



nAMI Orange County News & Views

National Alliance on Mental Illness

The Official Newsletter of NAMI Orange County, NC

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Inside This Issue:

Health Care Forum	2
Decriminalizing MI	2
Peer Support Workshop	3
Calendar	4
Board of Directors	5
Community Resources	7
Volunteer Spotlight	9

Events:

September 20 - 21, ASIST
 September 21, Peer Support Program
 September 22, Family-to-Family Reunion
 September 26 - 27, MHA-NC Conference
 September 29, Healthcare Forum
 October 11, NAMI-OC Meeting
 November 10, NAMI-OC Meeting
 December 8, NAMI-OC Holiday Potluck
See page 4 for details

Contact Us!

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New Mental Health Parity Law for NC

By Julia Trimmer

On July 27, Governor Mike Easley signed into law House Bill 973, which requires mandatory health insurance coverage of some mental illnesses and minimum benefits for others. Effective July 1, 2008, insurance companies must cover mental illnesses just as they do physical illnesses. "This legislation ends what has effectively been a form of discrimination in the health insurance coverage of those with mental illness," said Gov. Easley.

House Bill 973 covers the following illnesses at full parity: bipolar disorder, major depressive disorder, obsessive compulsive disorder, paranoid and other psychotic disorder, schizoaffective disorder, schizophrenia, PTSD, anorexia nervosa and bulimia. Other mental illnesses are covered at financial parity, so that deductibles, coinsurance factors, co-payments, maximum out-of-pocket as well as annual and lifetime limits are required to be the same as for physical illnesses. HB 973 covers all group plans and requires plans to include mental health coverage.

At the signing ceremony, Rep. Marth Alexander (D-Mecklenburg), the bill's primary sponsor, said, "Today is an historic day for the citizens of North Carolina. For too many years we have been unfair to those with mental illness and now these patients will be treated on par with other patients and not discriminated against." Other sponsors of the bill include Rep. Hugh Holliman, Rep. William Wainwright and Rep. Verla

Insko. During the Senate debate on July 3, Senators Eleanor Kinnaird, Tony Rand, Doug Berger and Martin Nesbitt spoke in favor of HB 973. This legislation is hard-won; supporters of mental health parity have carried on a mental health parity campaign for nearly 15 years.

If you would like to thank Representative Martha Alexander for her hard work, over many years, championing this cause in the General Assembly, you can send her email at marthaa@ncleg.net. North Carolina will be one of 34 states that require limited parity and only sixteen states have parity laws that are comprehensive with only a few exemptions.

Supporters say that in other states, costs have not increased due to parity laws. On the contrary, as most NAMI members are aware, insurance coverage can save the public money. Early intervention and access to care can prevent serious problems and keep people out of public mental health clinics and hospitals.

The new legislation, while an important victory, fails to help uninsured people with mental illness. One in five people with a serious mental condition in the US lacks insurance, or roughly 3.6 million people, according to NAMI Factsheets. If you have a low income and no insurance, you are twice as likely to have a psychiatric disorder. Taking care of the uninsured, helping them get treatment and stay healthy, should be one of our primary healthcare priorities.

“Learn about universal health care options, their political obstacles, and ways to bring about change.”

Health Care for Everyone: A Public Forum

What would it take to provide health care access to everyone? What’s the best way to promote universal health care? How do we know which presidential candidates’ plans to reform our health care system are realistic? What’s the best to advocate for universal health care?

A public forum on Saturday, September 29 from 9:00 to noon will address these questions. Participants learn about various health care reform options, their political obstacles, previous mistakes in health care reform and better ways to bring about change. The forum will cover health care reform legislative activities in North Carolina and will recommend ways to work with legislators to advocate for health care reform.

Sponsored by the UNC-CH School of Social Work’s Clinical Lecture Series, and the League of Women Voters in Orange, Durham and Chatham counties, the forum presenters include Rep. Verla Insko, Adam Searing, the Project

Director of the North Carolina Health Access Coalition in the NC Justice Center, and Jonathan Oberlander, Associate Professor of Social Medicine and Health Policy & Administration at the University of North Carolina.

To register, send your name, address and phone number to Evelin Brinich, 320 Glendale Drive, Chapel Hill, NC 27514, or send an email to brinich@email.unc.edu. Registration is free but must be received by September 15.

The forum will be held in the auditorium of the UNC School of Social Work, the Tate-Turner-Kuralt Building. For directions, refer to their website at ssw.unc.edu/map.htm. Parking is available at the State Employees’ Credit Union on Pittsboro Street, and in the new Global Education Center’s parking structure next door, (enter lot from Cameron Street onto Pharmacy Lane). There are also a few spaces, including handicapped parking, directly adjacent to the SSW building.

“For families, consumers, law enforcement, prison and jail staff, and anyone who works with the law . . .”

NAMI-NC Decriminalizes Mental Illness

NAMI NC is planning to hold a two-day conference called “Decriminalizing Mental Illness” with goal of influencing public policies regarding people with mental illness and law enforcement.

The conference targets families and consumers, law enforcement officers, policy makers, prison and jail staff, researchers, and anyone who works with people with mental illness and the law.

On Monday, November 26, Crisis Intervention Team (CIT) statewide conference will cover how to start a CIT in your area, and how to enhance your CIT program. Speakers include Major Sam Cochran, the CIT Coordinator in the Memphis, TN, Police Department and Dr. Fred Feese, nationally recognized speaker on schizophrenia.

On Tuesday, November 27, the NAMI Fall Institute features the following topics:

- Mental health courts
 - Jail screening instruments
 - Best practices in jails and correctional facilities
 - Panel of policy makers
 - Panel of family members and consumers sharing their experiences
 - Using the Sequential Intercept Model to guide community change
- Presenters on the 27th include Stephen Bush of Project Jericho in Memphis, Connie Milligan, Director of the Kentucky Jail Mental Health Crisis Network, and Anna Scheyett of the UNC School of Social Work, co-author of 2007 Jail Study. Registration is \$25. For more information, visit NAMI NC’s website at www.naminc.org.

Peer Support Workshop Helps Improves Quality of Life

A Peer Support Workshop will be held at Camp New Hope on September 21 for individuals with various mental health challenges and related disabilities. The interactive workshop is designed to engage people who are interested in exploring quality of life improvement, through peer support. The event will explain what is meant by “peer support” and will cover examples of peer support programs in North Carolina.

The keynote speaker will be Cynthia Vestor, Executive Director for the Association of Peer Specialists in North Carolina, who works with advocacy groups to promote consumer rights, alliance, and empowerment. Will Dudenhausen from the Dispute Settlement Center will facilitate the workshop. The Workshop is a collaboration of OPC Consumer and Family Advisory Committee and OPC-LME.

In addition, participants can visit these presenter tables:

- Acting for Advocacy, UNC’s Arts and Advocacy Group
- Peer Connections, advocacy focusing on “preventive wellness” activities and support for individuals challenged with disability

- Peer Tree, mirror frame guiding art and social group
- Dialectical Behavior Therapy Group, “DBT,” for building life coping skills
- Care and Discernment Group, Episcopal Origin Sharing and Support
- Brushes with Life which showcases art for artisans living with mental health challenges
- NC TASH Theatre Group, an inclusive community theatre
- Family to Family
- (WRAP), a comprehensive individual and group support system
- Triangle Residential Options for Substance Abusers (TROSA)
- Caramore, a residential and relocation vocational rehabilitation program
- Orange Enterprises, Circle of Friends . . . support in the work environment
- Club Nova, a classically modeled and innovative club house for individuals living with mental health challenges.

The workshop will be held from 9 to 4:30, and doors open at 8:30.

Registration is free. Space is limited so register promptly by sending an email with the subject line “Edward” to Hew50@Bellsouth.net. Please include your name, address and phone number.

“This interactive workshop explores quality of life improvement through peer support.”

Help us learn about

Schizophrenia

UNC School of Medicine

UNC researchers want to better understand the development and risk factors of **Schizophrenia**

Looking for **9-18 year olds** with FIRST DEGREE relatives with Schizophrenia or Schizoaffective Disorder (**Brother, Sister, or Parent**)

Who **do not** have schizophrenia or schizoaffective disorder themselves

State of the art Brain Imaging Techniques such as MRI, fMRI, and EEG

Up to \$150 in compensation

Research Coordinator: Erin Douglas, 1-866-914-9679, erin_douglas@med.unc.edu

*Join us at the
Family-to-Family
Reunion on Sept 22.*

Calendar of Events

Thursday and Friday, September 20 – 21

Applied Suicide Intervention Skills Training (ASIST) at UNC, a two-day, intensive, interactive workshop that teaches suicide first-aid intervention to any and all community caregivers and gatekeepers. Contact Romaine Riddle at 919-866-3272 or rriddle@mha-nc.org.

Friday, September 21

Peer Support Program at Camp New Hope, Hillsborough, NC. See page 3 for details.

Saturday, September 22

Family-to-Family Reunion at the United Church of Christ, Martin Luther King Jr./ Historic Airport Road, Chapel Hill, NC. Annual meeting at 4:30, refreshments and fun from 5:00 to 8:00. Contact Julia Trimmer at 933-1979 or julia.trimmer@gmail.com.

Wednesday and Thursday, September 26 - 27

Mental Health Association of NC's 2007 Annual Conference: Strength in Diversity: United We Stand, will be held at the Holiday Inn Sunspree Resort in Wrightsville Beach, NC on September 26-27. For more information or to register, visit www.mha-nc.org/annualmeeting07.htm

Saturday, September 29

Health Care for Everyone: A Public Forum. UNC School of Social Work, the Tate-Turner-Kuralt Building from 9:00 to noon. See page 2 for details.

Thursday, October 11

NAMI-OC monthly meeting features the "Brushes with Life:" documentary shown at 7:00 pm at the Century Center in Carrboro. For more information, contact Virginia Hill at 542-2726 or vahill@duke.edu. The film will be followed by a panel discussion. No confidential sharing group will be held for the October meeting.

Saturday, November 10

NAMI-OC monthly meeting at the Church of Reconciliation, 110 Elliot Rd., Chapel Hill. 9:30, Fellowship & refreshments in the Meeting Room or Sharing Time in the Lounge. 10:30, "Dialectical Behavioral Therapy" with CFAC members Edward Wright and Rhonda Allen. For more information, contact Virginia Hill at 542-2726 or vahill@duke.edu.

Monday and Tuesday, November 26 – 27

NAMI-NC Fall Institute, "Decriminalizing Mental Illness" at the McKimmon Center, Raleigh, NC. To register, visit NAMI-NC's website at www.naminc.org.

Saturday, December 8

Holiday potluck instead of monthly meeting from 6:00 to 8:00 pm at Chapel Hill Institute for Cultural and Language Education (CHICLE), 101 East Weaver Street, Suite G1(3rd floor above Weaver Street Market) in Carrboro.

Monthly Support and Program Meetings

We meet the second Saturday of most months at the Church of Reconciliation at 110 North Elliot Road in Chapel Hill. In July, August and December we have potluck dinners instead of monthly meetings. Our Open Support Group meets from 9:30-10:15 in a private room. From 10:30-11:30 our program is educational in nature, and most often features a speaker.

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- *Taking Zyprexa, Risperdal, or Seroquel?*
- *Have a diagnosis of schizophrenia or schizoaffective disorder?*
- *Experienced weight gain, high cholesterol, or other health problems?*

Persons who answer YES to all of these questions might be eligible for the CAMP study. The CAMP clinical trial will provide all of the following:

- Clinical care from a psychiatrist and treatment team specializing in schizophrenia and schizoaffective disorders.
- An individual behavioral intervention designed to help with weight loss.
- Free study medications and free study-related care.
- Compensation for time.

If you have any questions or to discuss if you or someone you know might be eligible for the CAMP study, please contact:

**Marianne Livingston, LCSW in Chapel Hill (919) 966-9587,
or Victoria DeVaugh-Geiss, MS in Raleigh (919) 733-5227**



*Tag sale, raffle and
silent auction to
benefit the Mental
Health Association
of Orange County*



Vintage Faire ***An Upmarket Tag Sale***

The 6th annual fundraiser to benefit the Mental Health Association in Orange County

Saturday, September 29th 8am ~ 5pm (#'s given out at 7am)

Sunday, September 30th 11am ~ 5pm (raffle drawing at 3pm)

Silent auction for a painting by David White

**Held at the former Avalon Medical Building,
South Hamilton Road & Raleigh Road / Route 54
Chapel Hill NC 27517**

We are still accepting donations for the following:

Furniture, glassware, crystal, silver, fabric, artwork, rugs, lamps, new items, crafts, coffee table and decent fiction & non-fiction books (no textbooks, computers, or outdated sports equipment).

And, for the first time, we are accepting select, quality clothing, handbags, and shoes.

Receipts given for charitable donations. Please call the Mental Health Association in Orange County at 919.942.8083 for more information.



Mental Health Association in Orange County

Programs benefited include: Compeer, Vocteer, The Community Backyard Family Advocacy Network, Strengthening Families, and Community Garden

Community Resources

Caring Family Network Treatment Group

New treatment group for consumers with bipolar disorder. The group will focus on understanding and managing the symptoms of bipolar illness, understanding medication management, learning and improving coping skills and maintaining a healthy lifestyle. Mutual support and sharing among members will be an important part of the group's work.

Insurance is accepted, including Medicare and Medicaid and sliding scale fee will be available for consumers who are uninsured. The group will meet on Wednesday evenings, 5:30 at the Northside Clinic, 412A Caldwell St. and will be led by Marilyn Ghezzi, LCSW. The group will begin as soon as we have enough referrals to form a group of at least 5 members. Interested consumers should call Marilyn at 913-4200 for information about the group and to schedule an assessment appointment.

Community Resources

NAMI-Orange County Monthly Meetings

Held on the second Saturday at 10:30 at the Church of Reconciliation, 110 N Elliot Road in Chapel Hill (see Calendar of Events, page 4).

Recovery Inc

Wednesday at 7 p.m. and Friday at 10:30 am at Caramore Community, 550 Smith Level Rd. Chapel Hill. Structured peer support meetings cover methods for managing anger, reducing stress, controlling depression and anxieties. Call 918-3677 for more information.

Call Center

Consumer-run call center. Monday to Friday a.m. to 6 p.m.. Focus on providing accurate information to consumers, families, professionals, and providers regarding access and other issues surrounding mental health reform as well as general mental health information and referrals. Call 1-800-897-7494 or email callctr@mha-nc.org.

Family-to-Family Class

NAMI educational program for families of persons with serious mental illness. Helps family members to better understand and support their ill relative while maintaining their own well being. Free 12 weekly classes. In Orange County contact Susana Burns (932-4304), in Durham Selde (225-0808) or Cheryl (531-7683).

Family Advocacy Network (FAN)

Individual and group support for parents and caregivers of children with emotional, behavioral or mental health challenges. Call Linda Boldin at 942-8083.

Peer Parent Program

Confidential support network for families of children with emotional, behavioral or mental health challenges. Call Linda Boldin at 942-8083.

Confidential Sharing Group

Every second Saturday from 9:30 to 10:30 am at the Church of Reconciliation, before the NAMI Orange program. Both family members and consumers are welcome. Call 929-7822 for more information.

Duke Community Bereavement Services

Support for those who have experienced a loss due to suicide. Call 919-644-6869 for more information.

Support groups, programs, classes and web resources can be a good way to start when seeking help.

Caramore Community, Inc.

Rehabilitation program for NC citizens over age 17 with severe mental illnesses. Provides employment and independent living training services. 550 Smith Level Rd. Chapel Hill. Call 919- 967-3402 or see www.caramore.org.

Club Nova

Providing Orange County residents with “a place to come for a sense of belonging, acceptance, friendships and opportunities,” including access to housing, meals, and a transitional employment program. 103D West Main St. Carrboro. Call 919-968-6682 or see www.clubnova.org.

XDS-Cross Disability Services

Serves persons aged 17 and older with multiple disabilities of mental illness, developmental disabilities and/or substance abuse disorders. Multidisciplinary team provides a variety of services. Call 919-490-5503, browse to xdsinc.org, or email thava@xdsinc.org.

Resources on the Web

NAMI Orange County at www.namiorange.org

North Carolina Mental Health Association at www.mhaoc.com

North Carolina Mental Hope at www.ncmentalhope.org. Links to many mental health related organizations, NC legislative issues, discussion groups, and support.

North Carolina Division of Mental Health, Developmental Disabilities and Substance Abuse Services at www.dhhs.state.nc.us/mhddsas

Psychiatric Advance Directives National Resource Center, at www.nrc-pad.org. This site is a collaboration between Duke’s Department of Psychiatry and Behavioral Sciences and the Bazelon Center for Mental Health Law.

Episcopal Mental Illness Network at www.eminnews.org

Mental Health Ministries at www.mentalhealthministries.net

Pathways to Promise at www.pathways2promise.org

The Down & Up Show at podcasts.depressionisreal.org

Volunteers Needed

The following opportunities are available to contribute a little time and energy:

- Bring refreshments to NAMI-OC monthly meetings.
- Join a team for two hours to label and organize the newsletters for mailing.
- Monitor Orange County Board of Commissioner meetings and

other meetings that address mental health related housing, funding, or other issues (not time-intensive, just a few meetings during a year).

- Write an article for NAMI-OC News & Views newsletter.
- Contact Lisa Hamill at 933-8941 or lisahamill@earthlink.net if you can help.

Volunteer Spotlight: Dick Plaisted

In this issue, we caught up with one of NAMI-OC's founding members.

How did you get involved with NAMI?

When my daughter was 15, she was diagnosed with schizophrenia. She was in and out of the hospital for for 34 years, but she graduated from college with honors. The doctors found a good combination of drugs for her but she died when she was 49.

My daughter was part of a support group, and that's how we got started with NAMI-OC. It was a small group that met in our church, the Church of Reconciliation.

You were one of NAMI-OC's first leaders.

Yes, I was one of the first couple of people who helped run the group, in 1987 or 88. The guy who ran the group did everything, so when he moved, I took over. I served for two years. Mainly, I wrote up everything that we did and said and put it all in a newsletter that I sent it to everyone on a regular basis. I think that publicizing everything we did really helped the group grow.

What did you get out of NAMI?

I met a lot of people and formed a lot of good friendships. My daughter was was

fairly stabilized, so we didn't need a lot of support. But I got to meet a lot of people, and I saw a lot of life-and-death struggles, and I think it made me a better man.

I know that you lost your wife recently.

Yes, that's right, Betty died of Alzheimer's. I took care of her for 5 years, but finally put her in a home and she died a few months later.

I hear that you've been getting out a lot lately. Tell us what you've been doing.

I went to Myrtle Beach and went bungee jumping. It was like free falling for five stories. I'm glad I did it but I don't think I'd do it again. I went parasailing, and that was beautiful. And I'm dating again.

Dick, I admire your enthusiasm for life.

I'm like a farmer trying to get in the hay in before the storm comes. I'm 86 years old and I want to have all the fun I can in the time I have left. That's important for caregivers, too –get your loved one cared for, and then take off and go on a trip. Go have fun.

Great messages for all of us, actually.

Thanks for all your hard work for NAMI-OC and good luck to you.

“Get your loved one cared for, and then take off and go on a trip. Go have fun.”

Research Volunteers Needed

If you:

- Have a diagnosis of schizophrenia or schizoaffective disorder
- Would like to improve your social relationships
- Are between the ages of 18 and 65 then you may be eligible to participate in a study of Social Cognition and Interaction Training (SCIT). SCIT is a group psychotherapy that teaches strategies for getting along with other people and improving the social lives of persons with schizophrenia or schizoaffective disorder.
- **Half** of the participants in this study will receive 20 sessions

of SCIT group therapy over a five-month period and their usual treatment services. SCIT will be provided to you free of charge.

- **Half** of the participants will receive their usual treatment services.
- **All** participants can be paid up to \$200 to complete three assessments.

These will involve evaluations of symptoms, cognitive and social functioning. Each of these assessments will take about 3 hours. The assessments will be done approximately 4-5 months apart. To find out more about this study, please call Piper Meyer at (919) 843-5262 or email her at psmeyer@email.unc.edu.

“Earn up to \$200.00 and the chance to get free therapy.”



National Alliance on Mental Illness

*Join or donate
to NAMI-Orange
County today!*

Membership dues are \$35.00 for the calendar year (January-December). "Open Door" membership (\$5.00) is available for those with limited incomes. Your dues give you membership and newsletters from local, state and national NAMI organizations. Your additional donations are used to fund local programs. Make check payable to NAMI Orange County. Mail to NAMI Orange County, PO Box 4201, Chapel Hill, NC 27515-4201

Thank you for your support!

NAME _____ PHONE: _____ EMAIL _____

MAILING ADDRESS _____

___ Annual membership (\$35.00 regular or \$5.00 open door)

___ Donation (tax deductible)

___ Please remove my name from your mailing list

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**Open Your Mind:
Mental Illnesses are
Brain Disorders**