

Summer 2008

The Voice



NAMI Maine—Advocating for Healthy Minds

Welcome to the summer edition of the NAMI Maine newsletter

Special points of interest:

- * Book Reviews
- * Crisis Intervention
- * Grading the States Survey
- * Changes at NAMI Maine
- * Annual Meeting

Inside you will find up updates and information that we hope you find useful and interesting.

We are always looking for articles and book reviews from our subscribers. If you would like to be published in a future edition of our newsletter, please email us at info@namimaine.org or write to us a NAMI Maine 1 Bangor St, Augusta ME 04330

Candidates Forum

Legislative Updates

CIT Training Updates

Book Reviews

Veterans Issues

Support Groups

Grading the States: Mental Health Services Survey

August 20, 2008

Washington, DC— The National Alliance on Mental Illness (NAMI) is preparing to grade each of the 50 states on mental health services and invites the public to help by taking an online survey—and forwarding it to others. The survey is available at www.nami.org/mentalhealthservices and includes a version in Spanish.

In 2006, NAMI's "**Grading the States: A Report on America's Mental Healthcare System for Serious Mental Illnesses**" www.nami.org/grades provided the first comprehensive assessment in 15 years of publicly-funded mental health services, establishing a benchmark against which future progress could be measured. *The national average was a D.*

The next report card will come out in 2009. Which states improved? Are any states sliding backwards? The new survey will help answer those questions, identifying strengths and weaknesses from the perspective of the people they serve.

Survey results will be summarized and incorporated into the report, along with other sources of information. NAMI is asking individuals and families affected by serious mental illnesses to take the survey to measure "real world experiences."

Anyone age 18 or older who has been diagnosed with a serious mental illness or who has an adult family member with a diagnosed mental illness can take the survey. Serious mental illnesses include major depression, bipolar disorder, and schizophrenia.

The survey will remain online until September 30, 2008, and takes about 15 minutes to complete. Responses are anonymous.

NAMI Maine

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CHANGES AT NAMI MAINE

Children's Program Associate

Nora Morse; LCSW has joined the staff at NAMI Maine as the Children's Program Associate.

Nora will be working primarily on the grant that NAMI Maine has obtained for the next year to "Integrate Mental Health Services in the Schools". This is a planning grant that NAMI collaborated with the Maine Department of Education on; and the goal of the grant is to create protocols for school staff to ensure efficient identification and referral of students that are in need of services.

Nora is living in Portland with her husband. She has a Masters degree in Social Work from the University of Southern Maine, and has worked previously as a school-based clinician in Lewiston, Maine. nora@namimaine.org

Advocating for Healthy Minds

Please join us in welcoming Nora to NAMI Maine!!



Office Volunteers

NAMI Maine is grateful and lucky to have a number of wonderful volunteers. Each brings their special qualities to the organization and we could not do without them! If you would like to volunteer, please let us know!

We are currently looking for volunteers to assist with our help line, organizing our resource materials and basic office duties!

NAMI Maine Annual Meeting

It is with great regret that we must let you know that we have cancelled our annual meeting. Budget constraints have forced this difficult choice for us.

If you would like to be involved in coordinating next years annual meeting by securing sponsors, please let us know.

Candidate's Forum
Wednesday October 15th at NOON at the Saint Paul's Center ,
136 State Street, Augusta.

All Maine Votes is a nonpartisan coalition of individuals and organizations dedicated to encouraging people with disabilities, and those concerned about disability issues, to **exercise their right to vote**.

This election year, *All Maine Votes* is hosting a public forum for candidates seeking election to the U.S. Senate and House and for candidates for legislative leadership positions.

This is your opportunity to ask questions and to learn candidates' views on issues of concern to the disability community.

Please come, please bring your friends, family and colleagues and bring two written questions that we could potentially ask the candidates.

If you have any questions, please email Ross Doerr at rdoerr@drcme.org or Rick Langley at rlangley@drcme.org or me or call us at 626-2774 (1-800-452-1948). We look forward to hearing your ideas and working with you for a more inclusive election!

35 million Americans with disabilities are of voting age, and voters with disabilities are now one of the largest voting blocks in America. With a voting block that large, we CAN make a difference!

A few sample questions to get you started!

What steps will you take to address access to treatment for people living with mental illness?

What will you do to promote early identification and treatment of mental illness?

What will you do to address disparities in mental healthcare?

What will you do to address housing needs for people with mental illness?

What will you do to help people with mental illness return to work?

What will you do to reduce the numbers of people with mental illness in our criminal justice systems?

CIT Since Spring

Bob Tiner is now the Criminal Justice Manager. Any questions about the program can be directed to him.

We have had 5 – 40 hour trainings (Kennebec, Lincoln-Sagadahoc, Cumberland, Piscataquis and Franklin) certifying over 90 new people, 1 – 8 hour CEU class and presented 1- 8 hour piece at Maine Criminal Justice Academy for 42 new police officers.

As of today we have certified close to 500 men and women in more than 70 agencies.

We expect to have 5 counties hold trainings before the end of October. They are:

Knox/Waldo – August 25-29—14 newly graduated

Penobscot – September 8-12—18 newly graduated

Aroostook – September 22-26

York – October 6-10



NAMI Maine has been asked to collect information about the County Jails.

If you or someone you know was harmed because a County Jail withheld medications and/or medical care, let us know **call us at 1-800-464-5767** or **email us at info@namimaine.org**

House Passes Increases for Veterans Mental Illness Treatment

August 1, 2008

By a vote of 409-4 the House today passed legislation funding the Department of Veterans Affairs for FY 2009. The bill (HR 6599) includes \$3.8 billion for mental illness treatment and \$584 million for substance abuse treatment in the VA, significant increases over current year funding. Overall, the Veterans Health Administration budget is set at \$40.8 billion for FY 2009 -- \$1.6 billion more than the President requested and \$3.9 billion more than current levels. It is projected that the VA will serve 5.8 million veterans in 2009.

For homeless veterans, HR 6599 allocates \$130 million for the homeless grants and per diem program, rejecting a proposal from the Bush Administration to cut the program by \$8 million. This allocation also includes \$32 million to hire additional personnel as part of the joint HUD-VA "VASH" program for veterans supportive housing. A separate bill funding the Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD) appropriates an additional \$75 million at HUD for rent subsidies, i.e. the housing side of this joint program.

The bill also includes \$500 million for medical research at the VA, \$38 million more than the President requested and \$20 million more than was allocated in FY 2008. A full summary of HR 6599 can be found at www.nami.org

Housing Update: House Committee Passes Bills Expanding Supportive Housing and Homeless Programs

August 6, 2008

This past week the House Financial Services Committee approved separate bills reforming the HUD Section 811 Program (HR 5772) and the McKinney-Vento Homeless Assistance Act (HR 840). NAMI supports both bills as vital to modernizing and expanding two critical sources of permanent supportive housing for people living with serious mental illness. The full House is expected to take up both bills when Congress returns from its August recess the week of September 8.

In addition to the bills on Section 811 and homeless programs, Congress also passed (and President Bush signed) a massive housing and mortgage foreclosure prevention package that includes major provisions designed to expand investment in affordable rental housing for households with extremely low incomes (including supportive housing for individuals with serious mental illness).

Collectively, these actions are the most important actions taken by Congress on housing for people with mental illness in decades.



MAINECARE PROOF OF IDENTITY LAWS

When you apply for MaineCare, you may be asked to provide some or all of the items below:

- New Citizenship and Identity Requirements to Get MaineCare
- Copy of Power of Attorney, Conservator, or Guardianship documents
- Documentation of all income sources and amounts (with the exception of Social Security and SSI)
- Documentation of the value for property that is not the applicant's residence
- Copies of health insurance cards including Medicare
- Documentation of health insurance payments
- Copy of trust agreement where the applicant is a grantor or beneficiary
- Copy of annuity contract
- Copy of life insurance policies owned by the applicant and/or their spouse
- Copy of prepaid burial contracts
- Declaration of contents held in safety deposit box
- Documentation of liquid assets owned currently by the applicant and/or spouse, or those that have their name on them. These include:
 - Current statements on all savings and checking accounts, certificate of deposits, IRA or other investments
 - Copy of savings bonds that the applicant or spouse have an interest

For more complete information on MaineCare, please visit the State of Maine website at :
<http://www.maine.gov/dhhs/mainecare.shtml>

**If you have questions and need help – especially if you have lost your
MaineCare because you didn't meet this new requirement –
please let us know.**



Read Any Good Books Lately?

NAMI Maine is looking for book reviews! Just call or email us with the title, author and what you thought about the book and we will include it in our newsletter!



[Helping Teens Who Cut: Understanding and Ending Self-Injury](#)

by Michael Hollander, Ph.D. (Guilford Press 2008. 214 pages.)

A guide for worried parents of teens who are cutters. The author, a leading authority on self-injury, explains the reasons behind cutting and what to do to make it stop. In addition, proven treatments like dialectical behavior therapy (DBT) are explained, as well as tips on what to look for in a therapist or treatment program.

[Hurry Down Sunshine](#)

by Michael Greenberg (Other Press 2008. 238 pages.)

An excellent memoir about the onset of bipolar disorder in a literary writer's 15-year old daughter, her treatment and recovery, and the impact on their blended, extended family. It is especially notable for its description of the rhythms of life on a hospital psychiatric ward. It's unsentimental, insightful and humane.

[After the War Zone: A Practical Guide for Returning Troops and Their Families](#)

by Laurie B. Slone, Ph.D., and Matthew J. Friedman, M.D., Ph.D. (Da Capo Press 2008. 279 pages.)

An essential resource to help with the transition of returning from war, written for service members, their partners, families, and communities. This book pinpoints the most common aftereffects of war and offers strategies for reintegrating into daily life.

Here are **ten simple ways NAMI friends and members can make a difference:**

- 1. Vote.** Only six in ten voters cast their ballot in the 2004 Presidential Election and only four in ten voted in the 2006 Election. To register, visit www.vote411.org.
- 2. Ask questions.** Attend Town Hall meetings, internet forums, debates, house parties, and other events where candidates can be questioned
- 3. Educate candidates.** Provide candidates or their staff with NAMI's campaign materials. Post questions and comments on candidate Web sites and blogs.
Call campaigns and meet a health policy staffer in person, if possible. Develop a relationship. Raise mental health issues. **Thank candidates who take your materials or meet with you and send a follow-up note.**
- 4. Write letters.** Writing letters to the editor and op-eds are a terrific way to inform the public and influence candidates. Or, add your comments on mental healthcare to newspaper blogs. Candidates pay close attention to letters, op-eds and blogs because they reflect the pulse of voters.
- 5. Spread the word.** Your family, friends, and co-workers care about what you have to say. Let them know that mental illness impacts your life and the lives of 57 million Americans. If you belong to email lists
- 6. Be informed.** Track local and internet forums for opportunities to hear candidates and ask questions. Check candidate Web sites for positions on relevant issues. Inform fellow members of opportunities to make a difference.
- 7. Be prepared.** Anytime a pollster, political party, or campaign calls or knocks on your door, emphasize your concern for mental health care issues. One example: **I want to see parity of mental health and substance abuse coverage in all plans to provide health care."**
- 8. Meet the press.** Ask to meet with editorial boards, reporters, and radio announcers. Provide them facts, give them a real story (a consumer or family member who is willing to share), and let them know what you want from elected officials (feel free to use our Policy Action Agenda).
- 9. Collaborate.** Speak to other organizations about mental illness. Many other groups—from the medical field to education to law enforcement to AARP— recognize the impact of mental illness on their members. Ask if they will help send a message about the need for mental healthcare to candidates.
- 10. Volunteer your time.** NAMI members can volunteer as individuals (independent of NAMI affiliation) to work on campaigns, if they wish. People who donate time are valued—and so are their opinions. Campaign volunteers are in a unique position to talk about the importance of mental healthcare.

PLEASE CALL THE NAMI OFFICE FOR MORE DETAILS ON THESE GROUPS

Consumer Groups

- Augusta** - NAMI Peer Recovery - Maine General Conf Room 6 - Wednesdays 5:15 - 6:45
Augusta - UMA - Students Only - Call for more info
Bangor - Peer Support - Acadia Hospital - Fridays 12:00 - 1:30 and Thursdays 6:00 - 7:30
Camden - NAMI Connections - Call for more info
Machias - Washington Cty Peer Support - Kay Parker Bld - 1st Monday of month - 6:30 - 8:00
Millbridge - Millbridge Peer Support - Millbridge Harbor Apts - 3rd Sat of month - 1:00
NewCastle - Lincoln County Peer Group - 2nd Congregational Church - 3rd Wed - 6:30 - 8:30
Pembroke - Peer Support Group - Grace Christian Church - 3rd Monday of month - Call for more info
York - NAMI Connections - Eliot United Methodist Church - Tuesdays 1:00 - 2:30

DBSA Groups

- Belfast** - Belfast DBSA - Emmanuel Baptist Church - Every Wed. - 7:00 - 9:00
Portland - Portland DBSA - MMC - Dana Center - Every Mon - 7:00 - 9:00
Rockland - MidCoast DBSA - First Unitarian Universalist Ch - Every Thursday - 7:00
Saco - NAMI Aces - Most Holy Trinity Church - Every Monday - 7:00

Family Groups

- Augusta** - Capital Area Family Support - NAMI Office - 2nd and 4th Wed of Month - 6:30 - 8:00
Bangor - NAMI Bangor - Acadia Hospital - Every Tuesday - 6:30 - 8:00
Brunswick - NAMI CARE - Curtis Mem Library - 4th Wed - 7:00 - 9:00
Houlton - NAMI S. Aroostook - Houlton Reg Hospital - 2nd or 3rd Thurs - 7:00 - 9:00
Machias - Machias Family Support - Kay Parker Bld - 1st Monday - 6:30 - 8:00
Portland - NAMI Portland - MMC - Dana Center - 2nd and 4th Monday - 7:00 - 8:30
Sanford - NAMI Lights the Way - N. Congregational Church - 1st - 3rd Thurs - 7:00 - 9:00
York - NAMI Family York - Eliot United Methodist Church - 2nd Tuesday - 7:00 - 9:00

Dont see your area listed? If you are interested in starting a group in your area, please call NAMI and ask for Tammy!

1-800-464-5767 or email us at info@namimaine.org

Most people find support groups to be very helpful. A support group should be a safe and confidential place where you can come to know that you are not the only one with problems.

No one will say, "You're dealing with *what?*" It is a place to find encouragement from other people who are working to resolve the same issues you are, and that helps reduce your feelings of being alone, different, and isolated.



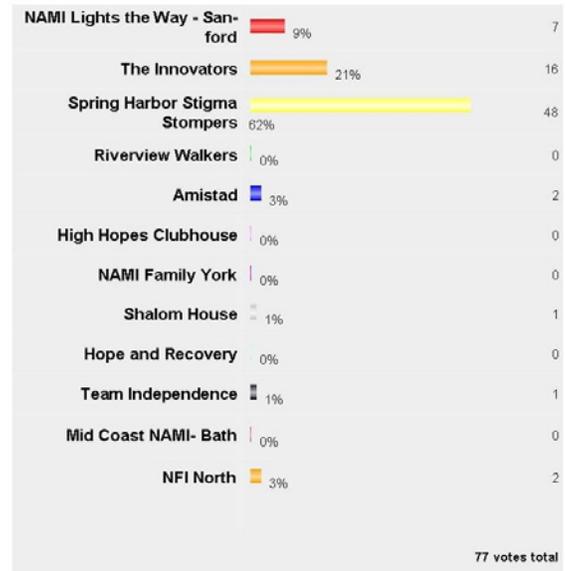
A support group is about helping others. In the beginning, you attend to help yourself, but you soon discover that you find the help you need when you extend help to others.

When you begin to care more about their needs than your own, you find yourself healed in the process.

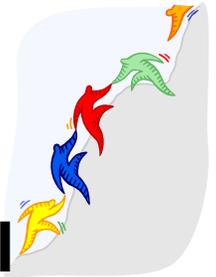
Congratulations to Spring Harbor Stigma Stompers!

Your award will be sent to you in the mail.

Team Captains...now is the time to start thinking of your team shirts! We will be running this contest again !!!!



Become a NAMI Maine Member!



Membership in NAMI Maine brings a number of benefits. NAMI Maine is the only state-wide organization whose mission is improve the lives of people affected by mental illness. Your membership helps us fight stigma, educate professionals to better understand mental illness, and advocate for public policy that improves the services for and understanding about brain disorders. As a member, you join NAMI National, NAMI Maine, and your local affiliate

All NAMI members receive the benefits of membership at all three levels of the organization, including:

- Membership in the local affiliate, state organization, and NAMI national organizations
 - Eligibility to vote in all NAMI elections
 - A subscription to *The Advocate* NAMI's quarterly magazine, as well as access to optional subscriptions to specialty newsletters and information at the national, state, and local levels.
 - Member discounts on brochures, videos, promotional items, and registration at NAMI's annual convention and many state and local conferences.
- Access to exclusive members-only material on www.nami.org.