



NAMI O'AHU NEWS

NAMI O'ahu is an Affiliate of the National Alliance on Mental Illness



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NAMI O'AHU NEWSLETTER

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DEPARTMENT OF JUSTICE STUDY: MENTAL ILLNESS OF PRISON INMATES WORSE THAN PAST ESTIMATES REFLECTS FAILURES IN MENTAL HEALTHCARE SYSTEM

*Statement of Michael J. Fitzpatrick, M.S.W.
Executive Director, National Alliance on Mental Illness*

September 6, 2006-The release today of a study by the U.S. Department of Justice's Bureau of Justice Statistics (BIS) showing that 64 percent of local jail inmates, 56 percent of state prisoners and 45 percent of federal prisoners have symptoms of serious mental illnesses is an indictment of the nation's mental healthcare system.

It is both a scandal and a national tragedy. The figures are worse than those generally believed in the past, in which estimates of the total number of inmates with mental illnesses have been approximately 20 percent.

The study reveals that the problem is two to three times greater than anyone imagined.

What is even more disturbing is the number of these inmates that have served prior sentences, committed violent offenses, or engaged in substance abuse.

What it means is that the mental healthcare system is failing-long before people enter the criminal justice system and after they leave it. Individuals are sentenced to lives without hope and enormous costs shifted on to our police, courts, jails and prisons at all levels.

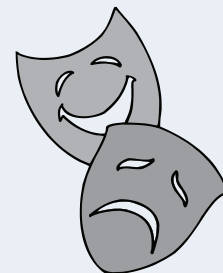
Unfortunately, Americans should not be surprised. In a comprehensive survey of state mental healthcare systems released this year, the national average grade was a D. Eight states received grades of F. Only five received B's.

States are failing to invest in providing adequate mental healthcare. Skimping on the front end leads to results like those reflected in this report.

To view the full Department of Justice report, go to www.nami.org and click on newsroom.

6TH ANNUAL FUNDRAISER TO UNMASK MENTAL ILLNESS: EVENING EVENT SET FOR OCTOBER 22

"Unmasking Mental Illness", this year's annual NAMI O'ahu fundraiser promises to be a festive event featuring entertainment by jazz singer Jan Taketa and a light supper prepared by Chef Eric Lautrec. There will be auction items galore including fabulous trips, fine wines, distinctive art work, and a bounty of other irresistible temptations. With veteran Donna Howard at the helm and Merrill Johnston as auction chair, a memorable evening is in store for our guests. "Mix and Mingle" tickets are \$100. Premium tables start at \$1500. Call the NAMI O'ahu office if you would like to join us on Sunday, October 22 from 5 pm to 8 pm. tickets MUST be purchased in advance.



PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE



Thanks to the hard work and resourcefulness of our treasurer, Jeff Emerson, our office has a great new look evolving. The old mismatched furniture has been replaced with gently used contemporary desks, cabinets and tables. The new furniture arrangement allows staff, volunteers, students and support groups to better utilize our limited office space. Stop by the office and check out our recent improvements.

On August 23rd, NAMI O'ahu presented its 2006 Hawaii Health Care Summit: Advocating for Access, Quality and Change featuring health care expert, Emily Friedman. Several days later, NAMI-Hawaii sponsored a talk and training session by Xavier Amador, clinical psychologist and researcher. His book "I am Not Sick, I Don't Need Help" is an important resource for families dealing with serious mental illness where treatment is being refused. Both of these educational forums served to empower consumers, families and mental health professionals by providing strategies to effect change.

NAMI had a strong presence at both the Gubernatorial and Mayoral proclamation ceremonies for Mental Illness Awareness Week, Oct. 1-7. In 1990, Congress established the first week in October to recognize the efforts by the National Alliance on Mental Illness to combat mental illness. At the proclamation signing ceremony on October 5, the governor announced the state has been awarded a five year \$14.2 million federal grant to develop a Statewide Comprehensive Mental Health Plan which is expected to transform the delivery of mental health services for mentally ill children and adults.

Members of the Board of Directors, staff and an enthusiastic group of volunteers are gearing up for our organization's 6th annual fundraiser, "Unmasking Mental Illness", on October 22nd. With a new evening format for the event, we hope to increase community awareness of our important cause and raise crucial funding for our programs of support, education and advocacy.

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CAPITOL CAPERS

No one has to tell you that it is election time! The buzz is in the air. The sign holders are waving. There are public appearances, debates, and media coverage. All are designed to get your vote. Asking the right questions will assist you in making key selections. The following are great questions prepared by NAMI national. Use them, and your vote will be informed. Government goes on, with or without you. Don't defer to others. Take Charge! – *Marion Poirier*



ELECTIONS 2006 - CANDIDATE QUESTIONS

- Mental illness is the leading cause of disability in the United States. Yet millions of Americans and their families struggle because they cannot get access to treatment. What are your personal views about mental illness? What will you do to improve access to mental health treatment and to support recovery for those who live with serious mental illness?
- A recent report issued by the U.S. Department of Justice revealed that as many as half of all inmates in U.S. jails and prisons have symptoms of a serious mental illness. Are there specific steps you would take to reduce the numbers of these individuals in the criminal justice system?
- Nationally, Medicaid is the single largest payer of mental health treatment. Millions of Americans rely upon the program for access to critical services. What specific reforms would you propose to improve Medicaid and how will they affect individuals diagnosed with mental illnesses? For Medicaid recipients, do you support co-payments or limits on prescriptions or services for people living with serious mental illnesses?
- Young families are in crisis as they struggle to find treatment for their children and teenagers with serious mental illnesses. Research tells us that there are services that work, but they are not available in our local communities. What will you do to address this growing problem and ensure that children have the help they need to become productive, healthy adults?
- A key challenge for our future is building a healthcare system that addresses racial and ethnic disparities and is sensitive to the needs of different communities. What will you do to eliminate existing disparities in mental health care and to provide better treatment and services to specific racial and ethnic communities?

NAMI O'AHU SUPPORT GROUPS WORK

When members choose to join a support group, it can make a big difference in the lives of both consumers and their families. The following is an excerpt from an appreciative support group member who was determined to improve the intolerable home situation of her parents. Her elderly parents were living with her mentally ill brother, who was continually harassing them. During an extended stay in Hawaii, she began attending support group meetings and taking important steps to effect change.

"I am so grateful to all of you for your support! My brother is continuing to do well. He continues to see the social worker every other week, and he now has a case worker from one of the mental health clinics. This case worker is amazing. He comes to visit our house to see the Obsessive Compulsive Disorder (OCD) situation, talks to my Mom to see how the yelling is going (it's much better!) and is going to my brother's psych visits with him to make sure the meds are adjusted to work on his OCD. I am very blessed to have found excellent health care professionals, now that my brother is ready to help himself. I did not think this was possible, and the journey to help our family began with NAMI. Thank you for all of your support...you are truly amazing people."

MEMBERSHIP MEETING FEATURES KCC'S GOURMET CUISINE

Join the fun at NAMI O'ahu's annual membership meeting and recognition luncheon to be held at Kapiolani Community College's Ka Ikena Dining Room on Saturday, December 2, 2006 from 11 am to 2 pm. A delicious complimentary gourmet lunch, prepared by the talented KCC Culinary Arts students, will be served and special entertainment provided. In addition to electing our 2007 board of directors, NAMI O'ahu will be recognizing and thanking its wonderful volunteers and celebrating the accomplishments of the past year. And...you can count on our traditional door prizes. Don't miss this great opportunity to get together with NAMI friends and family.

CONSIDER HAWAII'S NEW ADVANCE MENTAL HEALTH DIRECTIVE

By Anson Rego, Esq

In Hawaii, a competent adult may sign an Advance Mental Health Care Directive, a form available in Section HRS 327G-3 (2006) Hawaii Revised Statutes. "Competent" means the person must understand his health condition and the results his decision may have. The directive may be used in the case of later incompetence due to a mental illness and may avoid the need for a guardianship proceeding.

Hospital policies provide that only a competent patient, not friends or family, can make health care decisions. However, if the patient is mentally ill at the time and is not able to make decisions, a hospital can look at the Advance Mental Health Directive first to seek instructions from the patient's advocate named in the durable power. If the hospital believes, however, that the patient-signatory is competent and just does not know or is not sure about what he wants, or if there is a disagreement between the two parties to the Advance Mental Health Care Directive about whether to treat the ill person or not, the hospital may ask a court to appoint a guardian to make decisions. Thus, a written Advance Mental Health Care Directive should also include the principal's nomination of a guardian. This establishment of this directive is a step in the right direction, even though it may be overruled or reviewed by a court.

JOIN NAMI O'AHU TODAY!

NAME: Mr. Mrs. Ms. _____

STREET: _____

CITY: _____ STATE: _____ ZIP: _____

PHONE: _____ CELL: _____ FAX: _____

E-MAIL: _____

Payment

Check (made payable to NAMI O'ahu) VISA MasterCard

Account # _____ Exp. Date _____

Signature _____

Membership Level

- Individual/Family Member . . . \$25.00
- Professional Member \$50.00
- Contributions Member \$100.00
- Sponsoring Member \$250.00
- Benefactor Member \$1,000.00
- Scholarship Sponsor \$3.00
- Other Donations \$ _____

Detach form and mail in an envelope to:
NAMI O'ahu
770 Kapiolani Boulevard #613
Honolulu, Hawaii'i 96813

**Your donations are deductible to the limit allowed by law*

HOWARD HUGHES GALA

The World Premiere of the "Howard Hughes - An American Icon" exhibition was held June 8, 2006 at the ArtZone, a private residence in Nuuanu. The exhibition featured a pictorial, multi-media and personal memorabilia collection of Jerry Bell, a trusted agent of Mr. Hughes. Son Mark Bell of Postcard CD was responsible for the ambitious display of items, many depicting achievements and contributions Hughes made to the world. Proceeds from the event were earmarked for NAMI O'ahu in recognition of mental health problems faced by Hughes in later years. Bell's collection was subsequently on display at the Blaisdell Center.



L to R: Richard and Marion Poirier, Margie and Mike Durant, Mark Bell

DEPARTMENT OF JUSTICE STUDY-LOCAL PERSPECTIVE

By Pauline Arellano

It has been a long arduous journey to achieve the wonderful, sustained wellness we are enjoying as a family together. Our story begins in the early adolescence of our daughter. There was strange risky behavior and trouble in school. At every turn, there have been two choices: 1) the police, court, jail or 2) hospitalization. In the beginning, I didn't understand that a chemical imbalance could change a person's behavior. Finally we got an actual diagnosis of bipolar disorder. We were relieved. We had worried that we were bad parents. Recovery was one inch at a time. We could have been one of those statistics in the newspaper lately that indicates that most of the prison population has a mental illness. We're not. Together we advocate for others at the Legislature, and with other agencies like NAMI, who helped us get through this illness. We appreciate every day of wellness; it's been three years since our last hospitalization. Together we need to educate the public. The jails and prisons are no place for the sick.

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SUPPORT/EDUCATION

NEW SIBLING SUPPORT GROUP BEGINS

Saturday, November 11, 2006 at
office from 10-11:30 A.M.
Eileen Uchima-Sibling Facilitator

Meetings:

Manoa Family Support Group
Monthly on 2nd Tues.-7 P.M.

Office Support Groups:
Monthly on 3rd Wed.-11:30 A.M.
Monthly on 4th Fri.-5:30 P.M.

Family 2 Family
Office, Windward, & Central-
Leeward Sites

New: NAMI on CAMPUS
Student offerings at colleges

*For details, contact us at
808.591.1297 or namioahu@
hawaiiantel.net*

