

JANUARY/FEBRUARY NEWSLETTER

of NAMI - Alger / Marquette

Our affiliate Website = www.namiam.org (and it links to other NAMI sites)

**NAMI members share their knowledge and experiences,
but this is not to be considered the same as professional advice or treatment.
Appropriate professionals should be consulted as needed.**

CALENDAR

JANUARY

Support Group - Monday, January 11th - 7pm - 9pm - The Commons Conference Room, 129 West Baraga

Educational Meeting - Monday, January 25th - 7pm - 9pm The Commons Conference Room, 129 West Baraga
MGH Psychiatrist, Dr. Terry Meden will discuss bi-polar disorder, a special interest
of his, and other topics of interest to NAMI
MGH Recipient Rights Advocate, William Christensen will also be with us this month or next.

PBS Channel 13 Media Meet - Mental Health Update - Saturday/Sunday, January 16th-17th
Discussion of state of services, insurance, health care reform and more

Marquette General Hospital Mental Health Advisory Board Meeting - January 20th - 10:30 am

Executive Committee Meeting - tentatively scheduled for Thursday, January 21st
5 -6:30 PM - The Non-Profit Commons Conference Room

Connections Support Group for Consumers
Thursdays 4 -5:30 PM at the Brantley Center, 401 West Baraga, Marquette
for more information call 226-1077

FEBRUARY

Support Group - Monday, February 8th - 7pm - 9pm - The Commons Conference Room, 129 West Baraga

Educational Meeting - Monday February 22nd - 7pm - 9pm The Commons Conference Room, 129 West Baraga
The highly regarded PBS Show "Minds on the Edge" will be viewed and discussed.

Executive Committee Meeting - tentatively scheduled for Thursday, February 18th

Connections Support Group for Consumers
Thursdays 4 -5:30 PM at the Brantley Center, 401 West Baraga, Marquette
for more information call 226-1077

Pathways Board Meeting - Wednesday, February 3rd - 6 pm at Pathways Conference Room

MARCH

Families in Action - Eight Week Family Education Series to begin

Support Group - Monday, March 8th - 7pm - 9pm - The Commons Conference Room, 129 West Baraga

Educational Meeting - Monday March 29th - 7pm - 9pm The Commons Conference Room, 129 West Baraga

OTHER DATES TO MARK ON YOUR CALENDAR

April 24 -25 - State Conference in Grand Rapids
June 30 - July 2 - National Convention in Washington DC

NOTES FROM YOUR CHAIRPERSON

New years offer opportunities for new beginnings but for NAMI-Alger/Marquette 2010 would seem to be a year for holding steady and continuing to work on activities and projects already underway. We've seen success in so many arenas and we know that maintaining such programs as Families in Action, IOOV, Support Group and Educational meetings is a challenge for our membership. So many give so much time and energy to our organization, all the while dealing with the stresses and strains of everyday living, and of self and family maintenance. And so I hope that our resolve can be focussed on doing what we do best already and working to enhance or expand programs that will help us deal with these tough economic times and the ever-changing (often declining) provision of resources to those with mental illness.

I also hope that we can draw new folks onto our Board and into such responsibilities as education meeting facilitator, group facilitator, Newsletter preparer and others. We have a WONDERFUL team of Board members. Many have served in their positions for years and years and seem willing to continue participation in decision-making and implementation of our programs. But I believe that any organization benefits when new blood jumps onboard and there is some shuffling of responsibility. Burnout is a common phrase, but I do not see burnout in our membership. All seem resolved to do what needs to be done to sustain our organization and carry out our mission of Support, Education, Advocacy and the reduction of Stigma associated with mental illness. Still I do know that some of our workers would like to step back from their current positions for a year or two or to fill a new role within the organization.

So please take time in the early days of this new year and think about what role you would like to fill in NAMI-Alger/Marquette. Let any of the current Board members know of your interest and the amount of time you feel you might be able to contribute. If you are not currently a NAMI member, do join. Remember there is our "Open-Door" membership for \$3 and it brings all the benefits to you. If you are a member but haven't be able to actively participate in recent months, do come to a group or education meeting and/or sit in at a Board meeting to get the feel of how we operate and how your time and talents might be best utilized. We work hard, but we have fun and have enjoyed getting to know one another over the years.

We are coming up on 25 years of NAMI-Alger/Marquette Activity in the Community.....so

Let's make 2010 the most fulfilling year yet!

HOW CAN WE ADVOCATE FOR PERSONS WITH MENTAL ILLNESS & THEIR FAMILIES?

Join an advocacy group like NAMI-Alger/Marquette

Volunteer some of your time to such a group or other providers
of support such as Room at the Inn

Keep educated and up-to-date on mental illness and help others to learn about the issues

Become a Stigma Buster - See NAMI website to sign up - It's easy!

Make donations to advocacy groups like NAMI or NARSAD.

Write your Senator Prusi and Representative Lindberg and tell them how you feel about mental health issues coming before the legislature. (See Advocacy discussion below)

ACTIVITIES UPDATE

Meetings

January 25th's Education meeting - We have an opportunity to meet Dr. Terry Meden, MGH psychiatrist who has a particular interest in bipolar disorder. He will talk about this and other subjects of interest to our membership. MGH's Recipient Rights Advocate, William Christensen, may also attend.

February 22nd's Education meeting - We will view the hour-long PBS show "Minds on Edge" and discuss some of the issues raised. This is a very thought-provoking program and a lively discussion can be expected.

Members are encouraged to make suggestions to the Board regarding persons or topics they'd like to have for education meetings!

Families in Action tentatively planned for Spring

Interest has been expressed on our offering our ten-week education program.

We need at least five family units and 8-10 people to justify staff involvement.

FIA has proved to be one of the components of our programming that is most helpful to members and non-members who are coping with mental illness issues.

Please check in with Jane (226-8551) or Louise (225-4412) for information and/or to indicate your interest.

If you know non-members who might benefit from FIA, please encourage them to call.

In Our Own Voice (IOOV)

. Our IOOV program is receiving requests for scheduling. Our budget allows for 1-2 presentations per month and our trained presentors are pleased to have the opportunities. If you have a group to suggest, please call Jane (226-8551) or Niki (228-3378) and leave a message identifying a contact person if you know one.

NAMI State Conference - April 24 - 25th in Grand Rapids

We are hoping to be well-represented at the Conference. A wonderful array of presentations is planned.

Members may attend by making their own arrangements (registration and lodging) or they can let Board members know of their interest as we hope to offer some transportation coverage and help with other arrangements.

Fundraising

NAMI received a substantial donation in honor of Laurel Kniskern's retirement from Pathways. She had suggested that in lieu of retirement gifts, she would be honored to have donations made to our organization.

We give thanks to Laurel and her Pathways friends!

Once again thanks are due to all those who contributed to our NAMI-Walk efforts in September and our Community Days fundraiser in November.

Individuals contributed time and money resulting in a substantial addition to our treasury. This will allow us to offer IOOV to the community (paying our well-trained presenters), buy books for the library and NMU's counseling center, send the Newsletter to non-members who may have an interest in our cause, and help support participation in conferences, workshops and trainings by our members.

We are grateful to all, but especially to Louise, Lucy, and Pathways staff for their support for both projects and to Mary Lou and Sandy for organizing, once again, our participation in Community Days.

ADVOCACY

WHY WE MUST ADVOCATE!!

The need for NAMI members and supporters to advocate for services has never been greater.

In Michigan and in the Upper Peninsula Mental Health Centers' funds to provide services to persons with mental illness and their families have been cut and the cuts will continue until the economy improves.

The Pathways Board is discussing how it may need to reorganize the structure of the agency to fit changing responsibilities. With general funds decreasing, services to those with mental illness who are not on Medicaid are extremely hard to access and most general fund clients have been discharged from Pathways services.

The waiting list for qualified applicants grows. There is still not insurance parity for mental health services in Michigan so even those with private insurers are not always able to get help they need.

Efforts are being made to offer some of these services in the private sector and by non-profit social service agencies, but there is still an great lack of needed services.

NAMI's role as a support and education and advocacy system has never been greater.

We are grateful that more and more people and agencies are seeking our input and endeavoring to network with us on our common mission!

WHY WE MUST ADVOCATE!!!

Marquette General Hospital Strategic Planning for Mental Health and Substance Abuse Services

NAMI-Alger/Marquette was invited to participate in a survey of stakeholders to assist MGH staff in developing a strategic plan for Behavioral Health and Substance Abuse services.

Members met to discuss MGH's strengths and weaknesses and our chairperson shared our comments with MGH.

Michigan Association of Community Mental Health Boards Strategic Planning

NAMI-Michigan's Executive Director was invited to share NAMI's concerns with MACMHB as it worked on its Strategic Plan. All affiliates were asked to contribute ideas.

We received the following summary from Sherri Solomon, our Executive Director.

The top three priorities were mentioned in some manner by all who responded. These items have been on the radar of NAMI Michigan. The 4th item was mentioned one each by two additional affiliates and will be brought forward tomorrow (January 8th) and also to our internal public policy committee. Please advise additions or alternate roles for NAMI Michigan or MACCMHB. Thank you for your quick response and please consider a seat on NAMI Michigan's public policy committee. We need your expertise and interest.

1. **Funding:** There is insufficient funding to meet the needs of Michigan's persons with mental illness (general fund/Medicaid eligibility and match/ access to the best and most appropriate medications/parity) insufficient funding is also present for those in need of substance abuse treatment services.
 - a. MACCMHB should define data capture and reporting standards to establish the gap between service needs and service availability The gap is not apparent to the general public nor the legislature and thus the need for funding is not defined.
 - b. NAMI will continue to educate members about this issue and how to advocate for change and continue a call to action with legislators and the general public. NAMI will join with other groups to advocate for adequate funding .

2. **Accountability and Equity:** Defects and failures of the system are not adequately identified and root causes not determined. Services are not consistently provided based on need and there is a lack of consistency across the State in service delivery, admission and discharge criteria and the impact of service discontinuation.
 - a. MACCMHB should develop standards for reporting that reveal problems (e.g. arrests, deaths, hospitalizations, staff turnover, incident reports, and ORR complaints etc.) and requirements for investigation and reporting or root cause analysis that goes beyond blaming the client or direct care staff. The system will not get better if it continues to avoid facing the problems. Work to revamp the recipient rights regulations to provide for external review. Promote a culture that is accountable and doesn't just say "we're doing the best we can with what we have---promote aggressive defense for improved funding. Promote and assure that programs that are felt to be best practice and important are provided consistently across the State. Continue vigorous advocacy efforts on behalf of individuals whose services have been discontinued due to lack of funding and join in with other groups to bring change via legislative or legal action (these last items would also fit with #1 above). MACCMHB should define consistent specifications for services and criteria for access to services that reflects severity of disability, sustained recovery and overall availability of funding.
 - b. See #1 above in addition NAMI will partner with others to collaborate on legislation that will promote accountability and equity.

3. **Criminalization of individuals with mental illness:** Too many people with mental illness are in the criminal justice system

- a. MACCMHB should establish standards for intervention and for CMH services during and after incarceration.
 - b. NAMI will work to change the involuntary treatment laws so that people receive treatment before they engage in homicidal, suicidal or criminal behavior.
4. Also mentioned by one affiliate each was 1) the **need for jobs especially those that do not jeopardize disability benefits** –suggest policy that provides incentives to employers to hire those with mental illness or other disabilities and/or grants to NAMI affiliates to provide 2)other barriers to service **including transportation**

NEWS RELEASE

December 2, 2009

Contact: Joseph Zyble, 906 228-3613

MARQUETTE—A new clinic will soon open its doors to offer primary health care, dental and behavioral health services for residents of Marquette and Alger counties. The new Marquette Alger Health Center, located at 700 W. Washington St. in downtown Marquette, will specialize in providing services to the uninsured and underinsured, and will also offer a convenient location for anyone with health insurance in need of care.

“The Marquette Alger Health Center is not just another doctor’s office. We’re a community health center. We serve everyone, regardless of insurance status. We specialize in providing care to people who might otherwise slip through the cracks.” said Sandy Wilson, board chairperson of the U.P. Association of Rural Health Services, Inc. (UPARHS). The association has organized and administered Federally Qualified Health Centers in the Upper Peninsula for over two decades.

The Marquette Alger Health Center will operate under the auspices of UPARHS as it works toward completing the process of becoming a Federally Qualified Health Center. As such it will be supported by government and community grants, co-payments from patients, insurance reimbursements from those who have health insurance, and donations. In the meantime, the clinic is being launched with UPARHS’s existing funds.

While there are hospitals and other health care options in the region, Gov. Jennifer Granholm recently applied for a federal exemption to include Marquette among those designated as Medically Underserved Populations; Alger County has received a similar designation as a Medically Underserved Area.

“When budget issues forced the health department to close its dental clinic at Sawyer, we stepped in to help. Based on what we’ve witnessed at the clinic in Sawyer, there are many, many people in the region who are in need of care, and not just dental care,” said Joseph Zyble, communications manager for the U.P. Association of Rural Health Services, Inc. “The degradation of the economy in recent years is putting more of our residents at risk. Our board, which by federal guidelines consists of members who are patients at our health centers, recognized that there is a growing population of uninsured or underinsured people in this region who need health care services. The governor’s action supports this.”

“We all know relatives or friends who have lost their job and their health coverage; it’s frightening,” said Ed Bogart, a member of the UPARHS Board. “Our clinics can help these folks. They can get services on a sliding fee that’s based on family size and income. It’s not a free clinic, but the co-payments are minimal. It makes getting health services possible for just about anybody.”

Studies have demonstrated that at times even those with health insurance sometimes do not receive proper health treatment due to lack of convenient provider locations or other factors that limit access.

“This clinic is located on the main artery that runs through the center of Marquette; we’re in a very visible, accessible location for people. It will be great health care option for those who need the convenience,” Wilson said.

In accordance with guidelines for establishing Federally Qualified Health Centers, the new clinic will also be adding behavioral health services, a feature that can be especially important during economic downturns.

“Unemployment can lead to depression; it’s natural. And we know that people who suffer depression also tend to get sick easier and take longer to recover. We focus on taking care of the whole person and behavioral health services will be an important component of the clinic,” Zyble said.

Over the years, a number of studies have demonstrated the positive outcomes of community health centers. Some of these include:

- _ Greatly improved access to basic care and preventative services to vulnerable populations.
- _ Reduced patient care costs resulting in as much as \$24 billion in nationwide annual savings, which includes a \$6.7 billion in savings to the federal share of the Medicaid program.
- _ Reduced health disparities between groups based on socio-economic factors.
- _ Reduction of infant mortality rates by 10 percent, and lowered rates of low birth weight.
- _ Create economic growth in communities they serve by creating jobs. In 2008, Michigan community health centers had a positive economic income on the state of \$323,800,000.

“As a community health center we often serve those who would otherwise not get the care they need, but we’re here for anyone who needs care. We accept Medicaid, Medicare and most insurances. We look forward to collaborating with other health care organizations in Marquette and Alger counties to get everyone the health care they need,” Zyble said.

The Marquette Alger Health Center is owned and operated by the U.P. Association of Rural Health Services, Inc. The association also has clinics in Crystal Falls, Engadine, Ewen, Gwinn (Sawyer), Menominee and Spalding. More information will be forthcoming regarding the opening of the clinic. For more information about the U.P. Association of Rural Health Services visit www.upruralhealth.org.

These don't seem to be New Year's Resolutions, but they could be :-)

from THE STOMP - sponsored by Community Network Services - www.cnsantistigmaprogram.org

Written By Regina Brett, 90 years old, of The Plain Dealer, Cleveland, Ohio.

"To celebrate growing older, I once wrote the 45 lessons life taught me. It is the most-requested column I've ever written. My odometer rolled over to 90 in August, so here is the column once more:"

1. Life isn't fair, but it's still good.
2. When in doubt, just take the next small step.
3. Life is too short to waste time hating anyone.
4. Your job won't take care of you when you are sick. Your friends and parents will. Stay in touch.
5. Pay off your credit cards every month.
6. You don't have to win every argument. Agree to disagree.
7. Cry with someone. It's more healing than crying alone.
8. It's OK to get angry with God.. He can take it.
9. Save for retirement starting with your first paycheck.
10. When it comes to chocolate, resistance is futile.
11. It's OK to let your children see you cry.
12. Don't compare your life to others. You have no idea what their journey is all about.
13. If a relationship has to be a secret, you shouldn't be in it.
14. Everything can change in the blink of an eye. But don't worry; God never blinks.
15. Take a deep breath. It calms the mind.
16. Get rid of anything that isn't useful, beautiful or joyful.
17. Whatever doesn't kill you really does make you stronger.
18. It's never too late to have a happy childhood. But the second one is up to you and no one else.
19. When it comes to going after what you love in life, don't take no for an answer.

20. Burn the candles, use the nice sheets, wear the fancy lingerie. Don't save it for a special occasion. Today is special.
21. Over prepare, then go with the flow
22. Be eccentric now. Don't wait for old age to wear purple.
23. No one is in charge of your happiness but you.
24. Frame every so-called disaster with these words "In five years, will this matter?".
25. Always choose life.
26. Forgive everyone everything.
27. What other people think of you is none of your business.
28. Time heals almost everything.. Give time, time.
29. However good or bad a situation is, it will change.
30. Don't take yourself so seriously. No one else does.
31. Believe in miracles.
32. God loves you because of who God is, not because of anything you did or didn't do.
33. Don't audit life. Show up and make the most of it now.
34. Growing old beats the alternative -- dying young.
35. Your children get only one childhood.
36. All that truly matters in the end is that you loved.
37. Get outside every day. Miracles are waiting everywhere.
38. If we all threw our problems in a pile and saw everyone else's, we'd grab ours back.
39. Envy is a waste of time. You already have all you need.
40. The best is yet to come.
41. No matter how you feel, get up, dress up and show up.
42. Yield.
Life isn't tied with a bow, but it's still a gift.

Thank you for your support of the Stomp Out Stigma program. We hope that you have gained valuable information that can help in erasing stigma and look forward to seeing you at one of our upcoming events. If you have any comments or questions about The STOMP!, please contact us at lfarwell@cnsmi.org