



NAMI Southwestern Pennsylvania

An Affiliate of the National Alliance on Mental Illness

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NAMI Southwestern Pennsylvania

Harriet D. Baum, M.Ed.

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Barbara A. Reith – Administrative Assistant

Evelyn J. Stafford – Interviewer

Carol A. Wivell – CHIPPS Liaison

2004 – 2005 Annual Report

Dear Friends,

People with mental illness have the same basic needs as everyone else – and the same potential. They can and do recover, leading productive lives and making valuable contributions to society. But recovery can be complicated by discrimination from those who still don't understand that mental health is as important as physical health to anyone's overall well being. Our mission at NAMI is to develop and promote opportunities that encourage recovery, while removing barriers to healing by providing advocacy and education to dispel the stigma of mental illness.

This annual report documents quantitatively the numbers of people served by NAMI's programs in the past year. However, because of our incredible grassroots foundation of gifted, passionate volunteers who perform the bulk of our extensive reach of support activities, these numbers – although not officially documented – are much higher. It is a true testimony to our cause that those who initially rely on NAMI for information and support feel compelled to give back as they heal:

- Family members who attend our education programs become inspired to volunteer as teachers.
- Those who join a support group soon find they are ready to lead one.
- Consumers and family members want to share their stories to provide hope and courage to others.

Volunteers are the lifeblood of our organization, from active board members to peer education teachers and support group leaders, as well as those engaged in public education activities and advocacy. Many health professionals from throughout the region also contribute their professional time and resources to NAMI, giving our organization added credibility and a stronger reputation.

NAMI knows that connected, educated family members improve recovery outcomes for their mentally ill loved ones. We understand it is our responsibility to provide a forum where the collective voice of consumers and families can resound to positively impact the delivery of effective mental health services. It is our impassioned volunteers and members who give strength and volume to that voice, which is making a difference for current and future generations who face the challenge of living with – and recovering from – mental illness.

We are proud to call ourselves a strong, mature organization, guided by professional staff and a well-qualified board. We also recognize and thank each one of our dedicated volunteers for your continued involvement and support, and for providing us with the passion and motivation to keep moving forward

Sincerely,

Edna McCutcheon
President

Harriet D. Baum
Executive Director

Empowered passionate volunteers committed 4,675 hours to NAMI activities – the equivalent of one year’s work for two full-time employees. This help amounted to 40 percent of NAMI’s annual efforts.



Responded to 186,301 web and email requests, and answered 1,360 telephone inquiries for information, education and support services for consumers of mental health services and their connected family members and caregivers.

“When people ask me questions about where to find helpful information and resources related to mental illness, I am always confident referring them to NAMI.”

Eileen Lovell, Volunteer Family Support Group Leader

Offered technical assistance to volunteers leading 20 affiliate and peer support groups in the 10-county service region. Provided a variety of resources to support group participants, including adults coping with mental illness and their families, as well as parents of children struggling with behavioral and emotional disorders.

“As the parent of a consumer, I have found my support group to be my best resource for information, comfort and hope.”

Rose Schmitt, Volunteer Leader, Borderline Personality Disorder Support Group

Provided education and information about mental illness to 1,655 professionals, students, families and consumers who attended NAMI Education Workshops. Topics included:

- Mental Illness Recovery
- Effective Legislative and Family Advocacy
- Psychiatric Advance Directives
- Effecting relationships/collaboration between family members, consumers and providers
- Video Workshop -*Hopes & Challenges: Family Story* is about mental illness, its impact on family; and the importance of family/professional collaboration

Gave much needed one-on-one support, education and empowerment skills to 130 rural and underserved families with young children or adolescents diagnosed with mental illness in Indiana and Washington counties through The Family Partner Program, funded by the Staunton Farm Foundation.

Focused significant advocacy activities, designed to protect the rights of individuals and support access to mental health services on:

- Medicare prescription drug benefits
- Maintaining access to medications on the Medicaid Preferred Drug list
- Preservation of Medicaid at the State and Federal Level
- Ensuring state hospitals’ plans provide adequate resources for individuals moving in the community
- Psychiatric Advance Directives
- Voter registration drives
- Mental health parity legislation
- Funding for and the development of safe, affordable housing for individuals with mental illness
- Authorization of designated funding for youth prevention suicide activities
- Education to assist parents to advocate for appropriate mental health access and education services for children with serious emotional and behavioral disorders
- Enhancement of Consumer/Family Satisfaction Teams within the region and across the state

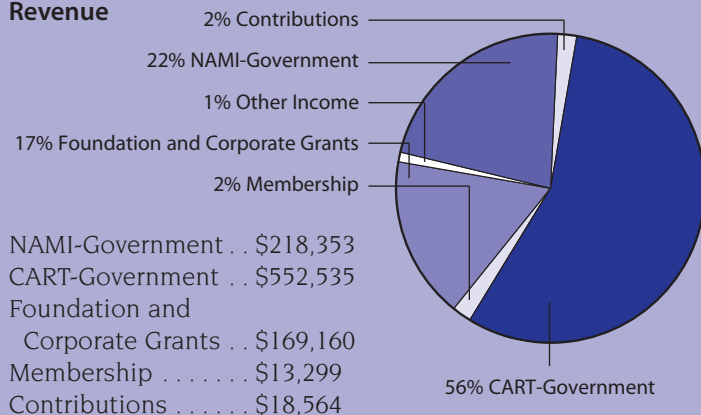
Supplied up-to-date information quarterly to 1,350 individuals through The Voice newsletter, and distributed frequent, up to the minute legislative action alerts to 209 members and other stakeholders.

Completed 3,307 interviews through the Consumer Action and Response Team (CART) to evaluate customer satisfaction regarding mental health and addiction services. Allegheny County service providers, the Allegheny County Department of Human Services and Community Care Behavioral Health use this information to implement necessary system reforms.

Highlights of Accomplishments

Audited Statements of Operations July 1, 2004 through June 30, 2005

Revenue



Expenses

