

WHAT ELSE SHOULD I KNOW?

- People with mental illnesses occupy more hospital beds than those suffering from cancer, lung and heart diseases combined.
- Serious mental illnesses are medical illnesses, like cancer or diabetes and can almost always be successfully treated with medication and counseling
- 75% of persons with schizophrenia develop the disease between the ages of 16 and 25
- Depression is the most common type of mental illness. Symptoms include feelings of hopelessness, sadness, and the inability to cope; affecting the body and the mind
- Bipolar (Manic-Depression) describes a cycle of moods between periods of elation and increased activity and periods of depression
- Schizophrenia**, which affects about 1 percent of the world's population, is a severe, chronic, and generally disabling brain disorder. While the term schizophrenia literally means "split mind", it should not be confused with a "split", or multiple, personality. It is more accurately described as a psychosis -- a type of illness that causes severe mental disturbances that disrupt normal thoughts, speech, and behavior. Schizophrenia is believed to be due to a combination of genetic and environmental factors.
- Depressive disorders**, which affect 9.5 percent of adult Americans or approximately 18.8 million people, are illnesses that affect the body, mood and thoughts. **Depression** is not simply a passing sadness or blue mood that lifts in a few hours or days, but is persistent. Different types of depressive disorders exist, including major depression, dysthymia and bipolar disorder.
- Bipolar disorder**, formerly known as manic-depressive illness, is a psychiatric condition characterized by severe shifts in a person's mood and energy, which make it difficult for the person to function. More than 2 million American adults or 1 percent of the population age 18 or older in any given year have bipolar disorder. The condition typically starts in late adolescence or early adulthood, although it can show up in children and in older adults. People often live with the disease without having it properly diagnosed and treated.
- Mental illnesses can affect persons of any age, race, religion, or income. Mental illnesses are not the result of personal weakness, lack of character, or poor upbringing. Mental illnesses are treatable. Most people diagnosed with a serious mental illness can experience relief from their symptoms by actively participating in an individual treatment plan.
- In addition to medication treatment, psychosocial treatment such as cognitive behavioral therapy, interpersonal therapy, peer support groups, and other community services can also be components of a treatment plan and that assist with recovery.
- The availability of transportation, diet, exercise, sleep, friends, and meaningful paid or volunteer activities contribute to overall health and wellness; improving recovery from mental illness.



NAMI-Ocean County is a group of families and friends who meet together to provide each other with support, encouragement and a caring atmosphere in which to cope with problems that can be overwhelming if faced alone. We also provide speakers to educate our members, work to reduce the stigma of mental illnesses in our community, advocate for equal treatment and opportunities under the law and support research to not only determine the causes of mental illness, but to alleviate its effects.

MEMBERSHIP BENEFITS

- A community of hope - a helping hand through the struggles and challenges of a mental illness
- The Advocate* a quarterly magazine and a local newsletter
- Timely information on mental health services, support groups, educational activities

MEETINGS

**Second Wednesday every month
6:30 to 9:00 p.m.**



**Ocean County Offices - Manna Café
129 Hooper Ave. (second floor),
(next to parking garage's third level -
enter via Madison Avenue)
Toms River, New Jersey**

**For More Information Contact:
NAMI-Ocean County, Inc.
P.O. Box 1436
Toms River, NJ 08754
(732) 244-4401**



OPEN YOUR MIND



***Mental Illnesses are
Brain Disorders***

WHAT IS MENTAL ILLNESS?

Mental illnesses are medical conditions that disrupt a person's thinking, feeling, mood, ability to relate to others, and daily functioning. Just as diabetes is a disorder of the pancreas, mental illnesses are disorders of the brain that often result in a diminished capacity for coping with the ordinary demands of life.

Serious mental illnesses include major depression, schizophrenia, bipolar disorder, obsessive compulsive disorder (OCD), panic disorder, post traumatic stress disorder (PTSD), and borderline personality disorder. The good news about mental illness is that recovery is possible. Here are some important facts about mental illness and recovery:

- ☉ Mental illnesses are biologically based brain disorders. They cannot be overcome through "will power" and are not related to a person's "character" or intelligence.
- ☉ Mental disorders fall along a continuum of severity. Even though mental disorders are widespread in the population, the main burden of illness is concentrated in a much smaller proportion — about 6 percent, or 1 in 17 Americans — who suffer from a serious mental illness. It is estimated that mental illness affects 1 in 5 families in America.
- ☉ The World Health Organization has reported that four of the 10 leading causes of disability in the US and other developed countries are mental disorders. By 2020, Major Depressive illness will be the leading cause of disability in the world for women and children.
- ☉ Mental illnesses usually strike individuals in the prime of their lives, often during adolescence and young adulthood. All ages are susceptible, but the young and the old are especially vulnerable.
- ☉ Without treatment, the consequences of mental illnesses for the individual and society are staggering: unnecessary disability, unemployment, substance abuse, homelessness, inappropriate incarceration, suicide and wasted lives; The economic cost of untreated mental illness is more than \$100 billion each year in the United States.
- ☉ The best treatments for serious mental illnesses today are highly effective; between 70 and 90 percent of individuals have significant reduction of symptoms and improved quality of life with a combination of pharmacological and psychosocial treatments and supports.
- ☉ With appropriate effective medication and a wide range of services tailored to their needs, most people who live with serious mental illnesses can significantly reduce the impact of their illness and find a satisfying measure of achievement and independence. A key concept is to develop expertise in developing strategies to manage the illness process.
- ☉ Early identification and treatment is of vital importance; By ensuring access to the treatment and recovery supports that are proven effective, recovery is accelerated and the further harm related to the course of illness is minimized.

Stigma erodes confidence that brain disorders are real, treatable, health conditions. We have allowed stigma and a now unwarranted sense of hopelessness to erect attitudinal, structural and financial barriers to effective treatment and recovery. ***It is time to take these barriers down.***

WHAT IS NAMI?

With more than 100,000 members, NAMI is the nation's leading grass roots organization solely dedicated to improving the lives of families affected by serious mental illnesses

We provide education, support and systems advocacy to empower families and persons with mental illness. We provide self-help and grassroots advocacy, offer emotional support, information and advice about treatment and community resources

NAMI NEW JERSEY is a statewide nonprofit organization dedicated to improving the lives of individuals and families who are affected by mental illness. Affiliate groups located in each county offer emotional support, information and advice about treatment and community resources.

SUPPORT: In local self-help support groups, caring family members offer emotional support, information and advice about treatment and community resources.

EDUCATION: On a local, state and national level, NAMI provides education and confronts discrimination through awareness campaigns.

ADVOCACY: On a state and local level, NAMI promotes and supports legislative issues that benefit families and persons affected by serious mental illness, monitors governmental agencies responsible for the provision of services and promotes research into the causes and treatment of mental illness.

Family-to-Family Education Program

Developed by NAMI-Vermont in 1990, Family-to-Family classes are now offered in hundreds of communities across the country, in two Canadian provinces, Puerto Rico, and Mexico.

The NAMI Family-to-Family Education Program entrusts education to NAMI members who are, by any measure, the most advanced self-educated lay population in modern medicine.

The goals of this peer program are radical; they go far beyond the traditional curriculum of illness information and behavioral training. Although the course is rich in clinical detail, our primary mission in education involves orchestrating a transformation from personal devastation to action and power.

For More Information/Sign up: (732) 244-4401



MEMBERSHIP APPLICATION

NAMI-OC, Inc.
PO Box 1436
Toms River, NJ 08754

New _____ NAME: _____

Renewal _____ Street: _____

Contribution \$ _____ City/State: _____ ZIP: _____

Home Phone: _____ Day Phone: _____ E-mail: _____

Annual dues are: \$60.00 per Family Membership \$40.00 individual membership (Open Door Memberships Available)