



MULTICULTURAL ACTION CENTER NEWSLETTER

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NAMI's State Ratings Report By Mike Fitzpatrick, NAMI's Executive Director

NAMI's long-awaited, comprehensive state-by-state analysis of the nation's mental health care system will be released next month. The goal of the report, *2006 Grading the States: A Report on America's Health Care System for Mental Illness*, was to measure in as much detail as possible, America's continuing crisis in mental health care. President Bush's New Freedom Commission on Mental Health called the mental health care system a "system in shambles," and the recently released Institute of Medicine's Report indicated the "chasm" between promise and performance has yet to close.

We live in a time in which society's most vulnerable citizens are at risk. State systems are under tremendous financial strain from federal Medicaid cuts, and Medicaid remains the fastest-growing budget line in most states. Action taken by Congress in 2005 and 2006 will lead to structural changes in how people with serious mental illness can access coverage for services. Many of the cost-cutting measures being debated in Washington D.C., and in state legislatures, will do more harm than good.

This financial crisis is not the only factor driving the need for change. NAMI released its last state ratings report in 1990. Sixteen years later, mental illnesses cause more disability than any other class of medical illness in America. Many people living with the most serious and persistent illnesses are not provided with the treatment they need and as a result are allowed to falter to the point of crisis. High-quality psychosocial and medical treatments are simply not being delivered to the majority of people with serious mental illness.

In the past 16 years, mental health treatment has progressed from one of maintenance to one of recovery, which includes consumer- and family-driven choices as an essential dynamic. Still, in 2006, the costs of untreated mental illness are too often shifted to other sectors of society, such as the judicial system. Police, judges, and others involved in the criminal justice system today are often among the strongest advocates for treatment reform, as they experience the effects of society's cost-shifting most acutely.

NAMI's 2006 *Grading the States* report is intended to be a guide to the field for consumer and families. We also hope it will provide elected policymakers with a specific, systematic agenda for action and promote a dialogue among all stakeholders about what is and what is not working in the mental health system.

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NAMI Celebrates Black History Month

Each February, America celebrates Black History Month by honoring the many important contributions made by African Americans to our country.

This month and throughout the year, NAMI focuses attention on the disparities that African Americans face in receiving mental health care.

In this issue we highlight leaders and programs that are making a difference in the African American community.

Meet NAMI Leaders

Best-selling Author Bebe Moore Campbell



Bebe Moore Campbell is an active NAMI member. She is the co-founder of the NAMI Inglewood (CA) affiliate, a Family-to-Family trainer and the 2003 NAMI Outstanding Literature Award winner. Moore Campbell became a NAMI member and advocate because of a cherished childhood friend and a beloved family member.

Bebe is the author of three *New York Times* bestsellers. Her latest works deal with mental illness. She draws on her own powerful emotions and African-American roots and portrays characters who struggle with serious mental illness.

Latest works:

Sometimes My Mommy Gets Angry is a children's story that describes the joys that a young girl finds in her day-to-day activities, despite the sometimes difficult moments that she experiences with the symptoms of her mom's bipolar disorder.

72 Hour Hold tells the story of Keri and her daughter, Trina, who has bipolar disorder. Keri struggles to come to terms with her daughter's mental illness and find treatment and support for herself and her daughter while navigating the mental-health system. *72 Hour Hold* deals not only with mental illness but also race relations and family dynamics.

Clarence Jordan, NAMITN's Operations Officer

Clarence Jordan is the operations officer and the project director for the African American Outreach Project for NAMI Tennessee. Clarence has numerous years of experience conducting community outreach and developing, training and supporting self-help groups for individuals with co-occurring disorders.

Clarence is a Navy veteran who received master's degrees from the Naval Post Graduate School in Monterey, California, and the University of Arkansas. He was appointed by the Commissioner of Mental Health and Developmental Disability to the State Mental Health Planning Council as a member at large. He is also the president-elect of the Region Four Planning Council.



Jordan is the proud father of two adult daughters and a member of the steward board at his church. He is a strong believer of the need to put one's faith into action for sustained recovery. He considers learning about his mental illness and advocating for others as his greatest passion in life.

Multicultural Partner Coalition Members

Action for Mental Illness (India)

Alianza Nacional por las Enfermedades Mentales (Mexico)

Alianza Nacional de Salud Mental (Mexico)

Alianza Para la Depresión (Spain)

American Psychiatric Association

American Society of Hispanic Psychiatry

APOIAR (Brazil)

Asian Community Mental Health Services

Asociación Argentina de Ayuda a la Persona que Padece de Esquizofrenia y su Familia (APEF)

Asociación Maníaco Depresivos (Colombia)

Asociación Salvadoreña de Familiares y Amigos de Pacientes Esquizofrenicos (El Salvador)

African American Family Support Conference



The Central Texas African-American Family Support Conference (CTAAFSC) provides information and education to consumers, families and the community about mental health, mental retardation, chemical dependence, co-occurring disorders, and physical health issues. The goal of the conference is to increase awareness of available behavioral and physical health care services, reduce stigma and eliminate health disparities.

This innovative conference, now in its sixth year, is hosted by Austin Travis County Mental Health Mental Retardation Center and sponsored by community partners from public and private sectors. Research indicates that this was the first conference of its type in Texas and only the third in the United States. The other two were in Washington, D.C. and Ohio.

The conference was founded in response to the realization that people of color often face special and significant obstacles in accessing health care, and most particularly mental health care. This event continues to be an excellent opportunity to share knowledge and information in Central Texas and addresses recommendations outlined in the 1999 Surgeon General's Report on Mental Health, the Supplemental Report on Mental Health: Culture, Race and Ethnicity (2001), and the President's New Freedom Commission on Mental Health Report (2003). All address the reduction of stigma and the elimination of disparities in health care. The Educational strategies presented over the years in the CTAAFSC have been highly successful in efforts to alleviate the fear and stigma so often found in the African-American community.

In its third year, the CTAAFSC integrated a broader health focus that included a track of physical health. In 2003, with a session on "*The African-American Minister as a Source of Help for Serious Personal Problems: Bridge or Barrier to Mental Health Care?*" by Dr. Harold Neighbors, the Conference initiated an ongoing track on mental health and faith-based initiatives. The conference is now partnering with the faith community in its ongoing effort to break down barriers to mental health care and dispel myths and eliminate stigma toward mental illness.

In its 6th year the conference continues to expand. In 2006 it attracted more than 400 consumers, family members and professionals from across Texas and the country. Consumers and/or family members remain at an estimated 60 percent of attendees. The CTAAFSC targets the African-American community but embraces all community members regardless of race or ethnicity, and conference participation at all levels has been across racial and ethnic lines.

For more information, please call (512) 445-7739.

Multicultural Partner Coalition Members:

Black Psychiatrists of America

Center for Capacity Building for Minorities with Disabilities Research

Center for Psychiatric Rehabilitation (Boston University)

CHADD (Children and Adults with Attention-Deficit/Hyperactivity Disorder)

Circles of Care Evaluation Technical Assistance Center

District of Columbia Department of Mental Health

Federación Colombiana Para la Salud Mental (Colombia)

Fundación Contener (Argentina)

Fundación Costarr para Personas con Esquizofrenia (FUCOPEZ) (Paraguay)

Fundación Luz y Vida (Paraguay)

Health Watch Information and Promotion Services, Inc.

NAMI Greater Cleveland Multicultural Outreach Project

In order to serve the needs of the African American and Latino populations, NAMI Greater Cleveland has launched a comprehensive Multicultural Outreach Project. This project was launched with support from the Deaconess Foundation, the Mt. Sinai Foundation, and the Cuyahoga Community Mental Health Board. Key components of this project include:

- **Multicultural Outreach Programming:** Specialized outreach and programs geared to the unique needs of the African-American and Latino communities.
- **Multicultural Advisory Committee:** Established to provide ongoing assistance in reaching out and serving the targeted communities.
- **Community Events:** NAMI Greater Cleveland will host community events to promote awareness of the need for cultural competence and mental health in diverse communities.

NAMI welcomes Lynette Loury, NAMI Greater Cleveland's Multicultural Outreach Coordinator, who will take the lead on this important project.

CHADD'S Community Forums for African-American and Latino Communities

CHADD (Children and Adults with Attention-Deficit/Hyperactivity Disorder) has hosted 16 community forums targeted to the African-American and the Latino communities in the last four years.

A family-based organization with 14,000 members, CHADD is predominantly located in suburban areas in the United States. Through the efforts of their community forums project, CHADD now has several predominantly African-American chapters. And they have several chapters that are formally linked to local African-American community organizations. Several concrete investments were made to make this happen, including:

- CHADD National Cultural Competence training of chapter leaders expressing an interest in participating in this project.
- On-site orientation and technical assistance.
- Hiring a local consultant known in the African-American community who has a mental health background.
- Paying the local chapter an honorarium as well as all expenses.
- Ensuring that the location of the forum and subsequent meetings are accessible to the African-American community.
- Paying a stipend to those community residents requesting such assistance to help offset the costs of child care and transportation.

Multicultural Partner Coalition Members

INGENIUM
(Mexico)

International Association of
Psychological Rehabilitation
Services

Latino Behavioral Health
Institute

Malaysian Mental Health
Association
(Malaysia)

Massachusetts Mental Health
Services Program for Youth

NAMI India

National Asian American
Pacific Islander Mental Health
Association

National Council of La Raza

National Latino Behavioral
Health Association

National Medical
Association

National Organization of
People of Color Against
Suicide

National Youth
Advocacy Coalition

University of California, Davis Health System Center for Reducing Health Disparities

The mission of the *Center for Reducing Health Disparities* is to promote the health and well-being of ethnically diverse communities by conducting research, training, continuing education, technical assistance, and information dissemination within a bio-psycho-social framework that recognizes the unique cultural contexts of these special populations. The Center seeks to create and foster an innovative research environment at the University of California, Davis, the Department of Health and Human Services County of Sacramento Primary Care Center, regional community organizations, and racially and ethnically diverse communities in which: scientific and practical understandings of health disparities can be achieved; the knowledge generated can be shared through education; and new approaches to reducing these disparities can be developed for implementation throughout California.

While there is interest in a wide variety of health disparities, the Center focuses on improving access, detection, and treatment of mental health problems with an emphasis on primary care settings where these problems are most frequently presented. A second focus of the Center will be on the co-morbidity of depression with diabetes and cancer, aligning with two of the four key focus areas of research identified in the UCDHS Strategic Plan and identified also in the top 10 Leading Health Indicators in Healthy People 2010.

For more information visit: <http://www.ucdmc.ucdavis.edu/>

NAMI's State Ratings Report

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Striving for fairness, comprehensiveness, and transparency, we surveyed consumers and family members, experts, researchers, members of NAMI's scientific council, administrators and clinicians, and then focused on areas we believe matter most to people with serious mental illnesses and those close to them.

One of the main priorities of the report is to identify and reward states that show innovation in their approach to providing treatment for mental health. If we are to move forward, we must routinely engage in assessing mental health care systems in every state. It was our intention with this report, and future reports, to stimulate dialogue about what is and what is not working in America.

In 2009 we look forward to completing a follow-up to this report. It is hoped that producing reports every three years will, in time, paint the picture of a system of care that offers hope, opportunity, and recovery.

Visit www.nami.org to print a copy of the Report.

Multicultural Partner Coalition Members

New Jersey Asian
Association for Human
Services, Inc.

New Jersey Mental
Health Institute

New Vision Consumer
Services

Richmond Fellowship
(New Zealand)

Samaritans Nepal

Self Reliance Foundation

Student National Medical
Association

The Alliance for the
Mentally Ill of R.O.C
(Taiwan)

Thessalian Association of
Mental Health-Care -
Rehabilitation
(Greece)

South African Anxiety and
Depression Group

West Virginia Substance
Abuse Coalition

Voz Pro Salud Mental
(Mexico)

Zenkaren
(Japan)

Embracing diversity and defining solutions
to achieve mental health care equality



ELIMINATING DISPARITIES:
2006 Multicultural Strategic Summit

Special Event at the 2006 NAMI Convention

The NAMI Multicultural Action Center is proud to announce Eliminating Disparities: Multicultural Strategic Summit at the 2006 NAMI National Convention June 28-July 2.

The Summit, which will take place in Washington, D.C., brings together multicultural mental health leaders from across the nation to address the lack of access to care and the disparities in treatment faced by multicultural communities. It will feature policy and research briefings, plenary sessions and program tracks to address issues specific to diverse communities. Nationally recognized consumer and family advocates, researchers, policymakers and providers will work together to offer a vision for change.

To register or for more information, please visit www.nami.org/summit or contact MACenter@nami.org

New Book Targeted to Latino Community

Abriendo Caminos en Tu Vida (Opening Paths in Your Life) is an innovative Spanish guide designed to help Latinos with psychiatric disabilities assess their level of readiness to engage in rehabilitation services.

In order to best fit the specific needs of Latinos, this culturally competent guide was developed with the input and feedback from Latino consumers and their families. This user-friendly guide may be used by Latino consumers together with a practitioner or family members. At the end of the guide, there are concrete activities designed to help the individual develop his or her readiness for rehabilitation.

Find out more about the book at: <http://www.bu.edu/cpr/catalog/books/titles/abriendocaminos.html>. Learn more about the research project that led to its development at: <http://www.bu.edu/cpr/latino/readiness.html>.