

Using Faith and Multiculturalism to Foster Understanding about Mental Illness

By Rose Wilson

In communities of color the church has always been the leader in dealing with social, educational, political, and health concerns. In the African American community here in San Diego, a collaborative relationship has been forged with the pastors and congregation of New Creation Church and NAMI San Diego.

This relationship is being guided and directed by the efforts of Pastor Reginald Gary and Pastor Alice Gilbert. Pastor Gilbert has been charged to lead the church's Congregational Care and Counseling Department which oversees training, counseling and informing congregants about mental illness, loss and grief, divorce, and many of the issues of life. Anita Fisher, NAMI board member and mother of a son living with schizophrenia, has shared her journey and frustrations about seeking help and support from the faith community. Her speaking out was used to help establish the collaborative relationship we now share.

The month of May has been acknowledged as May is Mental Health Month with a host of activities to acknowledge the importance of mental wellness including a five week series entitled, The Community of Faith Celebrates Women of Wisdom, "Breaking the Silence". Beginning May 2nd, "**Busting the Stigma of Mental Illness**" was presented and Anita Fisher's comments and her letter from her son brought the congregation to an emotional awareness and expression that can only be appreciated by being there. Her presentation brought on numerous questions and interests about schizophrenia that many were afraid to ask before. I, Rose Wilson, spoke on depression and challenges during recovery and also about the need to get information out and to encourage more participation from faith based organizations. The series also feature "Living with HIV", "Celebrating

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NAMI San Diego's
First Thursday Education & Advocacy Meeting
 June 7, 2007

Note New Meeting Place!

NAMI San Diego has launched a new program:

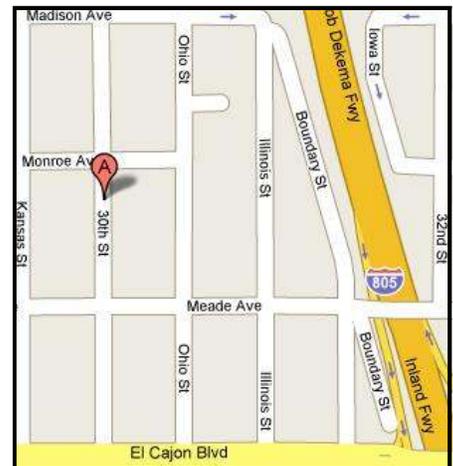
Come hear the why's and the how's from the Senior Mental Health Partnership.

- Maureen Halpain, Steering Committee Chair
- Sally Shepherd, NAMI San Diego Board
- Dahlia Fuentes, Steering Committee Member
- Shannon Jaccard, Coordinator

**St. John Garabed Armenian Church
 Conference Room**
4473 30th Street
San Diego, CA. 92116
(Across the street from our NAMI San Diego office)

Schedule:

- 6:30 p.m.: Special Recognitions**
- 7:00 p.m.: Announcements & Advocacy**
- 7:15 p.m.: Program**
- 8:30 p.m.: Refreshments & Social**



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Recovery", Overcoming Adversity", and the final discussion will be a Panel Presentation reviewing all that has been discussed and how the church and community can help with prayer, information, education and referrals.

The New Creation Church and its congregation are very progressive. They are not going to limit the services they offer through Congregational Care and Counseling to just the church, they are currently seeking a facility within the community so that they can assist more those who need the help, guidance, education, advocacy and understanding that they and NAMI San Diego must develop in all communities.

As a result of these efforts, other organizations have come on board to assist NAMI San Diego's efforts in the African American community. The Association of Black Psychologists is interested in partnering and collaborating to provide information, education and advocacy. We are all focusing on a multicultural approach to make all information and efforts accessible to all who are interested.



Legislative Update

CA Senate Bill (SB) 993 - Allowing Psychologists to Prescribe Certain Drugs

by Jan Daugherty, Governmental Relations Advocacy Committee (GRAC) Communications

SB 993 would allow licensed psychologists to prescribe certain drugs if certain conditions are met. Currently in California, licensed psychologists cannot prescribe drugs. On April 18, 2007, the bill was amended, and on April 24, the Senate Business, Professions and Economic Development Committee recommended that the bill be retained in committee, and that the subject matter be referred to the Committee on Rules for assignment to the proper committee for study.

The NAMI CA position is to oppose this bill. Opponents of this legislation argue that psychologists are not adequately trained to prescribe medications and expanding prescription privileges to psychologists will, therefore, seriously compromise the quality of care, safety, and well-being of vulnerable individuals with mental illnesses.

The National NAMI has prepared a position paper on "Prescribing Privileges for Psychologists: An Overview," because more and more states are dealing with this issue. Following is a summary of the position paper.

The NAMI Board of Directors charged the NAMI Policy Research Institute (NPRI) with examining the policy issues surrounding prescribing privileges for psychologists and to provide policy guidance to the Board. The report to the Board provides a comprehensive overview of the debate on prescribing privileges, describes a meeting of experts convened to explore issues pertaining to prescribing privileges and workforce shortages in the mental health field, and offers a set of recommendations to the Board on prescribing privileges and boundary-related issues affecting the availability of providers.

The contentious debate about prescription

privileges is occurring with concerns about limited access to care and severe workforce shortages in the mental health field as a backdrop. The 1999 Surgeon General's report revealed that less than one-third of all people with a diagnosable mental disorder in the U.S. receive treatment in a given year. And, the 1998 Schizophrenia PORT study revealed that fewer than 50% of all people with schizophrenia receive even minimally adequate treatment in a given year. These treatment access problems are even worse for children and adolescents with mental disorders.

One factor contributing to low rates of treatment and services for people with mental illnesses are the lack of qualified

Current CA SB 993 status:

http://info.sen.ca.gov/pub/07-08/bill/sen/sb_0951-1000/sb_993_bill_20070430_status.html

NAMI CA position on SB 993:

<http://www.namicalifornia.org/legislation...>

NAMI National position paper :

<http://www.nami.org/>

psychiatrists and other mental health providers in many parts of the country. There is compelling evidence that the nation's supply of psychiatrists is shrinking, and that access to treatment with psychiatrists is particularly limited for lower-income individuals who rely on public mental health systems for treatment and services. These problems are particularly severe in rural parts of the country. All 50 states and the District of Columbia authorize nurse practitioners or other advanced nursing professionals to prescribe medications, including psychiatric medications, with certain conditions. According to the American Psychological Association, 70% of psychiatric medications are today prescribed by general practitioners. General practitioners have extensive medical and pharmacology training, but may have limited training in psychiatry and psychopharmacology. In the Department of Defense (DoD) Psychopharmacology Demonstration Project (PDP) study between 1991 and 1997, some clinical supervisors found that

licensed psychologists with psychopharmacology training brought a unique combination of psychopharmacology and behavioral expertise to their programs that many of the psychiatrists in these programs lacked.

Supporters of prescription privileges for psychologists contend that safety concerns can be addressed through specialized training of psychologists who wish to obtain certification to prescribe medications. They argue that the current level of basic science training in graduation

education in psychology is adequate to enable psychologists, with some additional specialized training, to safely and effectively prescribe psychiatric medications.

Opponents of prescription privileges for psychologists argue that graduate education for psychologists de-emphasizes the medical model in favor of a social and behavioral approach that trains psychologists to conduct psychological assessments and provide psychotherapy, not to provide medical treatment. They point out that psychotropic medications used to treat mental illnesses are very powerful, can cause potentially disabling and life-threatening side effects, and require particular expertise among those who prescribe and monitor them.

Additionally, they also emphasize the importance of experience and expertise in monitoring complex medication interactions, pointing out that over 50% of individuals with mental illness prescribed psychotropic medications also have other serious medical conditions requiring medications.

As a consumer of psychotropic medication, I want to add a personal note here. In all the literature that I have read about treating clinical depression, which I have had twice, the key factors in treatment seem to be medication and a social and behavioral approach. I have found that to be true.

I heartily recommend you read the NAMI National position paper, and all the other available information on various web sites, if this is an issue that concerns you.

NAMI San Diego Meeting Schedule

NAMI San Diego

4480 30th Street
San Diego, CA 92116
(619) 543-1434 or (800) 523-5933

Morning NAMI-SD Support Group

Third Tuesday, 10:00 a.m. - 12:00 p.m.
NAMI San Diego Office
4480 30th Street, San Diego 92116
(619) 543-1434 or (800) 523-5933

Sibling and Adult Children's Group

Second Wednesday, 7:00 - 9:00 p.m.
Scripps-Mende Well Being Center
Adjacent to the UTC Mall
San Diego 92122
Call Michelle Cauble at (858) 756-3140

Clairemont NAMI Support Group

Second Monday, 7:00 - 8:30 p.m.
St. David's Episcopal Church (Library)
5050 Milton Street, San Diego 92110
Call Joan Williams at (858) 274-3716

La Jolla NAMI Support Group

First Tuesday, 7:15 - 9:00 p.m.
La Jolla Presbyterian Church (Room #9)
Enter on Eads Ave. - San Diego 92037
(858) 457-5057

NAMI Family Support Group

2nd & 4th Thursdays, 6:00 - 7:30 p.m.
Pegasus East
7841 El Cajon Blvd., #C
La Mesa, CA 91941

Support groups for families and caregivers of children and adolescents

La Mesa Group

Notice: This meeting has been suspended until this fall.

2nd Tuesday, 6:30-8:00 pm
Call Peggy & Bob Chambers:
(619) 464-0476

Spouses of Persons with the Diagnosis of Bi-polar

Third Tuesday, 6:30 to 8:00 p.m.
Clairemont Lutheran Church
(Luther Hall, Room 2 on the 1st Floor)
4271 Clairemont Mesa Blvd.
San Diego 92117
(858) 273-7423

Spanish - South Bay

First Monday, 6:00 - 8:00 p.m.
South County Family Resource Center
690 Oxford Street, Chula Vista 91911
Call Luz Fernandez (East County Clinic)
(619) 401-5500

Notice: The following meeting has been suspended until this September.

Spanish - Area de Clairemont - NAMI-SD Grupo de Apoyo

Clairemont NAMI Support Group
Tercer Martes (3rd Tuesday) 6:30-8:00 p.m.
St. David's Episcopal Church (biblioteca)
5050 Milton Street, San Diego 92110
(619) 543-1434 or (800) 523-5933

Spanish Family Support Group

Third Thursday, 6:00 - 8:00 p.m.
South Bay Guidance Center
835 3rd Avenue, Suite C
Chula Vista 91911
Call Gina Osuna: (619) 425-6879

NAMI Patton

Third Sunday, 1:00 - 3:00 p.m.
c/o Patton State Hospital
(Administration Annex - Room 148)
3102 E. Highland Avenue
Patton, CA 92369
Tel: (909) 425-7392 ☐ Fax: (909) 425-0160

NAMI-SIT

Schizophrenics in Transition

Board Meeting

Call for meeting time.
144 Copper Avenue, Vista 92083
(858) 481-7069

NAMI-SIT includes the following :

- Copper Hill Living & Learning Center
- Creative Arts Consortium
- Friends
- Advocacy Works
- Jardin Cesar Chavez

NAMI North Inland

P.O. Box 300386
Escondido, CA 92030-0386
(760) 745-8381

Education Meeting

Second Tuesday at 7:00 pm.

Kinesis North

474 W. Vermont Ave, Escondido 92025
(760) 745-8381 or 1-800-523-5933

Monday Share & Care in Fallbrook

Mondays, 5:00 - 6:30 p.m.
Fallbrook Healthcare Foundation Building
Corner of Mission and Fig
Fallbrook 92028
Call for further information: (760) 745-8381

Tuesday Share & Care Meeting

1st, 3rd, 4th & 5th Tuesdays, 4:00 - 5:30 p.m.
Joslyn Senior Center
210 East Park Ave, Escondido 92025
(760) 745-8381

NAMI North Coastal

P. O. Box 2235
Carlsbad, CA 92018
(760) 722-3754

Education Meeting

Third Thursday, 7:00 - 8:30 p.m.

St. Michael's by the Sea Episcopal Church
2775 Carlsbad Blvd., Carlsbad 92008
(760) 722-3754 or (800) 523-5933

Education Meeting followed by

NAMI Facilitated Share & Care Support Group 8:30 - 10:00 p.m.

TARA Borderline Personality Disorder Support Group

First Tuesday monthly at 6:30 - 9:00 p.m.
Carlsbad Community Church
3175 Harding Street, Carlsbad 92008
(760) 729-2331- Ask for Sandy



Education Corner



Updates and Accomplishments

As I sit back and look at what we have accomplished over the past few months I am in awe.

We have conducted several Family-to-Family class series in San Diego County in English and Spanish. Many additional teachers are being trained in June and November.

We have started a Peer-to-Peer education class for those who experience mental health issues. The focus of this program is on how to maintain wellness. In August we will be hosting a Peer Mentor Training which will enable us to offer this program, in both English and Spanish, on a regular basis several times a year.

We were fortunate to have Dr. Chris Amenson train over 20 family members and service providers in the Schizophrenia Education course which he authored. This 6-week course educates families on the illness of schizophrenia and how they can best support their ill relative, while looking at ways to maintain their own emotional wellness in the midst of the trauma which mental illness creates in the family.

NAMI San Diego will be hosting a Support Group Facilitator training this fall. Many family members state that the support groups are like a lifeline. They receive and give support with others who are experiencing similar situations. They feel less alone in a society which still holds on to the prejudice, ignorance and stigma which surrounds mental illness and those who live with it. The C.A.R.E. (Consumers Advocating Recovery through Empowerment) support groups provide similar types of education and support to people living with mental illness.

I am grateful to each person involved in the services NAMI San Diego and its Sister Affiliates in North Coastal and North Inland provide. Families, friends and those who experience mental health

issues are affecting change. We are working in partnership. "Partnership" is a term used freely today. Partnership is more than just a program or goal. I believe it is a 'state of mind'.

You see, as an adult educator, I believe it has been mainly through the efforts of grassroots organizations like this one, that society is becoming educated on the topic of mental illness and the rights that people who live with it deserve. In order to make informed decisions, individuals must be aware of what the issues are, and the choices involved surrounding those issues. I believe this is what the Family to Family, Peer to Peer, C.A.R.E and Family Support groups, In Our Own Voice, etc. offer – education about issues (whether that be how to maintain wellness or information on need for societal change) and how each of us as individuals or part of a larger framework, can work towards effective change.

It is these individuals – individuals who courageously live daily with the challenges brought on by mental illness - on whom I would like to focus on in the rest of this article.

As many of you know, I hail from Canada. And in Canada, individuals with mental illness are treated as second-rate citizens. Many adults with mental illness are not supported in educational opportunities to become fully participating members of society. This is why I am honored to be a part of NAMI San Diego, the work we do, and the programs we provide. We partner with many others who have a passion and commitment in advocating for those who at times, because of the nature of mental illness, may have a difficult time lobbying for themselves.

Society in general has started to recognize that those with physical disabilities, if allowed, can be contributing members of society. It will take time and education for those with mental illness to be viewed the same way.

Adult education is based on the premise that through continued learning, adults lead more satisfying lives. Numerous studies have shown that the more an individual learns, the more they want to learn. I truly believe that the clear function of education is to help

individuals reach their personal potential. And that's why I am proud of the work we all do. Thank you to each of you for making a difference in improving the lives of everyone affected by mental illness.

Respectfully,
Gloria Deck
Education Director

Aging and Disability Resource Connection: Fast, Friendly, Easy Access to Info and Assistance

County of San Diego Aging & Independence Services
Media Contact: Denise Nelesen (858-505-6474)

The County of San Diego Aging & Independence Services (AIS) is offering a new connection to resources for aging and disability services, now available to all San Diego residents looking for information for themselves or a loved one, on a professional or personal basis. The Aging and Disability Resource Connection (or ADRC) is a one-stop shop for services, health literature, assistive products, Medicare Part D updates, relevant legislation, fall prevention techniques, home and community-based care planning, and a protected site to store your own health-related information.

For those who use the web, log onto www.sandiego.networkofcare.org/aging. If you do not use the web or cannot find what you are looking for on the site, call the AIS Call Center at 1-800-510-2020 or Access to Independence, the local Independent Living Center, at 1-800-300-4326 (TTY: 1-800-959-9395). The ADRC is part of a larger national initiative sponsored by the Administration on Aging and Centers for Medicare and Medicaid Services to improve access to information about resources to help support elderly and disabled persons in the community and prevent unnecessary hospital and nursing home stays. Log on today and find what you need!

(For ADRC brochures, call Cindy Vogel at 858-514-4652.)

NAMI C.A.R.E. Support Groups

Consumer Support Groups
For more information call the
Albright I & R Center at
(619) 543-1434 or 1-800-523-5933

NAMI San Diego Office

4480 30th Street
San Diego, CA 92116
2nd & 4th Thursdays: 6:00 - 7:30 p.m.

Gifford Clinic (Cafeteria)

140 Arbor Dr.
San Diego, CA 92103
1st & 3rd Wednesdays: 2:00 - 3:30 p.m.

Sharp Mesa Vista Hospital

(Activity Room)
7850 Vista Hill Ave.
San Diego, CA 92123
Every Thursday: 11:15 a.m. - 12 Noon

St. Michael's By The Sea Episcopal Church (Parish Hall)

2775 Carlsbad Blvd.
Carlsbad, CA 92008
Call: (760) 722-3754
Third Thursday: 5:30 - 6:30 p.m.
(just prior to the General Meeting)

Mariposa Clubhouse

560 Greenbrier, Suite D
Oceanside, CA 92054
Call: (760) 722-3754
Every Thursday: 1:00 - 2:00 p.m.



Access & Crisis Line

1-800-479-3339
24 hours a day/7 days a week

Client Warm Line

1-800-930-9276
Daily: 5:00 p.m.—11:00 p.m.
Call us. We are fellow consumers who
have been there, done that. Listening
and talking are what we like to do.

Albright Information & Referral Center

1-800-523-5933, 1-619-543-1434
Volunteer resource specialists can
provide information and support to
callers and visitors, including consum-
ers, family members and profession-
als.

Resources

Client/Consumer

Patient Advocacy Program

5998 Alcalá Park, AW 304, San Diego 92110
(619) 260-7660 or 1-800-479-2233
Fax: (619) 260-7680
Monday - Friday: 8:00 a.m. - 5:00 p.m.

The Consumer Center for Health Education and Advocacy

1475 Sixth Ave., 4th Floor, San Diego 92101
Toll Free: 1-877-734-3258 ☐ Fax: (619) 471-2782
Monday - Friday: 9:00 a.m. - 5:00 p.m.
If you need help getting mental health services or
if you have a complaint or grievance, call or write
us. We are ready to help you.

Bayview Clubhouse

330 Moss Street, Chula Vista 91911
(619) 585-4646 ☐ Fax: (619) 585-4625
Monday - Friday: 8:00 a.m. - 4:00 p.m.
Evenings/Weekends - Call for Schedule

Casa Del Sol Clubhouse

1157 30th Street, San Diego 92154
(between Coronado Ave. & Beyer Blvd.)
(619) 429-1937 ☐ Fax: (619) 429-5205
Monday: 8:30 a.m. - 6:00 p.m.
Tue, Thurs & Fri: 8:30 a.m. - 4:30 p.m.
Wednesday: Noon - 8:00 p.m. (Bilingual)

Corner Clubhouse

2864 University Ave., San Diego 92104
(North Park at Utah Street)
(619) 683-7423 ☐ Fax: (619) 683-7428
Monday - Friday: 8:00 a.m. - 4:00 p.m.

East Corner Clubhouse

1060 Estes Street, El Cajon 92020
(619) 440-5133 Ext. 109 ☐ Fax: (619) 440-8522
Mon, Tue, Thurs & Fri: 8:00 a.m. - 4:00 p.m.
Wednesday: 8:00 a.m. - 6:30 p.m.

Eastwind Clubhouse

2359 Ulric Street, San Diego 92111
(858) 268-4933 ☐ Fax: (858) 268-0244
Monday - Friday: 8:30 a.m. - 5:00 p.m.

Escondido Clubhouse

474 W. Vermont Ave., Ste. 105, Escondido
92025
(760) 737-7125 ☐ Fax: (760) 737-6129
Monday - Friday: 8:00 a.m. - 4:30 p.m.
1st Saturday of month: 10:00 a.m. - 2:00 p.m.

Friend-to-Friend

1009 "G" Street, Ste. A, San Diego 92101
(619) 238-2711 ☐ Fax: (619) 238-1127
Monday - Friday: 8:00 a.m. - 4:00 p.m.
An SSI advocate is available (must be a member)

Friends In Hand Clubhouse

144 Copper Ave., Vista 92083 (302 Bus Route)
(760) 631-2206
Saturday: 11:00 a.m. - 4:00 p.m.

Mariposa Clubhouse

560 Greenbrier, Ste. B, Oceanside 92054
(760) 439-2785 ☐ Fax: (760) 439-6902
Monday - Friday: 8:00 a.m. - 4:30 p.m.

The API Discovery Clubhouse

5550 University Ave., San Diego 92105
Membership Information: (619) 667-6176
Saturday & Sunday: Noon - 4:00 p.m.

The Meeting Place, Inc.

4034 Park Blvd., San Diego 92103
(619) 294-9582 ☐ Fax: (619) 294-9588
Monday - Friday: 8:00 a.m. - 4:00 p.m.

The Oasis Clubhouse

3635 Ruffin Road, Ste. 101, San Diego 92123
(858) 300-0470 ☐ Fax: (858) 300-0471
Monday - Friday: 10:00 a.m. - 7:00 p.m.
Serving Transitional Age Youth (16-25)

Neighborhood House Association (NHA) Friendship Clubhouse

286 Euclid Ave., #104, San Diego 92114
(619) 266-2111 Ext. 106 ☐ Fax: (619) 266-0496
Monday - Friday: 8:30 a.m. - 5:30 p.m.

Visions

226 Church Avenue, Chula Vista 91910
(619) 420-8603 ☐ Fax: (619) 420-0385
Mon - Fri: Noon - 7 p.m.; Sat & Sun: Noon - 5 p.m.

The Access Center of San Diego

1295 University Ave., Ste. 10, San Diego 92103
(619) 293-3500 ☐ Fax: (619) 293-3508
Monday - Friday: 9:00 a.m. - 5:00 p.m.

Employment Services

1202 Morena Blvd., Ste. 201, San Diego 92110
(619) 276-8071 ☐ Fax: (619) 276-3542
Monday - Friday: 8:00 a.m. - 4:30 p.m.
(Must be receiving services from a county funded
mental health program and approved by Department
of Rehabilitation)

Job Options

3465 Camino del Rio South, Ste. 300
San Diego 92108
(619) 688-1784 (Valorie) ☐ Fax: (619) 688-9884
Mon - Thurs: 8 a.m. - 5 p.m.; Fri: 8 a.m. - 4 p.m.

San Diego Park and Recreation Therapeutic Recreation Services

3325 Zoo Drive, San Diego 92101
(619) 525-8247 ☐ Fax: (619) 299-9304
Monday - Friday: 8:00 a.m. - 5:00 p.m.
Provides year round recreational experiences for
individuals with disabilities.

The Creative Arts Consortium

P. O. Box 3053, San Diego 92163
(619) 282-4627 or (858) 481-7069

Compeer San Diego

(858) 361-3632
Offering support, information, and friendship!
website: www.compeersandiego.org
e-mail: info@compeersandiego.org

DBSA-Depression Bipolar Support Alliance

There are meetings in different regions of the
county. Call for meeting info: 1-800-826-3632
or go to the DBSA website at:
www.dbsalliance.org

The Advocate

NAMI San Diego, a non-profit organization, provides education, support services, and advocacy to improve the quality of life of everyone affected by mental illnesses.

NAMI San Diego is an affiliate of
NAMI and NAMI California

Board of Directors:

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Articles received by the 15th will be considered
for publication in the following month's news-
letter.

*The opinions expressed in the newsletter
do not necessarily reflect those of
NAMI San Diego.*

To register your opinion, call Bettie Reinhardt at
(619) 584-5564 or fax to (619) 584-5569 or email
at exudir@namisandiego.org or contact any of the
people mentioned in the articles.

Reactions

Last issue's column titled, "What's In a Name" by Wendy McNeill got a lot of people thinking. Here are some of your thoughts on the issue.

The Term: Implications of Choice

By Nancy Toti

The term "consumer" is not only used for people in the mental health system. It is also used for people who are in the Regional Center system in California, and other programs designed for developmentally disabled people. Why would "consumer" apply to folks struggling with mental illness and/or developmental disabilities? The logic here is the idea of choice. It was assumed by workers in both systems that consumers needed choice, and that like all consumers of goods and services, consumers of mental health and mental retardation services could "shop around" and get the best bang for their disability bucks. This is why the term was adopted, so social workers could feel good about the option of choice, the dream of choice in service delivery to people with mental disabilities. It hasn't quite worked out that way, especially not for the mentally ill. Developmentally disabled folks have more choice within the Regional Center system in California. They can choose, or not choose, a work training program, independent, supported or group home living, and several other options not available to the mentally ill. Each Regional Center consumer in California is assigned a social worker to oversee his or her treatment plan, known as an IPP (Individual Program Plan.) The IPP is a legal document agreed to by the consumer, Regional Center case manager, day program personnel, group home or supported living agency. Once the document is signed the services that are stipulated in the IPP MUST be delivered, unless the consumer changes his or her mind.

The mentally ill can choose to go to a treatment program, if they feel they need treatment, but their options are limited by their medical coverage. If they have Medi-Cal only, and most folks do, they can choose a community mental health

clinic. With recent cutbacks, that hasn't been an option, so they can choose to participate in a consumer run clubhouse, where access to social workers and doctors is limited. A mental health consumer can choose to decline treatment and medications and deteriorate until it becomes impossible for the family to care for this person. He or she can decompensate on the street, and fall prey to the many predators out there. After all, it's a choice. As if that isn't enough, there are more choices for the homeless mentally ill- they can eat out of dumpsters and never shower. They can get access to alcohol and other drugs that will make their condition worse. They can be arrested for sleeping on the street, or for being an inconvenience to shopkeepers, or for making the well heeled feel uncomfortable. They then get to go to jail. All of these wonderful choices spring from a brain that is broken, from a brain and a soul cut off from reality.

So, we social workers get to feel good about the notion of choice for the mentally ill. Society can labor under the delusion that there are treatment options for poor mentally ill folks, and that these folks can make rational choices when they are psychotic. We don't tolerate a mentally retarded person being left to fend for themselves on the street, that is why the Regional Center system was created in California. Yet we tolerate homelessness among mentally sick people who,

without medication have lost their ability to navigate their world. They are just as disabled as a mentally retarded person would be wandering the streets.

I am sorry, I don't have a PC term to describe the mentally ill, whether they are getting treatment or not. But I do have a term for the service delivery system designed for the mentally ill. I call it crazy, and without reform, those that tolerate and work in this system are crazy, too.



Reactions

More thoughts on the word "consumer"

By Julie Benn

Communications Specialist

Wendy McNeill brought up a topic that is being looked at on a national level by NAMI—the use of the word ‘consumer’ to refer to those affected by mental illness. Being a word nerd and one living with mental illness as well, I thought I’d drop in on the conversation.

I totally agree with Wendy. The word consumer is just not cool. More than that, it doesn’t make sense. Good ol’ Webster’s describes consumer as **a**: one that utilizes economic goods **b**: an organism requiring complex organic compounds for food which it obtains by preying on other organisms or by eating particles of organic matter. Uh, okay. That doesn’t really help.

When I think of a consumer, I generally

think of a person who decides to spend money at a place of their choosing. Now, as consumers of mental health services, this denotes that we get to choose what illness we have and exactly how we are treated for it. NOT! Too many of us get lost in the system, waiting years for treatment that never comes. Sure wouldn’t choose that. Others go undiagnosed or under diagnosed which can often cause lifelong problems, none of it chosen by the person.

Then there’s the alternatives to the word consumer. None of which have been agreed upon, obviously. I did recently hear a compelling thought for the use of the word ‘patient,’ however. A family member of mine, who is in the medical profession, said that if we say mental illness is a disease (which we do, and it’s been proven to be one), then why the stigma against being called a patient? Other people who have diseases are called patients, (i.e. heart disease patients, diabetes patients, cancer patients), so wouldn’t those with the disease of mental illness also be called patients? Wouldn’t that, in fact, help in medically legitimizing our cause? I don’t know, but would love to hear other’s thoughts on it.

Speaking of medical professionals, my psychologist and psychiatrist didn’t agree with the patient theory. They feel that mental health patient conjures up the term mental patient, which, in turn, conjures up images from “One flew over the cuckoo’s nest.” And we certainly don’t need that.

I don’t know where this conversation will take us, but amongst all of us I know there are some bright minds out there that could come up with a better term. Let’s get thinking!

Labels

By Roni Breite

Thanks for the great pieces on "labels" in the NAMI Advocate.

The term "consumer" has seemed strange, inappropriate and euphemistic to me too.

Especially since in our case, it refers to my daughter, now 10, but considered, I guess, a "consumer" since she was 6.

It makes it sound optional, aside from commercial and petty. She's not choosing to "consume."

Anyway, some rough thoughts on alternatives:

We could use initials that would become commonly known, as in MS, CP, AIDS, ADHD.

That could be MI for mental illness (as in "I have MI," similar to "I have ADHD.") That seems most direct, and includes the MI of NAMI.

There could be MHC for mental health challenges.

MIS for mental illness spectrum, indicating the broad range.

MWS (mental wellness seeker?)

We wouldn't want to be too coy, because if you broke your leg and said you're "bone integrity compromised" it would indicate shame about your condition. (It's like people telling me I'm not short, I'm vertically challenged; my husband's not balding, he's follicularly challenged) And we are, after all, trying to de-stigmatize mental illness.

On the sillier side, we could actually let ourselves drop all sense of propriety and go the way of the "We're Here and We're Queer" type of approach, reclaiming one of the old pejoratives, putting a new spin on it, and saying it proud. (OK, maybe just among "family.")

Anyway, let's keep the conversation going and then dump the consumer euphemism.

Senior Mental Health Partnership

a program of NAMI San Diego

Do you know an older adult who is sad, isolated, forgetful, worried? These are not a normal part of aging! The Senior Mental Health Partnership has a bi-monthly education and advocacy meeting to discuss issues pertaining to seniors and mental health. The meetings are open to consumers, caregivers, advocates, and health and social service providers. May’s topic was on Nutrition and Aging with guest speaker Kendra Grinde, R.D. We covered vital information on the importance of vitamins and minerals and which foods have these ingredients. Our next meeting will be July 13th with guest speaker Evalyn Greb.

Time: 8:30am to 10:00am

Location: Behavioral Health Administration Building

3255 Camino Del Rio South
San Diego, CA 92108

Contact: Shannon Jaccard

seniorMHP@namisandiego.org

www.namisandiego.org/seniorsmhp



Membership

NAMI San Diego relies on its membership and your generous contribution to continue providing education and other services to people with mental illnesses, their families, and the community. To join NAMI San Diego, renew your membership, or make a contribution, complete the information below and enclose your check payable to: **NAMI San Diego.**

Name: _____ E-mail address: _____

Address: _____ Home Phone: _____

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NAMI has a new volunteer, **Mike McNeill**, a chartered financial consultant with Prudential Financial. Mike can advise you about **Planned Giving** so that your gift is a win-win.

Please contact Mike at (858) 272-7997 or email at mike.mcneill@prudential.com.

Please Mail To:

NAMI San Diego
 4480 30th Street
 San Diego, CA 92116

Or Fax To:

619.584.5568

All gifts are tax deductible as provided by law.
 NAMI is a not-for-profit 501(c)(3) organization.



San Diego County NAMI-WALK 2007

Thank you for making this year's NAMI Walk such a tremendous success!! The rain cooperated to make a beautiful morning and we even got some sunshine! Over a thousand people gathered together to celebrate mental health and erase the stigma associated with mental illness.



Vital funds were raised to support NAMI programs throughout the county. We could not have done it without your continued support!!



For updates about next year 4th annual walk, please check our website: www.namiwalksandiego.org

On behalf of the participating NAMI Affiliates in San Diego County, thank you!

Shannon Jaccard
San Diego County Walk Manager



The Advocate

Vol. XI, Issue 6, June 2007



4480 30th Street
San Diego, CA 92116

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1st Thursday!!!

New Program Launch

More: What's in a name?



Return Service Requested

First Thursday Education & Advocacy Meeting Places

Where in June?

St. John Garabed Armenian Church

Where in July?

University Christian Church

Where in August?

No Meeting – Go On Vacation!

Directions

Take 8 East.
Exit Severin/Fuerte
Cross over the freeway.
Turn right on frontage road
Murray Drive
Go 0.4 miles.
Turn left on Water
Go 0.1 miles
Turn right on Mildan
Go 0.1 miles
Park entrance on the right

Look for the large
white and blue
NAMI banner!



Nami San Diego
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San Diego, CA 92116
www.namisandiego.org

Back by popular Demand
NAMI ANNUAL PICNIC
All Welcome!

SATURDAY JUNE 9TH
11.30 a.m.—2.30 p.m.

Harry Griffin Regional Park
La Mesa

HAMBURGERS, HOT DOGS
AND BEVERAGES
PROVIDED
PLEASE BRING A DISH TO SHARE

GAMES, RAFFLES, WALK RECOGNITION

TO REGISTER PLEASE CALL
JIM STAREK — 619-584-5564 (ext.115)

BY MONDAY JUNE 4TH

Contributions towards the lunch
much appreciated

UNDERSTANDING SOCIAL SECURITY & SSI BENEFITS

Saturday, June 2, 2007
9:00 a.m. – 12:00 Noon

SSI, SSDI, SSA, SGA...The alphabet soup of Social Security...
What does it all mean?

Attend an in-depth seminar to gain an understanding of the Social Security system. Find out, step-by-step, how to get and keep your SSI benefits without jeopardizing other income sources.

YOU WILL LEARN:

- Eligibility for benefits
- How to calculate benefits
- The link between state & federal benefits
- Understanding rules & regulations
- The Work Incentive Program
- Maintaining benefits while working
- PASS Plan for Achieving Self-Support

SPEAKER PROFILE:

Get it straight from someone who knows!
Peter Prather works for the Social Security Administration. His presentation will cover the application and approval process, and various work incentive programs available.

The seminar will be held at:

The Arc of San Diego – North Shores
9575 Aero Drive
San Diego, CA 92023

Yes! Please register me/us for the:

_____ Understanding Social Security & SSI
Benefits
June 2, 2007
Number Attending _____

Enclosed is my check/money order for
\$ _____
\$8 per person*/\$10 per family per seminar

*Please note that seminars are free of charge for people with disabilities.

Make checks payable to the Special Needs Trust Foundation

WALK AWAY WITH:

An Information packet that will guide you through the maze of Social Security and give you an understanding of where you fit in.

REFRESHMENTS

The SNTF thanks Peter Prather for speaking free of charge. Fee covers costs related to seminar.

INFORMATION:

SNTF
(619) 338-4477

REGISTRATION FORM DUE ONE WEEK PRIOR TO SEMINAR

Name _____

Address _____

City _____

State, Zip _____

Day-Time Phone _____

Please mail registration form and payment to:

Special Needs Trust Foundation
9575 Aero Drive
San Diego, CA 92123-1803

The "SPECIAL NEEDS TRUST FOUNDATION" (SNTF):

is a joint effort of Access to Independence, The Arc of San Diego, Community Options, Community Catalysts, Developmental Services Continuum, Friends of Vista Hill, Home of Guiding Hands, ***NAMI San Diego***, Sharp Healthcare Foundation, St. Madeleine Sophie's Center, United Cerebral Palsy Assoc. Of San Diego, and UNYEWAY.

SPECIAL NEEDS TRUST SEMINAR

Saturday, June 9, 2007

9:30 a.m. – 11:30 Noon

THE CURRENT DILEMMA:

- Parents with a child who has a disability often find themselves in a dilemma when planning for the future of this child.
- Individuals with special needs may have resources from an inheritance or settlement that may exclude them from receiving government support.

The Special Needs Trusts were established to assist families and individuals with special needs to establish a discretionary trust that allows them to supplement the child's or individual's monthly income from SSI with restricted funds with no adverse effects. This seminar will inform families and individuals of their options for estate planning.

WHAT YOU'LL LEARN:

- Planning for the future
- Court vs. non-court procedures
- Advantages of the Special Trust and individual trust
- Options regarding trustee, including the Special Needs Trust Foundation
- Difference between First Party or Self-Settled Trust and a Third Party Trust

SPEAKER PROFILE:

Nancy Spector – Attorney,
Certified Specialist in Estate Planning, Trust and
Probate Law

The seminar will be held at:

The Arc of San Diego – North Shores
9575 Aero Drive
San Diego, CA 92023

Yes! Please register me/us for the:

_____ Special Needs Trust Seminar
June 9, 2007
Number Attending _____

Enclosed is my check/money order for
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\$8 per person*/\$10 per family per seminar

*Please note that seminars are free of charge for
people
with disabilities.

Make checks payable to the Special Needs Trust
Foundation

REFRESHMENTS

INFORMATION:

SNTF
(619) 338-4477

The SNTF thanks
Nancy Spector for
speaking free of
charge. Fee covers
costs related to
seminar.

REGISTRATION FORM DUE ONE WEEK PRIOR TO SEMINAR

Name _____

Address _____

City _____

State, Zip _____

Day-Time Phone _____

Please mail registration form and payment to:

Special Needs Trust
Foundation
9575 Aero Drive
San Diego, CA 92123-1803

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Diego, and UNYEWAY.