



NAMI News

The County's Voice on Mental Illness 10730 Connecticut Avenue, Kensington, MD 20895



December 2002

Volume 24, Issue 11

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Wayne Fenton, M.D., Acting Deputy Director, NIMH, Addresses NAMI Meeting

Dr. Wayne Fenton, widely known clinician and researcher and longtime friend of NAMI, spoke at the November education meeting. Dr. Fenton always has not only a lot to say about recent research and treatment methods, but he speaks sensitively to the hearts and minds of family members. He has long had the reputation of being a caring psychiatrist and it is to the credit of the National Institute on Mental Health (NIMH) that he was added to the research team to provide the clinical and individual patient insights needed to develop meaningful and effective treatment programs.

Dr. Fenton opened his presentation with a brief overview of the mission of NIMH, which is, basically, to reduce the burden of mental illness through research on mind, brain and behavior. Dr. Fenton strongly urges NAMI to communicate with the NIMH website so it may hear about what's actually happening in local communities' experiences with their mental health systems.

Dr. Fenton went on to discuss some of the scientific activities regarding research about schizophrenia: the developmental aspects, known stressors, the genetics. The latter carries

(Continued on page 5)

**Please
Designate
NAMI MC
#9273**



United Way
Campaign Participant

General Education Meeting Thursday, December 12, 2002

Panel Discussion: Supported Employment Programs in Montgomery County

Participants will include: Judith Sitkin, MCHHS, Moderator; Larry Abramson, St. Luke's; and representatives from Jobs Unlimited and the Maryland Dept. of Rehabilitation Services (DORS).

A question and answer period will follow presentations.

Social Hour: 7:30 pm, Program: 8:00 p.m.
Cedar Lane Unitarian Church, 9601 Cedar Lane, Bethesda

The printing of the October newsletter has been donated by
Sy and Susan Miller

who wish everyone "Peace on Earth, Goodwill to All"

If you value our NAMI News and would like to help our cause by donating an issue, we are eager to discuss this with you. Please call Susan at 301-299-8956 or Leah at 301-949-5852.

December Events

- **Dec 3**—Board of Directors Meeting, 7:15 pm, NAMI Office. Executive Committee 6:15 p.m.
- **Dec 10**—Child & Adolescent Family Support Group, 7 pm, NAMI Office
- **Dec 11**—Family Support Group, 2:30 pm, Rockville Unitarian Church 501 Mannakee St., Rockville
- **Dec 12**—General Education Meeting, 7:30 pm, Cedar Lane Unitarian Church (see page 1 for details).
- **Dec 17**—Spanish Support Group, 6:30 pm, Multicultural Center, 8818 Georgia Ave., Silver Spring
- **Dec 17**—Family Support Group, 7 pm, NAMI Office
- **Dec 20**—Spouse Support Group, 7 pm, NAMI Office

**THE NAMI OFFICE WILL BE
CLOSED**

NAMI Support Groups

FAMILY SUPPORT For families and friends of anyone experiencing a mental illness.

2nd Wednesday of each month:

Time: 2:30-4 p.m.

Location: Unitarian Universalist Church, 501 Mannakee St, Rock-

Contact: Ursula 301-384-8100

4th Tuesday of each month (THIS MONTH, 3rd TUESDAY!)

Time: 7 p.m.

Location: NAMI office

Contact: Ann 301-774-1960

CHILD & ADOLESCENT FAMILY SUPPORT - For families and friends of children and adolescents experiencing a mental illness.

Date/Time: 2nd Tuesday of each month, 7:00—8:30 p.m.

Location: NAMI Office

Contact: Brenda 301-949-5852

FAMILY SUPPORT IN SPANISH- For Spanish-speaking families and friends of anyone experiencing a mental illness.

Date/Time: 3rd Tuesday of each month, 6:30 - 8 p.m.

Location: Multicultural Center, 8818 Georgia Avenue, Silver Spring (near Ballard St)

Contact: Eric or Steve 301-949-5852

SPOUSE SUPPORT - For spouses of persons experiencing a mental illness.

Date/Time: Group meets one Friday each month, 7 p.m.

Location: NAMI office

Contact: Bill 202-482-1287



ville

Other Support Groups

For Consumers:

On Our Own of Montgomery County has many activities and sharing groups for consumers. Call 240-683-5555.

Schizophrenia

Thursdays 6:30-7:30 p.m. Hughes United Methodist Church Wheaton - Call Linda 301-571-7386

Schizophrenia/Schizoaffective

Thursdays 6:30-8 p.m., Wildwood Baptist Church, 10200 Old Georgetown Rd, Bethesda. Contact: Richard 301-977-3507

Depression/Bipolar/Schizoaffective

Young Adults (ages 18-30), 1st and 3rd Wednesday of each month at Georgetown University. Call Emma Them-bani at 202-687-6355, Mature Adults, 2nd and 4th Wednesday of each month at Georgetown University. Call Barbara Wolff at 202-687-8804

For additional groups, call DRADA at 202-955-5800

OCD

2nd and 4th Tuesdays, 7:30 pm, 2424 Reedie Dr., Wheaton, Rm. 223. For information call Bruce 301-497-1589

For Families and Friends:

Depression/Bipolar/Schizoaffective

Call DRADA for groups in Mont. Co. 202-955-5800

OCD:

Families meet in area homes every 2 months. For information call Nancy at 301-340-1452.

All Disorders:

Bauer Drive Rec. Ctr. in Rockville Every Thursday (except the 2nd Thursday of the month)

For information call Susan at 301-299-8956

Suicide Related Support Groups

Yellow Ribbon Suicide Prevention Program - Call Mary McCausland 301-530-4761.

Seasons, Cedar Lane Unitarian Ch. 2nd Weds of each month. Call Corrine Melton 301-460-4677 or



**An offer
we can't
refuse!**

NAMI member Richard (Dick) Hyde is a local real estate agent. He has made a generous offer to donate 20% of his commission to NAMI MC from any sale that arises from a referral out of the NAMI membership.

If you are planning to buy or sell a home or know of someone who is, please call Dick Hyde at 301-258-9832 or Esther Kravitz at the NAMI office.



NEW SIBLING SUPPORT GROUP

IF YOU ARE AN ADULT SIBLING OF A PERSON WITH A MENTAL ILLNESS
PLEASE JOIN US FOR SUPPORT

THIRD TUESDAY OF THE MONTH
STARTING ON JANUARY 21ST

AT THE NAMI OFFICE: 10730 CONNECTICUT AVENUE
(ENTER THROUGH THE DOOR FACING SAVANNAH'S RESTAURANT)
CALL NICOLE NADEAU AT 301-949-5852 FOR INFORMATION



Welcome new members:

Elaine Barber
Stella Green



Acknowledgements

NAMI MC gratefully acknowledges
gifts received in October 2002

In honor of Police Chief Charles Moose by
Debbi Trester
Gary and Margy Lawrence

**In honor of the engagement of Alan and Peggy
Kalter by**
by Gary and Margy Lawrence

In memory of Steve Nachman by
by Barbara Weitz

In memory of John Winningham by
Helen Monogue
Pamela Szybel

In memory of Lester Sherman by
Martin Adler, M.D.
Mary Stephenson

**In honor of the cast and crew of "Love and An-
ger" at the Round House Theatre in Bethesda by**
Thembi Duncan and Timothy Hargrove
Nancy Robinette
Sarah Marshall

Other Contributors:
Mrs. Florence Vuitch
Carolyn Miele

Announcements

NAMI MC is seeking people with knowledge of the Latino community.

NAMI would like to reach out to the Latino community and offer more services for Spanish speakers. If you have ideas or would like to help NAMI in this process, please call Nicole Nadeau at 301-949-5852.

**Housing Unlimited is seeking a volunteer driver for
furniture pickups**, two to three times per month. Furni-
ture is picked up from donors in Montgomery County.
Volunteer must have an excellent driving record and be
comfortable driving a U-Haul truck. To apply call Nicole
at 301-230-0154 or housingunlimited@yahoo.com.

NAMI MD is seeking a part-time (20 hour/week) Co- ordinator for the In Our Own Voice: Living With Mental Illness (IOOV) Educational Program.

Candidates must be skilled in public speaking, meeting management activity, and Word and Excel Software applications. Duties include marketing the IOOV Program statewide, coordinating schedule of presentations, liaison with NAMI County Affiliates. Must have transportation and be available to work nights and weekends. Start date- January 2, 2003. EOE

Send cover letter and resume to:
NAMI MD, 711 West 40th Street, Suite 451, Baltimore, MD 21211,
fax: 410-467-7195, email amimd@aol.com

Advocacy News

Maryland Advance Directives/Health Care Agents: Problems and Advantages

As the article in last month's newsletter pointed out, Advance Directives and the Appointment of Health Care Agents can be extremely useful tools to promote autonomy, enhance communication and protect individuals from treatments that have been ineffective or had harmful adverse side effects. It is especially useful for those consumers who have some insight into their illness and what treatments have helped them.

The Advance Directive and appointment of a Health Care Agent are much less useful for consumers whose brain disorder includes the symptom of anosognosia, or lack of insight. If the consumer is not able to understand that he has a mental illness, then he may see no reason for any treatment. Such a consumer may fill out an Advance Directive stating he never wants any mental health treatment, making it more difficult for mental health professionals to help him, even when he becomes psychotic and homeless.

The Advance Directive and appointment of a Health Care Agent in Maryland may also fail consumers when they most need help, even if they generally have good insight. Consumers can revoke the Health Care Agent authorization at any time, even if they are out of touch with reality. If during a relapse, the consumer becomes paranoid of the Health Care Agent they normally trust, they may forbid providers to discuss treatment with them, just when they most need the Agent's help.

Under Maryland law neither a

Health Care Agent nor a guardian have authority to sign for voluntary or involuntary hospital admission for psychiatric treatment, regardless of what is stated in the Advance Directive.

Despite these problems, appointment of a Health Care Agent, especially, can be very helpful. A Health Care Agent can request copies of discharge reports and other records and send copies to subsequent providers to assure continuation of care. Health Care Agents can also sign releases for providers to talk to each other and others as appropriate. In addition Health Care Agents can talk to insurance companies to help straighten out bills, authorizations etc. Finally, as Health Care Agent, you can talk to crisis workers and emergency room staff during times of crisis or to try and locate the missing consumer. (Again, unless the consumer forbids it.)

It should be remembered that even if you are not designated as a consumer's Health Care Agent, as a non-treating person, you always have the right to send oral or written information to a health care provider. Under the law, the provider cannot divulge any information about their client without the client's permission, including the fact that they are in the hospital or treating them (the exceptions are to a guardian, or to warn someone that they are in danger) However the provider may always receive information. They are often grateful for such assistance, including information on past history, recent events, & past medications. When you encounter a provider who is unwilling to listen, it often helps to dis-

cuss this with their superior and remind them it is not against the law for them to receive information.

NAMI MC has available sample forms for appointment of Health Care Agent and for an Advance Directive, in Maryland. If you would like one, call the office at 301-949-5852 and request a copy of the booklet called Maryland's Public Mental Health System, A Resource Guide for Consumers and Families. This booklet was developed as a joint effort of NAMI MD and On Our Own of Maryland and includes much other information as well.

ACTION ALERT: **MENTAL HEALTH** **INSURANCE PARITY**

The Parity Bill is still alive and we need to push for passage in 2002 before Congress adjourns in December. Contact your Congressional Representative and urge support for passage of mental illness parity during the post-election "lame-duck" session. It is especially important that your House member be urged to directly contact Speaker of the House Dennis Hastert (R-IL) in support of action on parity during the "lame duck" session.

Contact Information: E-mails: All members of Congress can be reached at www.congress.org.

Congresswoman Connie Morella (District 8) Phone: (202) 225-5341 Fax: 202-225-1389. Address: 2228 Rayburn House Office Bldg., Washington, D.C. 20515-2008

Congressman Albert Wynn (District 4) Phone: (202) 225-8699 Fax: 202-225-8714. Address: 407 Cannon House Office Building, Washington, D.C. 20515

Thank You to Blair Ewing

As Councilmember Blair Ewing leaves the County Council, NAMI MC would like to express our deep gratitude for all of his efforts on behalf of people with serious mental illness. Mr. Ewing served as the chair of the Health and Human Services Committee of the County Council, where he was the driving force behind county government initiatives for the improvement of mental health services.

His door was always open to NAMI MC and other mental health advocates. Mr. Ewing and his staff, especially Matt Nisenoff and Victoria Rose, helped educate our fledgling advocacy committee about

how to advocate with the county council. Working together we were able to convince the County Council to appropriate funds for increased hours for the Mobile Crisis Team and Men's Emergency Shelter as well as increased case management for the homeless.

Mr. Ewing fought to save Chestnut Lodge Hospital and then successfully led the effort to provide County funds to keep open most of the remaining private mental health clinics in Montgomery County. Perhaps his most far reaching accomplishment was the introduction of the council resolution which created an independent Blue Ribbon Task Force on

Mental Health. The Task Force report with system-wide recommendations has stimulated significant ongoing planning and improvements in the County mental health system.

Mr. Ewing's voice on the County Council will be greatly missed by the entire mental health community. However, he has indicated that he will continue to advocate on behalf of mental health issues. NAMI MC thanks him for all of his past leadership, and we look forward to continuing to work together on advocacy for people with serious mental illness.

Wayne Fenton (continued)

a large part of the vulnerability and risk factors for schizophrenia. Like diabetes and hypertension, in which multiple genes are involved, schizophrenia is a complex disease. It is most difficult to hone in on these genes, for they have subtle effects on one another. In looking at how dopamine and enzymes are involved, researchers employ two approaches to studying genes: environmental, such as low birthrate, influenza during pregnancy, starvation during pregnancy, urban birth; and the natural history of the schizophrenia, such as onset ages.

Early intervention, Dr. Fenton emphasizes, is of vital importance. Worldwide, there is an average one- to two-year duration of untreated psychosis! He feels young people aren't taught enough about mental illness - schizophrenia, in particular - and that the U.S. should take more of a lead in doing that here in the States.

Dr. Fenton reminds us frequently that schizophrenia differs, sometimes greatly, from person to person. Negative symptoms and cognitive deficits are directly related to the degree of disability a person experiences - they are the major determinants of disability. It is now known that there is a 10-year reduction in the lifespan of a person suffering from schizophrenia - although patients are

better off now than they were in, say, the 1930's and 1940's.

Researchwise, we are hitting a ceiling with what medicines can do: medicines are all focusing on the same molecular entity; we're still looking at the same targets (limiting new drug development); and we're bound by DSM [Diagnostic & Statistical Manual of Mental Disorders] definitions. We need to partner government with industry to develop new medications, Fenton declares, and he feels his recently joining the NIMH will help speed this happening.

Clinically, treatment targets are: delusions and hallucinations, disorganization, negative symptoms and cognitive impairment. We need to develop drugs that target individual components of the illness; individualized target treatment is the treatment of the future. We need to translate molecular knowledge to clinical treatment.

Medications coming on the scene in the next 12 months include: Aripiprazole, which is a dopamine leveler comparable to Haldol and Risperdol and is has no weight gain feature; long-acting Risperdol, which lasts a few weeks and "doesn't hurt the patient."

Dr. Fenton then listed his "principles of

clinical reasoning."

1. Change just one thing at a time;
2. In advance, select what the target symptom is for treatment changes;
3. Try a new drug at an adequate dose and for an adequate time period;
4. Don't fiddle with medication during a stressful life event;
5. Strive for simplicity;
6. Try to time medication so the side effects coincide with sleeping hours;
7. Don't rock the boat when the cost of relapse is high;
8. Balance "never give up hope" with "better is the enemy of good."

And, lastly, Dr. Fenton commented about the fragmentation he sees in the advocacy community. Regarding the brain disease factor - we should include "and recovery is possible" when discussing this. The coercion issue should be addressed - we need to face the reality that many are bitter - present it as a last resort that specifically respects dignity and accesses procedural justice. We need to find a common ground between outpatient commitment and civil commitment laws. And consider the recovery model, in which there is a sharing of power between doctor and patient.

Family to Family

We are now enrolling for 12-week classes beginning in January and March. To register or for more information, call Nicole Nadeau at 301-949-5852

Save the Date!



December 2-3—TARA Research to Treatment Conference: New Hope for Borderline Personality Disorder.

Holiday Inn Select, 8120 Wisconsin Avenue, Bethesda. For information call Valerie Porr at TARA: 1-888-4TARA-APD.

December 7—Future Care of Relatives with Major Mental Illness

If you are concerned about what will happen to your relative with mental illness when you are no longer able to care for him/her, this workshop is for you. 10 am to 3 pm at the Unitarian Universalist Church of Rockville. For more information, call Agnes Hatfield at 301-925-7373.

December 13—Navigating the Criminal Justice System

The Howard County Mental Health Authority is sponsoring a mental health focused tour through the legal process from arrest to release from incarceration. Participants in this seminar will learn the legal terms and procedures, the services available to people with mental illness, and what you can do to assist individuals charged with a crime. 9am-1pm, Howard County Detention, 7301 Waterloo Road, Jessup, Maryland 21042 For more information, call 410-313-7350

January 10-12, 2003 — Family-to-Family Teacher Training

This training will be held in Arlington, VA. If you have taken the Family to Family course and you are interested in becoming a teacher, contact Nicole Nadeau at 301-949-5852.

EMERGENCY ROOM CRISIS— YOUR HELP NEEDED

The state has reduced the number of public and private psychiatric hospital beds to such an extent that there are now an insufficient number of beds to serve those in crisis. Patients who have been certified by emergency room (ER) doctors for involuntary admission are sometimes being held in ER's for several days, and in one case for 30 days. These are patients that present a danger to themselves or others and it is the state's responsibility to find a hospital bed for them within 30 hours if the ER cannot.

If you or someone you know has been taken to an ER for involuntary psychiatric evaluation and held in an ER for over 30 hours, please contact Evelyn at 301-340-0736. Your story is vital in our advocacy to correct this crisis. Confidentiality can be maintained.

Essays wanted

Guidelines For A Different Journey: Personal Stories for Parents by Adults with Disabilities is a new book that Stan Klein and John Kemp are co-editing. For this book, adults who have grown up with disabilities and/or health care needs are invited to write short essays for parents of children with disabilities and/or health care needs. In their essays, authors are asked to write an essay that they wish their own parents had read or been told while they were growing up.

Here are specific guidelines for essays:

Please write an essay of about 1500 words, or less. Add a biography of about 150 words, or less, that would follow the essay in the book. At the end of the essay, please write your mailing address, telephone number, fax number, and Email.

Please submit your essay as an attachment in Microsoft Word to an Email or paste your essay into the body of your Email. Send Email to: stan@disabilitiesbooks.com

If you submit your essay by regular mail, please double space the text. If at all possible, please also submit the essay on a disk as well. Please label each page of your printed essay and the disk with your name and address. Please send the printed copy and disc to:

Stanley D. Klein, Ph.D., DisABILITIESBOOKS, Inc., P.O. Box 470715, Brookline, MA 02447-0715.

Deadline: all essays are to be received by February 15, 2003. Authors of essays accepted for inclusion in the book will receive \$125 for the right to include their essay.

Child and Adolescent News

ATTENTION DEFICIT DISORDER IN ADULTS

- From the Harvard Mental Health Letter, November 2002

“Attention-deficit/hyperactivity disorder (ADHD) was not recognized until recently as an adult disorder, probably because adults usually learn how to suppress the most obvious and troublesome forms of hyperactivity and intrusiveness. But, it is now becoming clear many don’t outgrow it; for an estimated 30%-50% it’s a lifelong disorder.

“ADHD is most likely to persist when a person has an accompanying mood disorder or a family history of ADHD. The main change that occurs with age is the ratio of males to females: nearly 10 to 1 in childhood, only 2 to 1 in adulthood. The reasons are still mysterious. One possibility is that the disorder is more persistent in women, but most experts doubt that. Instead, they suspect that the diagnosis is often missed in young girls because they are less likely than boys to be hyperactive and impulsive, and their quiet inattentiveness is not noticed or taken seriously enough.

“Adults with ADHD are disorganized and easily bored. They act without thinking and talk without listening. They procrastinate, make careless mistakes, and abandon unfinished projects. They’re constantly late for appointments and too impatient to sit through meetings or stand in line. They tune out conversations or interrupt others, blurting out whatever is on their minds. They may accumulate debts and succumb to get-rich-quick schemes. They can be reckless and disaster-prone when driving cars or conducting romances. They often fail to find or keep jobs worthy of their talents. They can be exasperating husbands and wives and problem

parents, especially with a child who also has ADHD.

“Some of the symptoms of ADHD can occur as a result of stress, anxiety and depression, or as persistent traits of personality disorders (especially borderline and antisocial personality). In fact, ADHD often overlaps with one of these disorders. About 20% of children with ADHD could also be given the diagnosis of conduct disorder (lying, stealing, truancy, aggression), and about the same proportion fit the description of antisocial personality disorder as adults. Many adults with ADHD are seriously depressed or have alcohol or drug problems. Only about 25% have no other psychiatric disorder.

“Another problem in making the diagnosis is that everyone has some of the symptoms some of the time. It’s important to recognize that in ADHD, symptoms are present not just occasionally but persistently and in forms that are damaging to personal relationships and career prospects. Recently there have been some worries about inappropriate self-diagnosis – adults thinking they have ADHD and trying to persuade others of the diagnosis for some unwarranted gain, such as attracting attention or obtaining stimulant drugs. That’s been a minor problem so far. Independent observers tend to confirm what adults with ADHD say about themselves. Many adults seek treatment when they discover that one of their children has ADHD and recognize the symptoms in themselves. The second most common reason for seeking treatment is *difficulty at work*. Often husbands, wives, employers, or co-workers no-

tice the problem first.”

Cont’d next month: ADHD and the brain & drug and other treatments.



**Kids for Kids Event
at the
NAMI Thrift Shop
Sunday, December 14th
1-3 p.m.**

For 50 cents children can pick a stuffed animal to be given to the Montgomery County Police officer on hand. The officer will make sure the toys are delivered to needy children.



**NAMI MC mourns the
loss of two longtime
members and sends
our heartfelt condolences
to the family of
Sue Perrine
and the family of
Nick Manos**



NAMI Montgomery County

The County's Voice on Mental Illness

10730 Connecticut Avenue
Kensington, MD 20895
Phone: 301-949-5852
Fax: 301-949-5853
Email: namioffice@namimc.org
Web: www.namimc.org
Thrift Shop: 301-949-5731

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Become a part of a 25-year-old grassroots organization – with over 220,000 national members and 800 members in Montgomery County alone.

Membership Benefits:

- Support from people who understand
- Concurrent membership at local, state & national NAMI levels
- Our informative monthly affiliate newsletter
- Our influence in advocacy at County, State and Federal levels

Name _____ Phone _____

Address _____

City _____ State _____ Zip _____

If you would like to receive NAMI information and alerts via e-mail, please provide your e-mail address: _____

Membership Dues _____ . New Member _____ . Renewal _____

. Basic \$35 . Sustaining \$50 . Professional \$55 . Patron \$100

. Lifetime \$1000 . Open Door (Limited Income) \$3

. Non-member, NAMI MC newsletter only \$15

. Additional contribution \$ _____

TOTAL \$ _____ (dues and donations are tax deductible)

. Check Enclosed

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Make check payable to: NAMI Montgomery County (MD)

10730 Connecticut Ave., Kensington MD 20895

Please . Parent of Adult . Child of Mentally Ill Parent . Sibling

Check: . Consumer . Parent of Child under 21 . Spouse

. Friend . Mental Health Professional . Other