



**nami**

National Alliance on Mental Illness

**Alger/Marquette**

**National Alliance on Mental Illness Alger/Marquette affiliate newsletter for Spring 2018**

## **Notes from the Chair**

**By Cindy Bertucci,  
President, NAMI Alger/Marquette**

Hope this finds everyone making it through the winter and we hope Spring is just around the corner. Once all the winter cleanup is done then it is time to look forward to more sun, perennials blooming, new leaves on the trees, time to plant some annuals and just a time for a fresh new you. It seems there is a lot of emphasis put on making resolutions in the beginning of the new year. For me it is Spring when I feel like making those changes. Start walking more even though I do some in the winter, but I love to see all the new growth and start opening the windows for some fresh air. Here is hoping this Spring can start a new you if you need that to be. It is up to US to see that happens.

Many things have happened since our last newsletter. We spoke previously concerning the subject of re-affiliating our local NAMI with NAMI National and the process of such. After expressing what the obstacles we had ahead of us, such as the cost of the insurance we have to purchase, we were so fortunate as we did receive many donations from NAMI members, thank you for that. Also, we are very fortunate that our Upper Peninsula Health Plan (UPHP) made a donation to our affiliate in the amount of \$1001.00 which is the cost of the insurance for 2018/2019. **We are so blessed. We want to thank everyone for helping us be able to continue at least for this year. The insurance costs will be every year and we will keep working on that.**

Another fundraiser we are planning with the help of our NAMI Michigan office, UPHP and several other organizations will be a NAMI WALK on August 18<sup>th</sup> at the Mattson Lower Harbor Park in Marquette. We are hoping this to be successful to help us with anymore costs in the upcoming years. We do plan to have this every year and are looking for your help. We will need walkers – who could form teams raising money, volunteers with several items such as getting sponsors, some that would pay to advertise their name on our brochures or just donate money. **WE WILL TAKE ANY HELP WE CAN GET. THANKS EVERYONE IN ADVANCE FOR MAKING THIS A NEW YEARLY WALK IN THE UP. THIS IS ANOTHER WAY TO GET THE WORD OUT ABOUT MENTAL HEALTH AND STIGMA. WE NEED YOUR HELP!!!!!!! PLEASE WATCH FOR MORE DETAILS!!! WE CAN'T DO THIS WITHOUT YOU!**

## **NAMI Statement On The Parkland School Shooting Feb 16 2018**

NAMI is deeply saddened by the tragic school shooting that occurred yesterday in Parkland, Florida. These tragedies impact our communities-our parents, our children, our school professionals, our first responders-the mental health of our who country.

The details are still unfolding and there are still unanswered questions, but what we do know is that there were warning signs and that the shooter had received mental health treatment. As we continue the national discussion about what we can do to prevent further tragedies, we need to be willing to engage in an honest conversation about what allowed this young man to fall through the cracks, and the broader personal and societal factors that may have fueled his actions.

It is paramount for us to ensure the safety and well-being of our children and youth, and to remember that 1 in 5 people, potentially hundreds of students in a high school, have or will experience a mental illness. We need to be very careful that the response to these tragedies by the media and others does not discourage students from seeking help.

There are steps we can take now to educate and intervene early to break down barriers of understanding, and put an end to the stigma that often prevents people from getting the help they so desperately need:

1. Increase mental health awareness and availability of counselors in schools. Students should be encouraged to seek help for themselves or a friend. School based mental health has also proven extremely effective in engaging students who would not otherwise seek help. Some states have made significant investments in school based mental health and more needs to be done.
2. Train school staff, administrators, parents and youth, and provide the tools necessary to have conversations about the signs and symptoms of mental health conditions and where they can turn to for help.
3. Develop a comprehensive response program for youth who have demonstrated behavioral issues including involving family and mental health providers. Take steps to avoid expelling and suspending students as this only exacerbates the situation.
4. Increase the ability of the mental health system to be proactive in reaching out to youth, particularly those with the most serious conditions. Young people in distress will not seek help so there needs to be mobile outreach responses that are funded and easily available. This requires sustained and expanded funding for coverage for the mental health, not cuts.

Another part of the conversation that cannot be ignored is acting on common sense approaches to ending gun violence such as gun violence prevention restraining orders, which can allow for the removal of guns from people who may pose a risk of violence themselves and others. While the relationship between mental illness and gun violence is very low, we need reasonable options, including making it possible for law enforcement to act on credible community and family concerns in circumstances where people are at high-risk.

We all want an end to these horrific acts of violence. To achieve this, we need to understand the full picture of what is really driving increased violence and take sensible steps. Only then can we find meaningful solutions to protecting our children and communities.

# **CALL TO ADVOCACY!**

By Hannah Wesolowski  
Director of Field Advocacy  
Advocacy & Public Policy  
NAMI, National Alliance on Mental Illness

On Monday, Feb. 12th, the President released his proposed budget for FY 2019. The President's budget is a signal of the White House's priorities, but it is not necessarily an indicator of what the federal budget will look like, since it is Congress that passes the budget. The President's budget request includes proposed legislative changes to Medicaid that would hurt people with mental illness, including:

Promoting block grant approaches and per-capita caps that could reduce funding for mental health services and supports; Implementing work requirements for individuals receiving Medicaid; Increasing cost-sharing; Allowing "flexibility" in benefits, which could reduce coverage of mental health services and supports; and Ending Medicaid expansion, which helps many people with serious mental illness who otherwise fall through the cracks. The President's budget also proposes to make a devastating \$83B cut to Social Security over 10 years. This includes at least \$70B in proposed cuts to disability programs. The proposal includes cuts in the following areas:

Promoting demonstration programs that increase the number of people on SSI or SSDI in the workforce, which could jeopardize the economic security of people with mental illness (cut of \$48.4B); and Reducing the current maximum period of retroactive disability eligibility from 12 months to 6 months (cut of \$10.3B).

In addition, the President's proposed budget affects the following departments and agencies whose programs impact people with mental illness and their families:

## **Health & Human Services**

The President's budget proposes \$68.4B, a \$17.9B cut from the 2017 enacted budget, impacting several agencies that serve people with mental illness. However, the budget addendum adds \$15.8B, for a net cut of \$2.1B to HHS from 2017. Note: In the President's budget and addendum, \$10B is set-aside for opioid and serious mental illness within HHS.

## **SAMHSA**

\$283M, a \$112M cut to Mental Health Programs of Regional and National Significance; \$50M of this is from primary behavioral health integration Eliminated \$497M, the entire State Targeted Response to the Opioid Crisis Grants program

## **NIH**

\$23.75B, a \$8.96B cut from the current year's level

Note: The addendum adds \$9.2B, which restores NIH to the 2017 enacted budget level. Of the HHS \$10B set-aside for opioids and serious mental illness, the budget proposes \$750M for NIH, which includes \$400M for NIH's public-private partnership on opioids and \$350M for research on opioids, serious mental illness and pain.

## Housing & Urban Development

The President's budget makes significant cuts and proposes changes to Section 8 and public housing that could increase rents on people receiving housing assistance and impose work requirements. \$39.2B, an \$8.8B cut

Note: The total cut would be reduced to \$6.8B after a budget addendum adds back \$1B to avoid rent increases on elderly and disabled individuals, \$700M for the Tenant-Based Rental Assistance account, which would restore 200,000 housing vouchers to maintain 2.2 million total vouchers, and \$300M for the Public Housing Operating Fund. The President's budget request also includes proposed legislative changes that could hurt people with mental illness, including implementing work requirements for affordable housing.

## Veterans Affairs

The President's budget makes encouraging investments in Veterans' access to mental healthcare, homelessness programs and medical research.

\$8.6B for Veterans' mental health and suicide prevention

\$468M increase over FY 2018 \$1.8B for Veterans' homelessness (\$558M is for HUD-VASH grants to end Veterans' chronic homelessness) \$26M increase over FY 2018 \$727M for medical research (\$122M is for mental health research) \$87M increase over FY 2018 \$510M for Veterans' caregiver program \$7M over estimated FY 2018 Note: 89% of the VA health budget is covered by an Advanced Appropriation. Other VA programs, such as the caregiver program, are appropriated with the rest of the federal budget.

## Department of Justice

The President's budget includes some cuts to programs in DOJ that affect people with mental illness; a \$2M cut from the 2017 enacted budget, to MIOTCRA (Mentally Ill Offender Treatment and Crime Reduction Act) and a \$1M cut from the 2017 enacted budget, to Byrne Justice Assistance Grants (JAG)

NAMI will continue to advocate for mental health-related budgets as Congress finalizes the FY 2018 and 2019 budgets.

Hannah Wesolowski

NAMI, National Alliance on Mental Illness

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## **NAMI ALGER/MARQUETTE UPCOMING MEETINGS & EVENTS**

**ALL MEETINGS/EVENTS BELOW ARE HELD AT 129 W. BARAGA AVE., MARQUETTE UNLESS OTHERWISE STATED** (also known as the Baraga Place Conference Room)

MONDAY MARCH 12, 2018: SUPPORT GROUP MEETING 7 TO 9pm

THURSDAY MARCH 15, 2018: SUPPORT GROUP MEETING 7 TO 9PM

MONDAY MARCH 26, 2018: EDUCATIONAL MEETING

MONDAY APRIL 9, 2018: SUPPORT GROUP MEETING 7 TO 9PM

THURSDAY APRIL 19, 2018: SUPPORT GROUP MEETING 7 TO 9PM

MONDAY APRIL 30, 2018: EDUCATIONAL MEETING 7 TO 9PM SUBJECT: JUDGE CHERYL HILL WILL SPEAK ON SEVERAL TOPICS INCLUDING KEVIN'S LAW. A MEETING YOU WILL NOT WANT TO MISS. WHEN WE HAVE MORE DETAIL IN WHAT SHE WILL BE SPEAKING ABOUT LOOK FOR IT ON OUR WEBSITE OR NEWSPAPERS ALSO YOU CAN EMAIL CKBertucci58@charter.net, text or phone 906-360-7107

MAY 9<sup>TH</sup> - 11<sup>TH</sup>, 2018 NAMI STATE CONFERENCE CALL IF YOU WOULD LIKE MORE INFORMATION

MONDAY MAY 14, 2018: SUPPORT GROUP MEETING 7 TO 9PM

THURSDAY MAY 17, 2018: SUPPORT GROUP MEETING

MONDAY MAY 21, 2018: EDUCATIONAL MEETING

OUR EDUCATIONAL MEETINGS ARE USUSALLY THE LAST MONDAY OF THE MONTH BUT IN MAY THE LAST MONDAY IS MEMORIAL DAY.

WE ARE CONSIDERING HAVING SOME OF OUR EDUCATIONAL MEETINGS AT THE PETER WHITE LIBRARY INSTEAD OF OUR USUSAL MEETING ROOM. PLEASE WATCH THE NEWSPAPER OR ONLINE SOURCES FOR THIS INFORMATION. YOU CAN ALSO EMAIL OR CALL ME FOR MORE INFORMATION.

FOR NEWSLETTERS WE REALLY NEED SOME INPUT AS FAR AS SUBJECTS FOR OUR EDUCATIONAL MEETINGS. THESE MEETINGS ARE FOR YOU AND WOULD LIKE TO KNOW WHAT YOU ARE INTERESTED IN

CKBertucci58@charter.net , TEXT OR CALL ME AT 906-360-7107 CINDY K. BERTUCCI

**Remember: Check Your  
mailing label for membership  
expiration date.**



*Spring is when you feel  
like whistling, even  
with a shoe full of  
slush. -Doug Larson*

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