

NAMI Meeting Minutes 2-19-04

Members present: Pam W, Evelyn G, Susan G, Marty F, Susan F, Shaun C (guest) Priscilla E, Rick E, Bob H, Teresa E, D.E., Lynn C, Seth L

I. Presentation by Amy Forsythe-Stephens

A. Mental Health Association

1. There are 19 chapters in Virginia.
2. Funds come from the United Way, government grants, and private grants.
3. NAMI members Marty F and Bob H both serve on the Mental Health Association Board.

B. Crisis Intervention Training Project Update

1. CIT is a pre-booking jail diversion program targeted to assist those with a mental illness.
 2. CIT trains a special unit of officers to respond to mental health-related situations and crises. The goal is to train one-fifth of uniformed officers to be CIT officers. Amy states, "We don't want to criminalize people with mental illness."
 3. Sixty people were pulled together to participate in strands. The model was developed. The grant was approved to implement the model.
 4. The Bridge is the name for the proposed crisis unit drop off location where CIT officers can take consumers in need of mental health crisis intervention.
 5. Transportation Issues
 - a. How would a consumer who had been taken to the Bridge be transported back home if the crisis could be resolved within a short time?
 - b. What would be the best way to utilize funds for transportation assistance?
 6. Peer to Peer Support

Models for peer support exist already in the Domestic Violence program in which a volunteer meets and greets a victim in need of support.

C. A Member's Account

1. One NAMI member shared that after a session at a private therapist's office in which she revealed being deeply depressed, the outcome was that a police officer came and put her in handcuffs. This occurred despite the fact that the member was not in any way violent or a threat to anyone and of course, no crime had been committed. Member shared her profound feelings of shame and humiliation. She expressed that there was never any need for a police officer to be involved since family would have been able to transport if the therapist would have agreed to wait for family to arrive. A private matter then became

less private and a consumer was treated like a criminal for no reason.

II. STAR-technical assistance program by National NAMI which guides peer to peer crisis counselling.

III. Treasury Update

Checking account = \$3,648.82

Savings account = \$11,952.39

IV. Computers to Loan

1. Marty F is continuing to work on this project.

V. Post-Traumatic Stress Disorder

1. Marty F suggested that the experience of being hospitalized is a trauma in itself. Part of recovery may involve working through unpleasant memories of the experiences in the hospital.

VI. Psychiatric Medication Availability

A. Member Seth L informed members that there is a pharmacy known as the "Down Home Pharmacy" which helps low-income customers obtain their psychiatric medications at a reduced rate. Each customer must be seen in person to be evaluated regarding their status and medication needs.

Submitted by Pam Weiss
Secretary NAMI-NRV