

In This Issue

A Letter From The President, The Benefits Of Smart911, Notes From A Meeting With St. Vincent's CEO, Schizophrenia Study, Program Updates, Meet Your New Board And More!

A Letter From the President,

NAMI Santa Fe is saddened and disheartened about the recent fatal police shooting of a mentally ill individual in our community. When a tragedy strikes, it shakes our confidence in the order of things - something in our mental health system went terribly wrong.

Clear facts in tragedies often emerge slowly. We can't speculate about exactly what went wrong through the news media or rush to judgment about it. However, it does seem clear that Mr. Anthony Benavidez was receiving mental health treatment and had had contact with various organizations, including the police, our local hospital and his managed care organization.

Sometimes when tragedies strike close to home, we tend to avoid the anxiety they produce - especially if it didn't impact our family personally - but that doesn't help our community heal or fix the problem. This young man could've been any of one of our family members. In a way, we're all traumatized by that possibility.

It's vital for communities to come together to reestablish a sense of trust and unity. Being present with each other within our small community, "gathering around" so it speak, and offering ourselves to listen to shared experiences may help us heal, but it might also be the catalyst for change. Unfortunately, sometimes it takes a tragedy for change.

NAMI Santa Fe held an open forum on Saturday July 22 to allow people who have been impacted by less-than-optimal access to mental health care to talk about their experiences so that we could document those incidents and inform our community leaders. Our hope is that those who have the authority to make changes will hear us and make the necessary improvements so that another life is not taken. NAMI's mantra is "we will never give up hope."

Betty Sisneros Shover

NAMI Santa Fe - President

Announcements

September 11 Information meeting

Our Information Meetings are open to the general public and free of charge. Join us to learn more about Santa Fe's mental health community!

Upcoming Meeting Topic

Mental Health care Improvements at Christus St. Vincent's Regional Medical Center

Featuring

Representatives from Christus St. Vincent

Date/Time

September 11, 2017 5:30-7 pm

Location

Presbyterian Urgent Care, Community Room

454 St. Michaels Drive

Santa Fe, NM 87505

Meet Your New Board!

NAMI Santa Fe is proud to welcome 3 new board members. We look forward to the contributions you will bring to our mental health community. Congratulations to:

Daniel Hirshey, Dan Nickelson & Riesha Fiorina

NAMI Santa Fe Wants You! - Volunteers Needed

Many of you have expressed a willingness to participate as a volunteer in advancing NAMI Santa Fe's mission in our community. Our program offerings are numerous and ambitious and we look forward to engaging every volunteer, in whatever capacity you desire to serve.

Volunteer opportunities range from admin support to program coordinators. Every current NAMI Santa Fe leader is a volunteer so we look forward to including you as a member of our team.

Our Volunteer Coordinator (Tim Dabbs) is working with the Board to identify program areas where our army of volunteers may become involved. He would be happy to send you a list of the positions currently available for you to review. Hopefully, your interest will be sparked and you will want to join the team.

Some of our volunteer positions necessitate formal training provided by NAMI to assure you are prepared to take on your assignment. These learning opportunities are valuable not only to the organization, but also to you in dealing with the challenges that we all face. Working for a cause you believe in is both healing and empowering.

If you want to volunteer please email Tim at timj03@gmail.com. If you have no email and want to be on the team, please contact Tim at 505-690-7104.

We look forward to working with you to make NAMI Santa Fe a model program across the state.

News

The Benefits Of Smart911

Those who suffer from mental illness and their caregivers often face the daunting question: Is it time to call 911? Many are hesitant to call 911, even when a situation appears dangerous. What if you call 911 for your mentally ill relative and they become even more agitated by the arrival of police cars in the driveway? What if a call for help turns into an arrest? What if the situation turns deadly?

These are the type of questions that led NAMI Santa Fe to collaborate with Ken Martinez, Director of the Regional Emergency Communications Center (911 System for Santa Fe) earlier this year. Martinez, wanted to discuss a new tool that the center now has at its fingertips: Smart911.

Martinez is responsible for Santa Fe's 911 communications center, and deeply invested in ensuring that those calls translate into the best possible response by police and fire department officials. So much, he explains, depends on the information that is given to the 911 operator. What first responders know before they arrive at the scene can make all the difference in how a situation plays out.

Smart911 is a national database that allows you to create a profile linked to your address and phone number. You can upload photographs, floor plans, and medical history. You can enter your pet's names, vehicle information and any other details that could be helpful in deescalating a crisis.

There are many instances where additional information could be life-saving. It is a little known fact that location technology is oftentimes inaccurate, and while police can get an approximate location from a cell phone, they mostly rely on callers to tell them where they are. Adding additional location information to your Smart911 profile can cut down response time dramatically.

In the case of mental illness, you can include information on medications you take, emergency contacts you would like called, whether you are agitated by loud noises, etc. It is also possible to create profiles for your family members if you are concerned about their interactions with Law Enforcement.

A profile takes about a half hour to create. Profiles are secure, private and confidential and your personal profile is only accessible while you are calling 911. For more information about Smart911, please visit <https://www.smart911.com/>.

Summary Of Meeting With Mr. Patrick Carrier, CEO Christus St.

Vincent Regional Medical Center

July 25, 2017

Tom Starke and Betty Sisneros Shover met with Mr. Patrick Carrier on July 25. We let Mr. Carrier know our mental health community is very concerned about the recent death of Mr. Benavidez who we believe was not admitted to the BHU hours before he was killed. This could have been any of our NAMI members' children. We also brought to his attention the stories that several individuals told us at our July 22

Open Forum about recent negative experiences at the hospital's Emergency Department (ED).

Mr. Carrier indicated that, as of late, he has been focusing on behavioral health (BH) care at CSV, as several people have told him CSV needs to improve behavioral healthcare, while hospital staff have told him everything is being operated properly. He recognizes the BHU is operating at half capacity, even as the public tells him that our community's BH needs aren't being met. This is not his area and he has not previously managed a hospital with BH services. CSV is the only hospital in the CHRISTUS system that has a BHU.

We talked extensively about how people in BH (especially mental illness) crises are brought to the ED against their wills, either by family or law enforcement and how critical it is to hold them long enough to stabilize their crises and get treatment. Only accepting compliant patients who want to be treated results in the most behaviorally ill patients not receiving care.

CSV is bringing in an expert consultant. This expert will evaluate all CSV BH services and recommend improvements to bring them in line with best practices in other communities-particularly with other hospitals and communities like CSV and Santa Fe. The expert will

- Meet with NAMI leaders and members, as well as other interested parties
- Evaluate all CSV BH services and recommend how to define and establish a BH service line (assuming such a line is recommended)
- Evaluate upgrades required by the BHU
- Evaluate how co-occurring disorder patients are treated and recommend changes, if necessary
- Evaluate how BH patients are cared for in the ED
- Evaluate how CSV collects health information from families for patients who can't communicate well because of their illness or psychotic state; evaluate how CSV communicates patient status to families
- Evaluate the process used in the ED to determine admission to the BHU
- Evaluate the ED's new BH assessment room
- Evaluate and recommend staff training
- Evaluate other facets of the BH program as appropriate.

Mr. Carrier informed us that CSV has hired a replacement for Susan Kammerer as Behavioral Health Services Manager - Mary Magnusson, RN-BC, MSN from UNM and starts August 14. He has also filled the position of Director of Emergency Services, which had been vacant for the past year - Mary Bednar, RN, MSN, CEN from a hospital in Ohio and she starts August 28. Treatment of people with mental illness diagnoses and their families will be one of the director's priorities. This director will review ED

staff training and what could be done to improve their understanding and ability to care for BH patients.

We let Mr. Carrier know the statements by CSV's spokesperson, Arturo Delgado, offended many NAMI members because they communicated a lack of understanding of the nature and effects of mental illness. - as well as not reflecting our experiences with the hospital.

Our requests to Mr. Carrier:

- A public meeting with NAMI members where they could relate their experiences in the ED. The new BHU manager, the expert BHU consultant, and hopefully the new ED director will attend this meeting. NAMI needs to let CSV know when and where.
 - Establish and communicate a clear, uniform process for family/friends to communicate health information about a patient brought to the ED. Establish and communicate a clear understanding of what CSV can and can't tell families about the status of their adult relation/friend being treated at CSV. The mental health of family and friends are impacted by how reassured they are about the care their loved one is receiving.
 - Let NAMI know the results of the BH expert's evaluation and recommendations. This would be part of an on-going CSV process for letting the public (and NAMI) know its BH plans and accomplishments.
 - Work with NAMI to implement Assisted Outpatient Treatment (AOT) in Santa Fe County, specifically making CSV a partner who will evaluate and stabilize AOT participants who don't comply with treatment. The new BHU director will work with NAMI on this.
 - The new BHU manager will coordinate with Kathy Armijo-Etre about possibly introducing herself and speaking at the September 11 NAMI Information Meeting.
 - The new BHU manager will participate in BH community integration meetings and processes where CSV's contribution makes behavioral healthcare more effective in our community - including Santa Fe's Behavioral Health Alliance meetings.
 - The new BHU manager will be the hospital's representative on the NAMI Hospital Committee.
 - The new BHU manager will work with NAMI to hold a Provider Education class for selected hospital staff
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Schizophrenia Study: Patient Advocate Firm Seeks Research Study Participants

A private patient advocate firm that assists individuals with services such as navigating the healthcare system, identifying resources, accompanying patients to appointments, finding clinical trials, etc. is currently assisting with a study for 330 schizophrenia patients which require a 15 minute survey for which the participant will receive a \$40 gift certificate to Amazon upon completion.

The purpose of the study is to understand how specific adverse events due to treatment with atypical antipsychotics affect the functioning of patients with schizophrenia: both physically and mentally, as well as quality of life from a patient perspective. It will also serve to better understand how patients with schizophrenia feel in response to experiencing adverse events which have a functional impact on them. We are hopeful this information will help developers of such treatment become more aware of such impact from medications. Medpanel www.medpanel.com is a Cambridge based firm which conducts primary market research for the healthcare community. They are coordinating the study for Evidera, a global leader in health outcomes research (www.Evidera.com).

Patients who have started a new treatment within the past 12 months are invited to participate by clicking on the following link or copying and pasting to the search bar.

<http://www.surveygizmo.com/s3/356151-/Med-Health>

The honorarium is a \$40 Amazon Gift Certificate and the survey takes about 10-30 minutes to complete. (The certificate will be mailed to a valid mailing address of the participant.) ALL information is strictly confidential. If one chooses to take a break and return to the survey later, it must be completed within 5 days of starting.

For questions about the study or if there is a technical difficulty, please contact Linda or Erin at PillarMentalHealth@gmail.com or call 908-698-1038.

Support Group Times & Program Updates

Fall Family To Family Class

We are now taking names for our Fall Family to Family class (Exact dates, TBA). If interested, please contact us at info@namisantafe.org or call 505-466-1668

Family Support Group

NAMI Family Support Groups are free, confidential groups of families supporting other families who live with mental health challenges.

NAMI Santa Fe offers two family support groups per month:

Dates/Times

August 7th, 12 noon

August 28th, 6 pm

September 4th, 12 noon

September 25th, 6 pm

Location

The Life Link, La Luna Room

2325 Cerrillos Rd.

Santa Fe, NM 87505