

Contact: Matt Kozlovac
mkozlovac@namiswpa.org
Office: (412) 366-3788
Cell: (814) 421-8470

For Immediate Release

They Call it a “Game Changer” for Mental Health

New research finds that early intervention and recognition can prevent a First Psychotic Episode

Pittsburgh, Pa. – Promising, new intervention programs for First Episode Psychosis (FEP) have shown to offer real hope for recovery to the hundreds of thousands of adolescents and young adults who experience their first psychotic episode each year.

- WHAT:** NAMI Southwestern PA 16th Annual Educational Conference
A Call to Action: Creating a Movement to Change Lives
- WHEN:** Saturday, April 9, 2016
8:00am to 4:30pm
- WHERE:** Pittsburgh Airport Marriott, 777 Aten Drive, Coraopolis, PA 15108
- WHO:** Open to the public. Registration is required.

Typically, a first psychotic episode occurs during a critical developmental stage of an individual’s life, ages 15-25. Without early treatment, research has shown that young adults are at risk of dropping out of school, unemployment, drug and alcohol abuse, incarceration, and suicide.

This conference aims to challenge our region to implement not only promising early intervention programs for First Episode Psychosis, but to create a dialogue that leads to appropriate and necessary changes to current treatments and supports. Through these changes, emerging adults can receive effective care and improve recovery outcomes. The conference will discuss current advancements from renowned physicians, researchers, and advocacy leaders.

Dr. Irene Hurford, Assistant Professor in the Department of Psychiatry at the University of Pennsylvania, and the Program Director for the Psychosis Education, Assessment, Care and Empowerment (PEACE) program at Horizon House, will give the Morning Keynote Address on Early Psychosis Services. In addition, **NAMI CEO, Mary Giliberti**, will give the Afternoon Keynote Address entitled, “Leading a Movement: The Power of Advocacy.” **NAMI Southwestern PA Executive Director, Christine Michaels**, will be available for comment.

NAMI Southwestern Pennsylvania (an affiliate of the National Alliance on Mental Illness) is a non-profit organization dedicated to improving the lives of individuals and families affected by mental illness through recovery focused support, education, and advocacy. More information is available at www.namiswpa.org or by calling (412) 366-3788.

###