

MISSION: To empower persons affected by mental illness and their family members to achieve a better quality of life by providing them with mutual support, practical information, referral, advocacy and educational resources.

In this issue of *The Voice*, NAMI GC is presenting information on interfacing with first responders.

We are also happy to share our conversation with **Captain James Purcell, Crisis Intervention Training (CIT) Coordinator for the Cleveland Police Department.**

NAMI GC: You are a great advocate of CIT training. From your perspective, how does it make a difference in how officers relate to those living with a mental illness?

Capt. Purcell: *I think there are two parts to that. One is that the officers gain more insight and understanding into the struggles individuals living with mental illness experience in their lives. So they have more empathy. The other part is they learn to be more effective in their approach and verbal skills in encounters with these individuals.*



(l-r) Officers Sean Schuler and Dymphna O'Neill receive the inaugural Crisis Intervention Team Officer Award at NAMI GC's annual meeting.

NAMI GC: On average, how many calls related to mental illness does CPD receive weekly?

Capt. Purcell: *Between 150 and 200.*

NAMI GC: How many CPD officers are currently CIT trained?

Capt. Purcell: *600 out of approximately 1450 officers have received the 40 hour CIT Training.*

NAMI GC: What is the most difficult part of being a CIT officer?

Capt. Purcell: *I think that CIT officers are asked to respond and de-escalate individuals in crisis suffering from a wide variety of mental illnesses, some of whom are under the influence of a variety of substances, with limited training and often, very little information to go on. It is work that is outside what we traditionally think of as law enforcement, and yet, these officers do a great job, day after day.*

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Calling 911 And Talking With Police

If a situation escalates into a crisis, you may have to call the police. Thankfully, there are a few things you can do to keep the situation as calm as possible.

On The Phone

Share all the information you can with your 911 operator. Tell the dispatcher that your loved one is having a mental health crisis and explain her mental health history and/or diagnosis. If the police who arrive aren't aware that a mental health crisis is occurring, they cannot handle the situation appropriately. Many communities have CIT programs that train police officers to handle and respond safely to psychiatric crisis calls. Not every police officer is trained in a CIT program, but you should ask for a CIT officer if possible.

During A Crisis

Police are trained to maintain control and ensure safety. If you are worried about a police officer overreacting, the best way to ensure a safe outcome is to stay calm. When an officer arrives at your home, say "this is a mental health crisis." Mention you can share any helpful information, then step out of the way. Yelling or getting too close to the officer is likely to make him feel out of control. You want the officer as calm as possible.

Be aware that your loved one may be placed in handcuffs and transported in the back of a police car. This can be

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NEWS AND NOTES & COMMENTARY – FIRST DAYS AND LAST DAYS

Michael Baskin, *Executive Director*

Did you know that my first day of work at NAMI Greater Cleveland was April 23rd, 2005 and I never showed up? How's that for a first day on the job?? There was an ice storm all over Northeast Ohio and I couldn't get out of my driveway. My last day will be July 31st. While I have looked forward to retirement for a long time, leaving the people here and the organization we've built together will be a mixed blessing. I can say one thing for sure; I've learned a lot at NAMI and met fascinating people along the way. But I'm ready for a change and it's time for me to start doing some of the things I've always wanted to, but haven't gotten to, or some favorite things I've wanted to go back to, or brand new things I don't even know yet what they will be. In any case, I'll always look back fondly at my time at NAMI, my "home away from home" for almost 14 years. It has been a privilege to serve in my role as Executive Director and as a colleague to all these wonderful people who work and volunteer here.

C.I.T.

In this edition of The VOICE we are highlighting the work of "first responders" in Mental Health (MH). I think that for many people, especially in the general population, they may not know who first responders in MH are, or how critical they are in the lives of family members and individuals with a diagnosis. Crisis Intervention Team (CIT) Officers often change the course of people's lives while putting their own lives at risk.

NAMI was at the forefront of this movement for first responders, when, in 1988, the Mayor of Memphis turned to local NAMI advocates, enlisted police, community mental health profes-

sionals, university leaders, hospital administrators, and church officials to conceive a new approach to working with persons with mental illness in crisis. This was the first CIT. NAMI GC staff are key members in CIT as part of planning with the Mental Health Response Committee locally, which features the development of several areas of CIT Team Training, and directly in communities, where we provide support to CIT. Our Community Education Coordinator Ellen Riehm ensures that NAMI members (those affected directly by mental illness) are a part of the CIT curriculum ensuring the "consumer's" voice is heard. She was an essential voice and advocate in the startup of CIT in the West Shore communities. I hope as you read about the work that's being done, and the development of the work in this field of first responders, you will appreciate the credibility and value of their efforts, including most importantly that CIT Officers keep families safe and help direct individuals into treatment instead of jail whenever possible.

WHAT DIAGNOSIS CAN'T DO

In the "Notable Deaths" section of the Plain Dealer on May 15th, I read where Margot Kidder had died. You may remember Ms. Kidder was an actress best known for her role as Lois Lane in the original Superman movie. Ms. Kidder was also known for her advocacy in mental health. What struck me most in the article was in the words she used to describe diagnosis. "A diagnosis is just a description of symptoms to guide doctors on how to treat you. A diagnosis does not even hint at the root cause or the possible cure for those symptoms." To me this is an ideal way of saying I am not my mental illness. It won't define me! It's a simple yet essential message in the battle against stigma. These labels are

only signposts for the individual to understand a portion of what's meant about symptoms. Unfortunately, with our current nomenclature in the culture today, mental health diagnoses have come to define who a person is. The label says nothing about where the person comes from and who they are. While it is true that for many, naming something gives one power, it also has the power to distort meaning and that's where a diagnosis can be stigmatizing. As part of stigma, the shame surrounding diagnosis can force people back into the shadows, as Kidder attested to. Ms. Kidder became an outspoken activist after a bout with bipolar disorder, and later was awarded The Courage In Mental Health Award from the California Women's Mental Health Policy Council in 2001. Her message is one from which each of us could learn. I did.

NEW OFFICER SELECTED TO NAMI GC BOARD

On a final note, John Cippola, Esq. was named as Vice president and Chair of Governance at NAMI GC. John is an attorney at the law firm Calfee, Halter and Griswold, LLP. He replaces Mark Weintraub who retired from the board this past May.

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NEWS & NOTES *continued*

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FUNDING PROVIDED BY THESE GENEROUS ORGANIZATIONS MAKES IT POSSIBLE FOR NAMI GC TO OFFER ITS PROGRAMS AT NO COST TO PARTICIPANTS!!!!!!

WISHING YOU ALL THE BEST TO COME, SPRING TO SUMMER AND MORE, FROM ALL OF US AT NAMI GC!!!!

Yours and Best,



Executive Director

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NAMI GC: What do you think inspires an officer to volunteer for CIT training?

Capt. Purcell: *I think there are a variety of reasons. Some just have a strong desire the help these individuals and want to be able to do it better. Some have friends or family members struggling with mental illness. Some officers want the training to improve their skill-set and literally be the best police officer that they can be.*

NAMI GC: Do you think mandating police to be CIT trained is a good idea or that the traditional model of it being volunteer only works better?

Capt. Purcell: *I believe in the model of having your CIT Officers that handle the calls from dispatch be volunteers. Being a full-time CIT officer*

is somewhat of a calling, and takes a special type of officer. However, all officers can benefit from some level of training in CIT skills and principles, and bringing all officers up to a higher level of knowledge and skill in their interactions with people suffering from mental illness is a worthwhile goal.

NAMI GC: What is your vision for CIT in our community?

Capt. Purcell: *I believe that CIT will continue to expand in policing and we will continue to see more CIT officers and a greater awareness of what CIT officers do in our community. We will also continue to see CIT officers improve their skills as the training becomes better and more challenging.*

NAMI GC: How do CIT officers interact with Mobil Crisis at Frontline?

Capt. Purcell: *Our CIT officers take referrals from Mobil Crisis for people needing immediate intervention, as well as refer people to Mobile Crisis that may need some ongoing care or follow-up services.*

NAMI GC: How do you think NAMI can assist you?

Capt. Purcell: *I think NAMI can assist by continuing to spread the word about CIT officers and what they do, as well as helping people we encounter gain information about mental health care and navigating the mental health care system. I would also like to say that I hear people praising NAMI every day for helping them with difficult, sometimes impossible situations and cannot say enough good things about this organization.*

MOCA Cleveland Event Raises Awareness of Mental Health and Benefits NAMI GC

On April 20, MOCA Cleveland hosted eCLEtic: Soles On View which focused on the art of the sneaker culture. Archie Green, community engagement & project manager at MOCA Cleveland, a musician and mental health advocate, conceived the program. The evening

included two panel discussions and the sale of sneakers painted by local artists. NAMI Greater Cleveland benefited from the proceeds of an Ohio City themed shoe created by local artist Jared Mitchell.

Thank you to Archie and all of our friends at MOCA Cleveland for supporting NAMI Greater Cleveland and to Jared Mitchell for sharing his artistry.



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extremely upsetting to witness, so be prepared.

What Can The Police Do?

- Transport a person who wants to go to the hospital. A well-trained CIT officer can often talk to a person who is upset, calm him down and convince him to go to the hospital voluntarily.
- Take a person to a hospital for an involuntary evaluation. In certain circumstances, police can force a person in crisis to go to the hospital involuntarily for a mental health evaluation. The laws vary from state to state.
- Check on the welfare of your family member if you are worried about her or can't reach her. Call the non-emergency number for the police department in your community and explain why you are concerned. Ask them to conduct a welfare check.

If you have questions about the laws in your state, talk to your local police department or contact your local NAMI.

Crisis Intervention Program

The lack of mental health crisis ser-

vices across the U.S. has resulted in law enforcement officers serving as first responders to most crises. A CIT program is an innovative, community-based approach to improve the outcomes of these encounters.

In over 2,700 communities nationwide, CIT programs create connections between law enforcement, mental health providers, hospital emergency services and individuals with mental illness and their families. Through collaborative community partnerships and intensive training, CIT improves communication, identifies mental health resources for those in crisis and ensures officer and community safety.

The Benefits of CIT

Not only can CIT programs bring community leaders together, they can also help keep people with mental illness out of jail and in treatment, on the road to recovery. That's because diversion programs like CIT reduce arrests of people with mental illness while simultaneously increasing the likelihood that individuals will receive mental health services. CIT programs also:

- Give police officers more tools to do their job safely and effectively. Research shows that CIT is associated with improved officer attitude and knowledge about mental ill-

ness. In Memphis, for example, CIT resulted in an 80% reduction of officer injuries during mental health crisis calls.

- Keep law enforcement's focus on crime. Some communities have found that CIT has reduced the time officers spend responding to a mental health call. This puts officers back into the community more quickly.
- Produce cost savings. It's difficult to estimate exactly how much diversion programs can save communities. But incarceration is costly compared to community-based treatment. For example in Detroit an inmate with mental illness in jail costs \$31,000 a year, while community-based mental health treatment costs only \$10,000 a year.

NAMI promotes the expansion of CIT programs nationwide by providing NAMI Affiliates and State Organizations, local law enforcement, mental health providers and other community leaders with information and support about CIT implementation. NAMI also works with local and national leaders to establish standards and promote innovation in CIT.

These articles were reprinted from NAMI's Blog. Curious about NAMI's Blog? Go to www.nami.org/blog.

NAMIWalks Announces Team Captain Challenge

- Recruit 10 Team Members (you + 9 others)
- Raise \$1000 as a Team (hint: \$100 per person)
- Do this by Friday, August 17 (4 weeks before Walk Day)

Do all of the above and a NAMIWalks Team Captain Ballcap will be shipped directly to you, for you to wear on Walk Day: Saturday, September 15.

Questions? Contact Lisa Dellafiora at 216-875-0266 or ldellfiora@namiclevelnad.org.



Annual Meeting & Awards Ceremony

An enthusiastic crowd of nearly 200 NAMI GC friends attended our NAMI Greater Cleveland's Annual Meeting & Awards Ceremony where we hosted a panel discussion titled Friend or Phone: How Does Social Media Affect Your Mental Health. We are grateful to Dr. Erum Ahmad, Chief Fellow, Division of Child and Adolescent Psychiatry, University Hospitals of Cleveland Medical Center, for serving as the panel's moderator. And we are equally appreciative of our panelists: Dr. Jo-

seph Austerman, Director of Child and Adolescent Psychiatry, Cleveland Clinic; Dr. John Hertzler, Division Chief, Psychiatry, University Hospitals Rainbow Babies and Children's Hospital; and Dr. Andrew Hunt, Director of the Transitional Youth Initiative at University Hospitals. Each dispensed personal anecdotes and professional advice about the importance of moderation when accessing social media. In addition, our guests enthusiastically acknowledged our honorees, both individuals and organizations, affirming their outstanding efforts on behalf of those living with a mental illness. Thank you to our outstanding sponsors as well as all who attended and generously supported this event.



Sean Schuler; Officer Dymphna O'Neill, Bay Village High School representatives Kelley Knaak and Gabby Kariotakis; Dr. Leopoldo Pozuelo, Larry Heller; Life Exchange Center representatives Dr. Martha Potts and Ovetta Joi Dixon; The Honorable Judge Emanuella Groves; and Judith Banks.

ANNUAL MEETING & AWARD CEREMONY HONOREES:

Larry Heller

The Scott Adamson Memorial Peer Award

Judith Banks

Mental Health Family/Caregiver Award

The Honorable Emanuella Groves,

Cleveland Municipal Court

Valeria A. Harper Cultural Competence in Mental Health Award

Dr. Leopoldo Pozuelo, Cleveland Clinic

Mental Health Provider Award

Life Exchange Center

Eugene Brudno Memorial Organization Award

Bay Village High School

Teen Mental Health Award

Dymphna O'Neill,

Cleveland Police Department – Second District
Inaugural Crisis Intervention Team Officer Award

Sean Schuler, Cleveland Police Department

– Second District Inaugural Crisis
Intervention Team Officer Award

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Sainato's at Rivergate

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Join us for our NAMIWalks Kick-off Lunch

Friday, July, 13 – 11:30 a.m. to 1 p.m.
 Jerry Sue Thornton Center
 CCC Community Room
 2500 East 22 St. - Cleveland OH 44115

This event is free to anyone interested in creating a NAMI-Walks fundraising team. Contact Lisa at 216-875-7776 or ldellafiora@namicleveland.org to make your reservation.



Presented by



Saturday, September 15
 Upper Edgewater Park
 Goals: Raise \$140,000 and attract 1,400 participants

NAMIWalks is for everyone: peers, family members, friends, mental health professional and well-versed advocates, fitness enthusiasts, the concerned and the curious. We look forward to seeing you on September 15 as we raise awareness of mental illness and funds for NAMI GC. Go to namiwalks.org/greatercleveland to register, donate or sponsor.

NAMIWalks Unveils 2018 Recognition Items

Earn great prizes by fundraising for NAMIWalks.

Raise \$100 and receive the 2017 NAMIWalks T-shirt on Walk Day.

Raise \$250 and receive the 2018 NAMIWalks T-shirt and a Baseball Cap or Stainless Steel Tumbler.

Raise \$500 and receive the 2018 NAMIWalks T-shirt and a Long Sleeve Wicking Tee (available in men's, women's & youth sizes).

Raise \$1,000 and receive the 2018 NAMIWalks T-shirt and a Microfleece Jacket the Performance Fleece (available in men's, women's & youth sizes).

Raise \$1,500 and receive the 2018 NAMIWalks T-shirt and a Rain Slicker (available in men's, women's and youth sizes).

Raise \$2,500 and receive the 2018 NAMIWalks T-shirt and 2-n-1 Wheeled Tote.

With the exception of the T-shirt, which is awarded on Walk Day, recognition gifts will be mailed to qualifying participants after the Walk. Start earning your prizes today. To register for NAMIWalks 2018, to go www.namiwalks.org/greatercleveland. For more information contact Lisa at 216-875-0266.



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