



Northside Atlanta

Support • Education • Advocacy • Research

North Atlanta's Voice on Mental Illness: Buckhead, Brookhaven, Roswell, Dunwoody, Alpharetta, Johns Creek Sandy Springs, Vinings, Milton, Norcross and Beyond

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NAMI Northside Atlanta is a Non-Profit 501(c)3 Tax Exempt Organization, IRS EIN 45-1227396

► Education Program – Monday - March 24 - 7:00 PM – DUMC - Room 258 ◀

Be prepared – learn more at this meeting.

Presentation by a speaker from the office of DeKalb County Magistrate Judge Rathelia Stroud

DeKalb Diversion Treatment Court, also known as Mental Health Court.

The Diversion Court has been operational since May 2001 and has graduated nearly 300 individuals with mental illness, who have had their criminal cases dismissed.

www.dekalbcountymagistratecourt.com/diversiontreatmentcourt.asp

Elections to the state office of NAMI in Georgia Board of Directors - with vote counting at the annual state meeting is on April 26, 2014. **Our own Susie Kyle is a candidate for the Board** in this very important election affecting NAMI future. NAMI Northside Atlanta progress during Susie's 3 year presidency speaks for itself. More to come on the overall election...

Susie Kyle and Joan Johnson are in the seventh week of teaching the current NAMI Northside Atlanta education class of Family to Family.

The NAMI Northside Atlanta Silver Lining Project, with board member Bill McClung, had another very productive meeting this month. Check out NNA's web site www.naminorthsideatlanta.org for project information. We are very fortunate to have so many dedicated and **enthusiastic** participants working for improvement – of course, we need more. It was a pleasure to participate in this NAMI Northside Atlanta meeting. Ed.

► Renew your NAMI Northside Atlanta membership, regular or open door, to ensure our voices are heard as involved, determined, passionate people, and acted upon to build the environment for our families to achieve optimal recovery outcomes.

► Renew or join on our web site now, US mail or see the Treasurer: www.naminorthsideatlanta.org

It has been stated by knowledgeable people that the following is as viable today as when written.

“Who you gonna call” Getting a handle on Mental Health Care

April 9th, 2008 by Rob Cunningham; Editor, Health Affairs www.healthaffairs.org

The Washington Post called Health Affairs the leading journal of health policy, thought and research.

It's been nearly five years since the President's New Freedom Commission on Mental Health issued its final report. The report affirmed the possibility of recovery and the effectiveness of available treatments for many conditions. But it also warned that many patients never find their way to care and that providers are often unaware of therapies that have proved their worth.

The commission also marshaled evidence of the crucial importance of ancillary services like supported housing and employment and income-support programs for the severely ill. But it candidly acknowledged that management of these services is in most cases hopelessly fragmented among siloed government departments with no collaborative traditions.

No one was expecting miracles from the report, and none have occurred. But it's not because no one is trying. Two years ago, for example, the National Institute of Mental Health produced its blueprint for disseminating evidence-based best practices to clinicians, *The Road Ahead*. The obstacles were detailed this week at a MacArthur Foundation-sponsored research conference in Washington.

Knowledge about new drugs spreads rapidly, because the pharmaceutical industry gets a handsome return on its investments in physician sales calls and direct-to-consumer advertising. But effective interpersonal treatment techniques like cognitive behavioral therapy don't generate profits for their inventors, so there is not much of a business case for the enterprise of dissemination.

The notion that supportive housing, employment, or income programs are an integral part of care for the seriously ill was originally the vision of idealistic social reformers, said Howard Goldman, director of the MacArthur Network on Mental Health Policy Research. But since that vision was first articulated three decades ago, studies of the effectiveness of such programs have confirmed their value. "Research has turned social reform into evidence-based practice," Goldman said.

But just as implementation of clinical best practices has lagged behind research, coordination of treatment with supportive services is typically lost in a maze of structural and administrative disconnects. Medication may temporarily stabilize a schizophrenic patient. But when that patient needs help applying for a housing voucher, a disability check, or a slot in a vocational rehab program, "**Who you gonna call?**" asked Mike Hogan, who was chair of the New Freedom Commission and is now mental health commissioner for the state of New York. Meanwhile, unmet needs spill out into schools, courts, welfare offices, and the streets.

The locus of responsibility for coordination of mental health services remains conspicuously indeterminate, Hogan said in summing up the problems that confront the mental health field. Medicaid is the largest single payer for care, but it spends nothing on employment or housing services. State mental health agencies historically bore the principal responsibility for organizing services but lack the authority to manage federal funds or local care delivery operations. Local government may serve as an important service provider but lacks resources to orchestrate supports. Private, for-profit managed behavioral health care organizations administer provider payments under Medicaid and private insurance but have little incentive to invest in wraparound services. Consumers and their families have the most knowledge of what is needed but the least leverage to influence the organization of care.

Hogan advanced the notion of "stewardship" as a way of thinking about how to get results at all levels of a system of such overwhelming complexity. The Washington conference marked the winding down of 30 years of investment in mental health policy by the MacArthur Foundation. In his valedictory remarks, Goldman suggested that the foundation's role as a steward must now be taken up by the voluntary efforts of the willing. "**Go forth, and connect,**" he concluded.

As part of the Silver Lining Project, NAMI Northside Atlanta is researching "Who you gonna call? (for a Directory of Services) and intends to "Go forth, and connect" including an information exchange/feedback system with treatment and services to improve outcomes. We plan for effective interface with Planned Lifetime Assistance Network (Case/Care Management)
www.planofgeorgia.org Please help!

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