



Affiliate Toolkit

*A guide to Operating
a NAMI Affiliate*

Summer, 2007, 5th Edition
Presented by, Center for Leadership Development





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Thank You

Thank you for offering your time and energy to your NAMI affiliate. Because of your commitment to our cause and your willingness to serve, we can—and do—have a lasting positive impact on the lives of families and mental health consumers living with mental illness throughout our country.

If you're a first-time officer, director or committee chair of your affiliate, you may feel overwhelmed with your new responsibilities. If you're a seasoned veteran, you may be looking for fresh ideas to revitalize your affiliate. In either case, the NAMI Affiliate Toolkit has been created for you.

Use the Toolkit to—

- Educate and orient new affiliate leaders.
- Build understanding and consensus about our organization's mission and goals among your members.
- Provide officers and committee chairs the information and perspectives they need to do their jobs more efficiently and effectively.
- Ensure affiliate practices meet NAMI organizational standards.
- Adapt ideas and strategies that have worked for other affiliates to yours.
- Help organize your affiliate and its activities.
- Help identify your affiliate's annual "action plan" activity(s)

The NAMI Affiliate Toolkit will be updated on an annual basis. Thus, every year the new edition will include changes made at that national and state level to include the most up-to-date information.

The NAMI Affiliate Toolkit will also be available online on the NAMI Website, www.nami.org, in the members only section under State Relations. You can print pages directly from your computer to give to volunteers and committee chairs to help them in their affiliate leadership roles.

Call Us. We Can Help.

The Affiliate Toolkit is a supplement—not substitute — for the support services your state and national offices provide. Besides using the Toolkit for ideas, training and reference, we urge you to work directly with NAMI National and/or state staff to receive support and guidance tailored to your affiliate's individual situation, resources and needs.

Please let us know if you have any questions or suggestions for improving The Affiliate Toolkit by contacting the NAMI Center for Leadership Development Department at 703-524-7600, or CLD@nami.org. Thank you, again, for your service to your affiliate.



Introduction

As the blades of grass in our logo symbolize, NAMI is a grassroots organization that is dedicated to the eradication of mental illness and to the improvement of the quality of life of those whose lives are affected by these diseases (NAMI By-laws, July 2002).

NAMI is a service and action-oriented organization that brings communities together: to advocate for improved services and laws that govern the care of people with mental illness; to combat the stigma that surrounds mental illness; to support individuals and families in their path to recovery; and to educate individuals, families and the public on the nature of these diseases and their treatment.

NAMI focuses its efforts on serious mental illnesses caused by brain disorders that can affect the ability to think, feel and relate to other people and the environment. For adults, serious mental illnesses include schizophrenia, major depression, bipolar disorder (manic depression), obsessive-compulsive disorder, panic disorder and other brain disorders. For children and adolescents, serious mental illnesses include those experienced by adults as well as attention deficit disorder, autism, pervasive developmental disorder and Tourette's syndrome.

Membership consists of: people of mental illness, their family, friends and mental health care professionals (NAMI By-laws, July 2002). Our financial support comes from member donations, corporate, federal and state grants and other philanthropic grants.

With an estimated 20 percent of families affected by mental illness, our organization's membership represents only a small fraction of those who could benefit from our services and add their voices to ours. As a leader of your affiliate, you can nourish our grassroots by extending support, education and advocacy opportunities to individuals in your community.

For more information contact the NAMI National office at:

NAMI
Colonial Place Three
2107 Wilson Boulevard, Suite 300
Arlington, VA 22201

Phone: 703-524-7600
Website: www.nami.org



Part I: Affiliate Organization

*A Guide to Governance
of a NAMI Affiliate*



Part I

Affiliate Organization

Clearly, the best-run affiliates are the ones that are the best organized. They have formulated bylaws, elected officers and appointed committees, developed policies and procedures and have volunteers in place to handle key affiliate functions, such as answering calls, holding meetings and collecting dues.

Affiliate Board of Directors

Board of Directors Roles and Responsibilities

The Board of Directors will:

- Prepare and submit affiliate bylaws for member approval
- Establish goals, priorities and strategic plans for the affiliate
- Determine how the affiliate spends its money
- Develop general policies and procedures for operating the affiliate
- Establish committees and appoint committee heads
- Create task forces to handle special projects
- Help members develop leadership skills to qualify them to hold affiliate offices and encourage turnover among affiliate leaders

Suggestions on Setting Goals, Priorities & Strategic Plans

- Survey your members annually to find out what programs and projects they want and need most.
- Include questions about skills, interests and the types of tasks and projects members want to work on.
- Schedule a planning retreat soon after your affiliate elects its officers and board members.
- Work with your state office staff and/or Board to incorporate important state and national initiatives
- Make general long-range plans for membership growth, program growth and funding growth you anticipate during the next year or two.
- Discuss and reach consensus on your affiliate's three most important priorities. Make strategic plans and allocate affiliate resources to address your affiliate's priorities.
- Make specific plans for programs, projects and activities during the upcoming year.
- Outline responsibilities and tasks for the upcoming quarter and identify the member(s) who will see that they get done.
- Construct a budget that reflects expected revenue and expenses for your planned activities.

All affiliates should elect officers, including—

- President
- Vice-president (Note: Some affiliates elect a first and second vice president.)
- Secretary
- Treasurer

Normally, one person serves in each office, but in some affiliates, two members share an office. In addition to electing officers, your members may also elect at-large board members to represent them on your affiliate's Board of Directors.

All affiliate officers and directors are expected to—

- Understand the affiliate's mission, services, policies and programs.
- Identify key political issues and decide how the affiliate will address them.
- Establish policies for the affiliate's relationships with area mental health programs and other organizations with similar interests and goals.
- Develop policies for the support services the affiliate will provide to individual members.
- Set policies for length of officers' terms, elections and other operational matters.
- Attend and participate in all board and membership meetings.
 - Keep meetings focused on a single purpose—education *or* support *or* affiliate business. Schedule separate sessions for each function.
 - Prepare a simple written agenda for meetings and stick to it. If possible, mail, fax or email a copy of the agenda to meeting participants in advance.
- Attend affiliate functions and special events.
- Serve on committees that can benefit from the board member's area of expertise

Notes About Responsibilities & Tasks

In the smallest of our affiliates, the officers *are* the members—all of them. For those officer-members, being *responsible* for a task means *doing* the task. Ideally, for the rest of our affiliate leaders, accepting responsibility for seeing that a task gets done means breaking it down into manageable pieces and *delegating tasks to members*.

Why is delegation so important? Here are a few of the many reasons:

- Delegation allows affiliate members to share the work—and the satisfaction that comes with working together on a successful project.
- Delegation allows more members a chance to be interested and involved in your affiliate. When a few officer-members keep all the responsibilities *and all the tasks* to themselves, newer members or those who feel outside your affiliate's "inner circle" lose interest and lose the chance to feel they belong.
- Delegation helps minimize the burnout that comes when too few members take on too much work.
- Delegation allows your members opportunities to develop the knowledge and skills they need to head committees and hold offices. This is how your affiliate develops new leaders.
- Delegation of tasks frees officers to concentrate on leading and managing the affiliate. By shifting from a task orientation to a leadership orientation, your officers and board members can concentrate more on planning, setting goals and establishing priorities.

Officer Duties and Responsibilities

President

- Works with other officers and board members to develop long-range plans and set priorities for the affiliate.
- Works with members and officers to develop an annual operating plan that includes an annual budget.
- Plans, schedules and presides over board and affiliate business meetings.
- Chairs the affiliate's executive committee.
- Calls special meetings when needed.
- Appoints members to chair affiliate committees.
- Oversees affiliate operations to make sure essential tasks are getting done.
- Serves as the affiliate's primary contact with the state and national organizations.
- Reviews and responds to mail and messages from the state and national offices.
- Acts as the spokesperson for the affiliate.

Vice President

- Attends all board meetings.
- Serves on the executive committee.
- Manages special projects as requested by the president.
- Takes over the president's responsibilities when the president is absent.

Secretary

- Attends all board meetings.
- Serves on the executive committee.
- Notifies members about upcoming meetings.
- Records and reports minutes of all board, executive committee and business meetings.
- Takes on the president's responsibilities when the president and vice president are both absent.

Treasurer

- Keeps the affiliate's financial records.
- Reports financial information to officers, directors and members.
- Prepares operating budgets and monitors spending.
- Collects dues and other affiliate revenues.
- Forwards dues collected from affiliate members for the state and national organizations, along with a statement showing the exact amounts due to the state and national organization by December of each year.
- Manages member records.
- Supplies the state office with current information, including members to be added or deleted from the affiliate roster and address changes.
- Notifies the state office promptly of changes in affiliate officers or contact persons.
- Collects and classifies donations to the affiliate as gifts from individuals, gifts from organizations or grants.
- Pays bills.
- Files appropriate tax forms and reports.

Notes for the Treasurer: Keeping Books & Records

- Keep accurate records of the income your affiliate receives, the money it spends, the value of any assets it owns and the amount of any money it owes.
- See the “Financial Records” Section in Part II, Affiliate Operations for a suggested chart of accounts.
- Add new members immediately to your affiliate’s mailing list for newsletters and meeting notices.
- Utilize the NAMI web-based membership system for promptly updating member records as members’ addresses and other information changes.
- Develop a system for sharing current member information within your affiliate and with the state office.

Notes for the Treasurer: The Budget

- As the end of your affiliate’s fiscal year approaches, begin work on a budget for the upcoming year, using financial records from previous years as a guide.
- Provide past financial reports to your affiliate’s board, committee heads and program coordinators to use as a guide and ask each of them to prepare a proposed budget for the coming year’s income and expenses in their areas of responsibility.
- If your affiliate plans to recruit new members, be sure to factor in the additional variable costs to serve them, such as increases in newsletter printing quantities, postage and refreshments.
- Keep financial records up to date and review them at least quarterly. Compare actual income and expenditures to budgeted amounts and make adjustments as needed.

Organizing for Success

Bylaws

If your affiliate has not already done so, you will need to develop and adopt bylaws immediately. Sample affiliate bylaws that meet NAMI standards are provided below. We recommend using this sample as a framework for developing or reviewing your own affiliate bylaws. Based on the size and activities of your affiliate you may want to exclude, clarify or revise the wording. **Don't forget to have your state NAMI office and/or the national office review your bylaws and any revisions before they are adopted, and send each a final copy when approved.**

*Please note that suggestions and guidelines have been denoted with ****'s and should not be included in your final copy.*

Sample Affiliate Bylaws

I. Mission

- A. To provide support, education and advocacy for people with mental illness and their families.
- B. To promote better quality of care, rights and interests of people with mental illness, particularly of those who cannot speak for themselves, and to advocate policies at the local, state and national levels to accomplish these objectives.
- C. To help families and friends of people with mental illness by providing emotional support, education and information.

II. Membership

- A. Membership is composed primarily of people with mental illness, their families, friends, mental health providers, and/or allied professionals, and people in the community.
- B. Members in good standing are eligible to hold office and vote in person or by proxy on all motions considered at general membership meetings.
- C. Control of this organization rests with the members. Any action of the Board of Directors is subject to review and approval by a majority of the membership present at a meeting. Any member may request that any action or motion be tabled or rescinded by a majority of the membership at a regular meeting or a special meeting called for the purpose.
- D. The organization shall be independent of other agencies and advocacy groups not affiliated with NAMI, and shall not share bylaws, articles of incorporation, or boards of directors with such other groups.

III. Dues

- A. Affiliate members pay dues yearly as established by the Board of Directors.
- B. The local or state Board of Directors may waive dues for individual members at their discretion.

IV. Membership Meetings

- A. Regular meetings of the membership will be held once a month except in July and December.
- B. The March membership meeting is designated as the Annual Meeting for the election of officers.
- C. Special meetings of the members may be called by the President, the Board of Directors or on request of five or more members.

V. Fiscal Year

The fiscal year begins January 1 and ends December 31.

VI. Board of Directors

A. The Board of Directors will have no more than nine** members including the five elected officers—president, first vice-president, second vice-president, treasurer and secretary. The officers may elect by majority vote as many as four additional directors from among the affiliate members to serve concurrent terms.

** The number of directors is flexible depending on state law. The BOD can be comprised of between three and fifteen members

VII. Terms of Office

- A. The officers' regular term of office is two years, continuing until the election of their successors.
- B. The immediate past president serves as an ex-officio member of the Board of Directors.
- C. The Board of Directors may replace any director or officer who has failed to attend three consecutive board meetings. After giving reasonable notice to the director or officer involved, board may declare the office vacant.
- D. The board will elect replacements to fill vacant elective positions except for the office of president.

** Consider limiting officers and members to two consecutive terms

** Consider requiring officers and members to take a year off from holding office after serving two consecutive terms. (Of course, these former board members can head committees and task forces during their year off from the board.)

** Stagger terms of service so that one half or one third of the board members are elected every one or two years for terms of two to three years. The initial board members may be placed in three classes A, B & C for staggering purposes.

VIII. Duties of Officers

A. The president presides at all meetings of the members and of the Board of Directors. The president appoints chairpersons for all committees except the Nominating Committee, with the

approval of the Board, and supervises their work. The President acts as the affiliate's executive officer and, in general, performs the duties usually associated with the office of president.

B. The first vice president succeeds the president in case of a vacancy in that office and performs the duties of the president in his absence or due to disability. The first vice president undertakes other responsibilities assigned by the president.

C. The second vice president succeeds the first vice president in case of a vacancy in that office and performs the duties of the first vice president in his absence or due to disability. The second vice president undertakes other responsibilities assigned by the president.

D. The secretary handles correspondence for the affiliate and records minutes of all meetings of the membership and the Executive Board.

E. The treasurer receives and disburses all the affiliate's funds and maintains a complete and accurate account of all funds received and disbursed. The treasurer provides members an annual financial report listing all receipts and disbursements by budget category after the close of the fiscal year.

IX. Authorization to Spend Affiliate Funds

A. The treasurer is authorized to pay as much as \$50 in a given month for any valid office expenses for supplies, printing or postage. All other disbursements of funds must be approved in advance by either the Board of Directors or the membership.

B. The Board of Directors, by approval of at least three of its members, may authorize expenditures of as much as \$200 in one month for any expenses deemed appropriate to the mission of the affiliate. The board will use discretion in authorizing expenditures and will seek membership approval when possible.

C. Expenditures not approved by the Board of Directors or in excess of \$200 must be approved by a majority vote of members in good standing at a regular membership meeting.

X. Elections

A. Officers are nominated by a three-member Nominating Committee appointed by the president and including at least one member who is a past president of the affiliate.

B. After securing the consent of the nominees to serve if elected, the Nominating Committee prepares a slate of candidates for election as officers.

C. Officer nominations are permitted from the floor provided the candidate is a member in good standing and has agreed to serve if elected.

XI. Standing Committees

A. The Executive Board creates suitable standing committees as needed.

B. The Board of Directors may create special committees as needed.

XII. NAMI Name and Logo

A. This Organization acknowledges that NAMI controls the use of the name, acronym and logo of NAMI and AMI, that their uses by this corporation shall be in accordance with NAMI policy.

B. Upon termination of affiliation with or charter by NAMI, the uses of these names, acronyms and logo by this Affiliate member shall cease.

XIII. Non-Discrimination

This Organization shall not discriminate against any person or group of persons on the basis of race, disability, creed, sex, religion, or age in the requirements for membership, its policies, or actions.

XIV. Parliamentary Authority

A current edition of *Robert's Rules of Order* shall govern the conduct of business in all cases in which they are applicable and not in conflict with the bylaws.

XV. Executive Director

An Executive Director may be employed by the Board of Directors and shall have general direction of and supervision over the day-to-day affairs of the organization. The Executive Director shall exercise such authority and perform such duties as the Board of Directors may from time to time assign to the Executive Director.

XVI. Amendments

Any proposed amendment to the affiliate bylaws is to be presented in writing to the entire general membership at least three weeks before the meeting at which it is to be voted on. Ratification of the amendment requires a favorable vote by at least two-thirds of the members in good standing present at the meeting.

** Consider a dispute resolution clause that resembles that of your state bylaws.



Committees: How Affiliates Get Things Done

Most of the work of affiliates gets planned, organized and accomplished by committees. The board decides how many committees your affiliate needs and their leaders, sizes, names and areas of responsibility, based on available personnel and service priorities.

How your affiliate organizes and assigns jobs is up to your board. The important thing is to get the jobs done. To help your members do their jobs better, we encourage you to share with them the appropriate lists of tasks, notes and tips which follow.

Committee Chairperson Duties

- As committee chairperson, your job is to plan programs and projects and *see that tasks get done* on schedule.
- You are not expected to do all the tasks yourself. Instead, give members a chance to get involved by taking on specific task assignments.
- Recruit enough committee members to handle tasks comfortably.
- Assign tasks so that all committee members get to make a meaningful, manageable contribution to the program or project.
- Assign tasks based on members' experience, skills, interests and available time.
- Prepare written lists of responsibilities, guidelines and goals for the committee (see sample Committee Description Template below).
- Check with members regularly to see that work is proceeding on schedule.

Committees Providing Support Services

The committee or committees in charge of your affiliate's various support services are responsible for functions including—

- Appointing and *training* one or more members to serve as the affiliate contact.
- Appointing additional referral contacts within your affiliate to support young families and consumers.
- Seeing that interested affiliate members participate in support group training to prepare affiliate members to lead support groups.
- Organizing ongoing support groups led by trained facilitators to meet the needs of the community (such as support groups for family members, people with mental illness, young families, etc). Arrange for all on going support groups facilitators to be trained.
- Organizing ongoing support groups run by and for people with mental illness.
- See *Support* section under Programs in Part II for more information

Committees Providing Education Services

The responsibilities and tasks for the committee or committees your board appoints to help

- Recognize and respond to members' varying needs by planning both basic educational programs for newer members and more advanced programs for established members.
- Plan special events to engage and educate the public about mental illnesses.
- Recruit affiliate members to teach family/consumer and community education courses. Designate a speaker bureau consisting of family members, and people with mental illness targeted toward a variety of audiences.
- Identify and plan educational programs for people, groups and agencies in the community who often deal with individuals living with mental illness and their families, including hospital programs and community settings.
- Track news and research current information on mental illnesses and their treatment.
- Collect books, brochures, fact sheets and copies of relevant news and feature stories and makes them available to members and prospective members through the affiliate's lending library.
- Provide the affiliate contact with a current list of resources and sends them to callers as requested by the affiliate contact.
- Provide members of the Advocacy Committee with a current list of resources and send them to legislators as needed.
- Recommend and/or supply resources to the local public library.
- See *Education* section under Part II: Affiliate Programs for more information.

Committees Providing Member Services

Your board may create committees and task forces or appoint individual members to handle these member services tasks—

- Recruit new members for the affiliate, reflecting the diversity of the community and help them get involved in affiliate activities.
- Encourage current members to renew their memberships.
- Publish the affiliate newsletter.
- Organize a telephone tree to get urgent messages to members quickly.
- Find suitable locations for meetings.
- Welcome visitors to meetings.
- Provide refreshments for meetings.
- Prepare, distribute and report to the board on the annual member survey.
- Organize a nominating committee or task force to develop a slate of officers each year.
- See *Membership & Dues and Member Services in Part II: Affiliate Operations* for more information

Other Committees

Other committees your affiliate may choose to initiate are:

Public Policy – handles tracking and disbursement of information on local, state and National public policy issues

Community/Media Relations – separates the community education portion of the Education committee to another committee. This is becoming more popular as more and more affiliates offer one or more NAMI signature education programs.

Committee Description Template

Committee Name

- *Responsibilities of the Committee:*
A brief narrative of the committee's responsibilities and objectives. Include any language from the bylaws that applies to this committee.
- *Background:*
Provide a brief explanation of why this committee was created, a purpose statement.
- *Contact information:*
Include contact information for the committee chair and a listing of committee members
- *Other Information:*
You may want to reproduce any notes or suggestions included in this Toolkit that relates to this committee.

Volunteers

Every NAMI affiliate member is a potential volunteer. Volunteers are the lifeblood of our affiliates; they are the oil that keeps the NAMI machine running. Below is a job description template for volunteer positions. Job descriptions help make volunteers more effective by providing clarity of roles and outlining expectations. Job descriptions also help ensure consistency when volunteers change.

Volunteer Job Description Template

Position Description for:

List of Duties:

Responsibilities:

Authorities:

Bylaws that pertain to this position:

Pre-requisites:

Training, if applicable:

Traditions:

Who to contact for assistance



Incorporating Your Affiliate

You may wish to create a separate legal entity for your affiliate, and make it eligible for non-profit tax status. Most charitable foundations require you to submit your articles of incorporation before considering your proposal for a grant. Incorporating your affiliate also shifts certain legal liabilities from individuals to the organization itself.

If your affiliate is already incorporated, you need to notify the appropriate state government agency and your NAMI state office any time you amend your articles of incorporation, change your principal office address or rename your affiliate.

Check with your state office to find out the status of your affiliate or for assistance/recommendations on affiliate incorporation and non-profit tax status.

Non-Profit Tax Status

Nonprofit corporations with charitable, educational, scientific, religious or cultural purposes have federal tax-exempt status under section 501 (c) (3) of the Internal Revenue Code.

If your affiliate's receipts are no more than \$5,000 per year, donations you receive may be tax-exempt for the donor even without securing official tax-exempt status. However, nearly all grant-making foundations contribute only to organizations that have formally applied for and received tax-exempt status. Non-profit mailing rates and some state and federal tax exemptions are available only to organizations with official tax-exempt status.

Because of these advantages, NAMI recommends that you to talk to your NAMI state office about their opportunities for assistance in seeking tax-exempt status—also known as 501 (c) (3) status. Many states offer umbrella tax-exempt status in which your affiliate is exempt through the state office's status. In this case, you will work closely with your state office to maintain records and necessary IRS documents.

REMEMBER: As a tax-exempt corporation, your affiliate may not endorse or oppose any political candidate. Your members may lobby legislators, but you may not spend more than 20 percent of affiliate income doing so. Since affiliates do not typically hire professional lobbyists, your lobbying costs should be well below the maximum.

There are other important restrictions on what 501 (c) (3) can and cannot do. To avoid legal problems, be sure to contact the state or national office before you begin any fund raising activities.



Consumer Involvement in NAMI

Why Consumer Involvement and Inclusion is important to NAMI:

- 1. Those persons for whose benefit NAMI was formed, namely consumers, have important assets to offer NAMI based on their unique experiences and insights as consumers of services.** New, more effective treatments and supports are allowing more consumers to recover to a substantial degree. Many realize that mental illness health care is in transition today. They want to be a part of NAMI advocacy activities, where experiential knowledge is priceless.
- 2. Consumers want information that NAMI provides.** Membership in NAMI gives consumers an array of resources, including the *Advocate*. Educational meetings, state NAMI conferences, state and local NAMI newsletters, and the NAMI national convention are other activities available to NAMI members.
- 3. A number of consumers are highly effective advocates.** Side by side with family members (many consumers also are parents, spouses and have siblings with mental illness) they are considered by many policy-makers to be the most credible spokespersons for citizens who have mental illnesses. Increasingly, consumers show a passion and tenacity and knowledge that can be an inspiration to others. Their valuable knowledge can help clarify our goals and steer our course more reliably. NAMI affiliates are stronger as a result of the different perspectives and skills consumer members bring to the table, complimenting advocacy, education, and support activities at the grassroots level.
- 4. Many calls to the NAMI Helpline (as many as one third) come from consumers seeking help.** Callers are referred to the affiliate nearest them, but they may not find a helpful, welcoming response in some cases. There may or may not be a suitable support group in their area, either one sponsored by a NAMI affiliate or with an outside consumer organization. Many recovering consumers would like to join or form support groups under the NAMI umbrella, and need help. Integrating NAMI signature consumer programs into the menu of resources affiliates offer can add value to membership in NAMI for consumers.
- 5. Support is as important to consumers as it is to family members.** As family members know, peer support is a cornerstone of meeting the challenges of mental illness. Consumers also find support from their peers a critical factor in promoting recovery and developing a stable, productive life. NAMI can provide a great service in facilitating the development of support groups, especially for those who are not yet connected to peer support groups and in areas where such groups do not currently exist.



Suggestions for Consumer Inclusion & Involvement in Local Affiliates

This list, created by NAMI consumer members, state leaders, and staff, provides suggestions for involving consumers in NAMI state organizations and local affiliates. Consumers already successfully fill many of these positions around the country, making significant contributions to their organizations. Local affiliates that actively embrace consumers often see a revitalization of their organizations with a significant increase in membership.

1. Governance

- Encourage consumer members to run for affiliate Board of Directors positions.
- Provide mentoring for consumers interested in serving on the affiliate Board
- Recruit consumer members for Board committees
- Encourage consumer member attendance at affiliate Board meetings
- Encourage consumer members to seek positions on state-level Consumer Councils (where they exist) and as state representatives or alternates to the NAMI national Consumer Council.

2. Education

- Involve consumers in the leadership and administration of NAMI consumer programs, including the development of strategies to offer these signature programs in affiliates without any consumer program capacity
- NAMI C.A.R.E. support groups
- In Our Own Voice public education and outreach campaign
- Peer to Peer education program
- Family to Family (consumers are family members, too)
- Provider Education course presenters

3. Volunteer roles in local affiliates:

- Telephone information/ telephone tree support.
- Newsletter reporter, writer; develop a consumer column on consumer issues/ perspectives.
- Story Bank maintenance—Consumer personal stories are in great demand by both media and legislators. Develop a Story Bank form that a consumer could coordinate by getting consumer profiles from around the state and sorting them for easy access for media or legislative use.
- Speakers Bureau—Consumers can pair up with families by doing educational, anti-stigma presentations in the community. Consumers could develop a list of people willing to speak in public and the topics they address.
- Helpline / Warmline volunteer.
- State NAMI web site maintenance. Many consumers have or are developing excellent computer and web skills.
- Information and Referral Maintenance—Most state offices and local affiliates have a constant struggle maintaining their I&R resources. Be responsible for reading all NAMI E-News and ‘filtering’ to affiliate and/or Board meetings.
- Provide input on pertinent Board decisions: “nothing about us without us.”
- Involvement in anti-stigma & discrimination efforts; Stigma Buster chair or committee/taskforce member.

- Involvement in state conference planning to develop consumer-friendly activities and workshops
4. Involvement in Advocacy Initiatives
 - Serving on State PACT Steering Committee
 - Serving on Local PACT Advisory Committees
 - Participation in Affiliate Annual “Action Plan”
 - Voter Registration- Connect consumers with other consumers and consumer organizations at “I Vote. I Count” registration meetings across your state.
 - Support consumer involvement on State Mental Health Planning Councils, local community mental health advisory boards (Protection & Advocacy entity), intersystem de-criminalization efforts (Crisis Intervention Team development, mental health court development)
 - Inclusion in developing legislative priorities in collaboration with state NAMI organization
 5. Financial Support
 - Some financial support may be helpful or necessary to enable consumer participation in state and affiliate activities, and to support the state Consumer Council, if there is one. Such assistance could provide:
 - Scholarships for state NAMI conferences
 - Postage, phone calls, copying and transportation to support NAMI consumer activities
 - Transportation stipends to NAMI state Board of Directors meetings
 - Scholarships for the NAMI annual convention.
 - Partnering to obtain funding for NAMI consumer signature programs
 6. Social and Recreational Activities
 - Encourage consumer members to sponsor recreational and social activities. These activities present a particular opportunity for local affiliates to involve local providers, peer-run services (drop-in centers, clubhouses), and may be an important source of new NAMI members.
 - Art shows
 - Arranging opportunities with local merchants for complimentary or discounted access (movies, bowling, sporting events)
 - Dances
 - Talent Shows
 - Review local newspaper notices regarding free events (community events section)

Involvement and inclusion of consumers is important. Current NAMI consumer members offer skills and talents which can contribute to local affiliate growth and success. Those consumers in your local community who are not NAMI members will benefit from joining, but only if your affiliate is ready to embrace consumers as equal and valued partners in the NAMI family.

While there are challenges in this area, consumers are among the fastest growing segment of NAMI membership. Local affiliates are in a unique position to welcome consumer members, and to support recovery by providing acceptance, support, and encouragement.



Part II: Affiliate Operations

*A Guide to Basic Operations
of a NAMI Affiliate*



Part II:

Affiliate Operations

Nuts & Bolts of Basic Affiliate Operations

Whether your affiliate has ten members or more than 200, the basics of organizing and operating your affiliate are essentially the same. On a practical level, we recommend you approach affiliate operations as if you were running a business. Naturally, the state and national office staff will support your efforts every step of the way.

Member Services

The single most important task for any affiliate is to attract and engage new members. When we consider that one in five people in our community have a mental illness it is obvious that we have much work to do. Our definition of a member challenges us to expand our ideas about serving our members and providing meaningful opportunities for involvement.

People join your affiliate for the services and opportunities you provide, including:

- **Chances for meaningful involvement in programs and projects to reduce the stigma of mental illness and improve services and care**
- One-on-one support from fellow members and/or your affiliate telephone contact
- Family and consumer support groups for people with mental illness, families, and families with young children an/or adolescents
- Access to family, consumer and/or provider education courses
- Local, state and national newsletters providing news and useful information from community, state and national perspectives
- Guidance and support for young families
- Access to training by the state and national office staff for members who want to facilitate a support group, teach a course, advocate more effectively or present educational programs to church and civic groups or in other community settings
- Opportunities to engage in the NAMI organization at all three levels
- List of community resources for people with mental illness

Your affiliate also serves members by keeping them informed about affiliate activities, encouraging them to keep their membership current, finding a place to meet, making sure visitors and newcomers feel welcome, and striving to provide innovative opportunities to support NAMI in your community.

Membership and Dues

NAMI National Announces Launch of New E-Join Program

NAMI E-Join is a nationwide online membership initiative that began on June 20, 2007. In addition to the traditional membership route via NAMI's grassroots affiliate network, the over 12,000 unique daily visitors to nami.org will have another way to easily join our organization. E-Join will allow visitors to NAMI's Web site to join online, using a credit card, for a universal dues rate of \$35/annually.

NAMI national will not retain any of the dues collected through the E-Join initiative, but will forward all dues income to the appropriate NAMI state organization who will, in turn, forward a portion of those funds to the appropriate local affiliate. At the time of joining, new members will receive an e-mail notification confirming their membership. NAMI state organizations and affiliates will also receive an e-mail message announcing confirmation of the new member.

Through communications with the leadership councils, newsletters, e-mail communications, and teleconference opportunities, NAMI national will ensure that NAMI's leaders are well informed as the E-Join initiative moves forward. If you have any questions, please contact **CLD@nami.org**. NAMI's goal is for anyone engaged with our mission to have the ability to join us as members!

Web-based Membership

Improved coordination of membership lists and files between the three levels of NAMI and the flow of paper work will allow all of us to service our members better and grow our membership.

To address this, NAMI national has launched the web membership system. The NAMI Web Membership will allow all of NAMI's leaders to view and work from the same membership list, minimizing the probability of human errors, delays in connectivity, and allowing for enhanced membership growth within our NAMI organization.

Information on the Web Membership Database and Processes is available as follows:

Frequently Asked Questions on Web Membership Database

- **QUESTION:** What are the costs involved with the NAMI Web Membership option?
ANSWER: There is no cost for NAMI Affiliates to participate in the NAMI Web Membership program.

- **QUESTION:** We have decided that our state or local affiliate needs to process our membership and address changes via the Internet using the NAMI Web Membership. What do we need to do?

ANSWER: If you do not already have an Internet provider, you will need to find one in your area and sign up. You can use AOL, MSN or any local provider. You will then need to contact the Web Membership Team at webmembership@nami.org to obtain a user login ID and password.
- **QUESTION:** Will other states or local affiliates be able to see or access our membership records on the NAMI Web Membership system?

ANSWER: No. NAMI National will control access to the local affiliates or state organization records you can access through your user login ID and password. For security reasons, you will need authorization to process memberships for your affiliate or state organization.
- **QUESTION:** What exactly can I do on the NAMI Web Membership system?

ANSWER: You can renew memberships, add new memberships, change addresses, spouse and demographic information, print rosters and mailing labels.
- **QUESTION:** When I process membership using NAMI Web Membership, how do I pay National for the memberships submitted?

ANSWER: When you submit your membership, you will have 30 days to submit payment to National based on the invoice produced from the memberships you processed. Failure to pay within that time will result in those membership records being reversed.
- **QUESTION:** Do we have to submit all of our memberships at one time or can we submit them in any amount as often as we like?

ANSWER: You submit memberships in as many invoices as you like and as often as you like.
- **QUESTION:** Why should I use the NAMI Web Membership system instead of submitting my memberships on NAMI's manual forms?

ANSWER: Because your memberships will be updated immediately. You control how the information is entered. Your new or expired members start receiving NAMI benefits and publications sooner.
- **QUESTION:** How can I keep my state organization informed when I make updates to my affiliates membership records in the Web Membership system?

ANSWER: Each time you make changes to your affiliates membership records, an e-mail will be generated and sent to your state office with a detailed report of the changes and updates that were made.
- **QUESTION:** Is the NAMI Web Membership system easy to use?

ANSWER: Yes, but like anything you use for the first time, you will have to follow the training instructions. You can download from the Web Membership welcome screen. We will also have a help-desk at the NAMI National office available for questions.

We will work together with NAMI state organizations and affiliates in taking all other steps necessary (e.g. workshops, development of manuals, travel to provide technical assistance, etc.) in order to assure that this system works without problems. This is the first stage in a comprehensive re-orientation of our national office to better enable us to provide excellent services to all NAMI members: state organizations, affiliates, and individuals.

To sign up for immediate access to the Web Membership Database, please contact the Web Membership Team at webmembership@nami.org (see NAMI Menu of Services: Membership, for contact information).

Member Records:

Below is the information you may consider collecting for your members. The data fields below match NAMI web-based membership system (see previous section for more information)

Fields marked with “*” are required for the NAMI system.

* Record Type (Individual or Company)
Prefix
* First Middle
* Last
Suffix
Nick Name
Title
Organization
* Member Type (Voting, Family, Open Door)
Rate
* Address Code (Home or Business)
* Address 1
Address 2
Address 3
* City
County
* State * Zip
Country
District Zone
Phone Ext
Phone 2 Ext
Mobile
Fax
Email
www

Spouse Information

Spouse Prefix
First Middle
Last
Member Type
Rate
Address Code
Address 1
Address 2
Address 3
City
County
State Zip Country

Recruiting New Members & Retaining Current Ones

Members come in all shapes and sizes. The support needs of today's families and consumers differ dramatically from those of twenty or even ten years ago. We must look beyond what we consider to be a typical member of NAMI to the larger community at those who are interested in community action for social justice, while continuing to embrace families and individual responsibility.

No matter how comprehensive your education programs, most graduates want to learn even more about issues such as housing, available services and benefits and current drugs and treatments. With their interest and motivation at its peak, course graduates represent your affiliate's best new member and leadership prospects.

Your affiliate's ability to manage relationships with course graduates, family support group visitors, and other interested community members determines your affiliate's quality and growth potential. To interest prospective members in joining and remaining active in your affiliate—

- Work with the affiliate contact to see that everyone who approaches your affiliate receives a brochure containing descriptions of affiliate services and a membership application.
- Work with the treasurer to encourage current members to renew their membership.
- Send renewal notices and reminders, or ask your state or national staff to assist with renewals (NOTE: This is currently under National review, look for information soon)
- Talk informally to members about their levels of satisfaction with the services they are receiving and pass along any noteworthy comments to the appropriate committee chair.
- Contact members who drop out of groups or stop attending meetings to determine if they need the affiliate's help. Try to determine if they dropped out for a particular reason and if possible, try to help resolve any misunderstandings and encourage them to return.
- Make sure all your members are aware of the critical importance of new member recruiting to your affiliate. Help them understand the potential of the educational and support programs to membership growth.
- Encourage affiliate members to drop in on education program sessions.
- Have membership forms available at all meetings and in most affiliate publications.
- Plan an educational meeting related to course content soon after a course ends and invite all graduates to attend.
- Invite all course graduates to join your affiliate's support group.
- Invite all support group visitors to enroll in upcoming courses.
- Plan social events such as picnics, luncheons and awards dinners throughout the year and invite prospective members to attend.
- Leave brochures in emergency rooms, advertise on the local cable channel, and arrange for IOOV presentations to be done at colleges and in other community settings.
- **Create opportunities for at-large members of the local community to engage in public awareness events and/or advocacy efforts.**
- Add visitors', course graduates', and prospective members names to the newsletter and direct mail mailing list.
- Follow up invitations with telephone calls, or email to remind the prospective member of the event.

- Arrange for designated affiliate members to greet visitors and make sure they feel welcome.
- Pair established members as partners with new members to be sure they get the most benefit from their involvement in your affiliate and your affiliate gets the most benefit from their interests and skills.
- Involve new members early by personally asking them to complete a specific task.
- Provide meaningful opportunities for participation and involvement for members at all levels at NAMI.
- Avoid making general calls for project and program volunteers. Instead, get to know your members and ask one-on-one for their help with specific tasks suited to their interests and skills.
- Survey all affiliate members annually about their needs and interests and set priorities accordingly.
- Remember that many people belong to your affiliate to receive information and/or to support the cause. These members may not participate in regular meetings but are valued members of our organization.

Member recruiting and retention require a concerted effort by all members of your affiliate. In particular, board members, support group facilitators and course instructors need to work cooperatively to create and maintain an ongoing recruiting and retention program for your affiliate.

Integrating New Members into the Affiliate

- Assign a member to greet and introduce visitors and new members at meetings.
- Remind members to help make newcomers' experiences with the affiliate positive and helpful.
- Determine the newcomer's needs, interests and skills and encourage the appropriate committee head to invite him or her to join a committee.
- Consider assigning a mentor to help the newcomer get involved.
- Remember some newcomers take longer to become part of the group than others. Don't pressure newcomers into joining committees before they're ready.
- Follow up with new members within 24 hours of their first contact with your affiliate.

Meeting Facility

- Having all affiliate meetings in the same place simplifies things, especially for new and prospective members.
- Ideally, the facility you choose will accommodate small support groups as well as large educational programs.
- Libraries and churches are often willing to provide meeting space for nonprofit groups.
- Once you've found a good meeting place, stick with it. Changing meeting locations can be confusing to participants and may result in loss of members.

Post Office Box

A post office box is a must for any affiliate and is well worth the minimal annual cost. Among the advantages—

- Your affiliate’s mailing address will remain the same over time, even as affiliate contacts and officers change.
- You save the time and effort of notifying others every time your leaders’ addresses change.
- Frequent address changes can prevent you from receiving important mail from organizations using outdated mailing lists. You may even miss some mail from the state and national offices while your address change is being processed.
- Keeping the same mailing address helps extend the “shelf life” of printed material, such as affiliate stationery and brochures.

Once you have a post office box, be sure someone checks it at least weekly, preferably more often—particularly when your members are mailing in their annual dues. Get duplicate keys from the post office for other members who need access to affiliate mail.

Bulk Mail Permit

If your affiliate relies on mailings for most of its promotion, consider applying for a nonprofit mailing permit from the U.S. Postal Service. There is an initial cost for the permit and an annual payment.

Bulk mailings are cost-effective if your affiliate mails at least five batches of at least 200 pieces per year.

Given the savings over first class postage rates, it should be cost effective to add names of area health care professionals, service organizations, churches, civic groups, editors and reporters to your mailing list to reach the required minimum. Your affiliate will also benefit from the additional exposure. Keep in mind, however, third class mail may take longer than first class mail to reach its destination.

For more information, contact your local bulk-mailing center of the U.S. Postal Service. They have everything you need to set up a bulk mailing account, along with detailed instructions on how to prepare mailings.

Bank Account

Your affiliate treasurer should open a basic checking account for the affiliate.

- Be sure you understand any service charges the bank will apply to account transactions. Although you will write relatively few checks, your bank deposits at dues time will consist of a number of checks, each of which may incur a service charge. Ask the bank to waive service charges altogether or, at least, to allow your affiliate to maintain a lower minimum balance to qualify for free checking.

- Save money by choosing wallet-sized checks instead of the larger format commercial checks.
- If your treasurer keeps your affiliate's financial records by computer, you may prefer to order computer checks.

Financial Records

Among the accounts and sub-accounts your treasurer will want to establish—

Income

- Family/Individual & Professional member dues income
 - Affiliate dues
 - National & state dues
- Open Door dues income
 - Affiliate dues
 - National & state dues

Expenses

- Affiliate operating expenses
 - Postage
 - Post office box rental
 - Printing
 - Telephone
 - Office supplies
 - Books, periodicals, tapes
 - Refreshments
 - Ongoing program expenses
 - Clubhouse
 - Special projects/events expenses**
 - Facilities rental
 - Advertising & promotion
 - Licenses or permits required by city and/or state
 - Contributions to the state organization

Affiliate Communications

Like any organization, your affiliate needs to communicate effectively with your own members and with other groups, individuals, and the community at large. We encourage you to establish some simple procedures for making sure important information gets to the right people at the right time within your organization, between your organization and other organizations—especially the state and national offices—and with individuals your affiliate serves. See Public Education/Community Relations in Part III: Affiliate Programs for more information.

Your internal communications network should include—

- Officers and board members
- Affiliate contacts
- Committee chairs
- Affiliate members
- The affiliate newsletter editor
- Prospective affiliate members

Your methods of communication should include: regular emails, email alerts, phone trees, affiliate newsletter and special mailings.

We recommend appointing a communications committee or task force to determine who needs to know what when and to develop a simple system to keep information flowing within your affiliate. Task force members should include an officer or board member, a committee chair, the newsletter editor and a new member. (see *Community Relations* section under Programs: Education for more information.)

Your external communications network should include—

- **The state NAMI office**
- **The NAMI National office**
- Other community organizations with similar goals and services
- State legislators who represent your area
- Mental health care professionals in your community
- Families and individuals living with mental illness in your community
- The general public

The communications task force should develop simple policies and procedures for communicating with external audiences. Ask your affiliate's president and treasurer to work with the task force to develop policies and procedures for communications between your affiliate and the state and national office. Ask your affiliate's community relations committee chair to work with the task force to develop a simple system to keep key external audiences informed. Have the task force work with your affiliate's legislative contact to develop a system for receiving and disseminating incoming information about legislation.

Funding Your Affiliate

Member dues should generate income to cover the basics for your affiliate, such as office supplies, photocopying, post office box rental and postage. Your affiliate will need additional funding for the services you provide.

Many affiliates raise money through special events or by having members sell merchandise. The events may be strictly to raise money, such as a yard sale or bake sale, or they may be designed to meet educational and community relations goals, too.

For example, if you set up an educational display, distribute brochures, sell merchandise and accept donations at a hospital health fair booth, you will simultaneously educate the public, raise your affiliate's visibility and solidify your relationship with the hospital as well as raise money. The state and national staff are happy to support you in planning and staging special events to raise money for your affiliate.

NAMI National assists in an annual Walkathon fundraising and public awareness event that all affiliates can participate in and benefit from.

Direct mail solicitation is seen by most volunteer organizations as a funding mainstay. Be on alert for information from NAMI National and your state office on direct mail collaboration opportunities.

One way to fund your affiliate programs is through community and foundation grants. NAMI encourages its affiliates to seek donations and grants from businesses, civic groups and community foundations. Some affiliates have applied for and received foundation grants for housing and clubhouses. Others have helped their area programs do so.

Grant-seeking involves—

- Carefully planning programs and projects to be supported
- Finding the right organizations to approach
- Writing grant proposals
- Submitting the proposals to the organizations

Remember, before you launch any fund raising efforts involving community foundations, you must have incorporated your affiliate and applied for official 501 (c) (3) status. Consult with your state and national office staff for help with identifying appropriate organizations to approach and advice on preparing grant proposals.

Special Events

- Fund-raising events can be strictly for raising money, or they can combine fund-raising with education.
- Types of special events and fund raising projects your affiliate might sponsor include—
 - Campaigns to sell greeting cards, gift-wrapping paper, art, plants and bulbs, concessions at special events, doughnuts, candy or other merchandise
 - Raffles
 - Dinner dances
 - Golf or tennis tournaments

NAMI's Web site and related services

Following a major re-design in 2003, NAMI's Web site has become increasingly more central to how NAMI works and accomplishes its mission.

NAMI's Web site is not only our public face for the thousands who visit us online each day, but also a major hub of resources for NAMI's state organizations and affiliates, and their leaders.

Web site

Here are some of the things that you can accomplish through the NAMI Web site:

- Join NAMI
- Manage your personal profile
- Choose your information preferences and receive automatic notice of updates
- Subscribe to NAMI's e-newsletters
- Participate in online discussion groups
- Purchase resources in the NAMI Store
- Register for the national convention
- Register and fundraise for NAMIWALKS
- Contact your state and national representatives for advocacy

As a NAMI leader, you will also want to:

- Regularly consult the homepage, myNAMI, and "What's New" to stay abreast of all the latest information. On average, 75 new pages are added to the site each month.
- Use the "E-mail This" and "Print This" features to distribute information to your board, members, committees, the media, etc.
- Post job openings (contact jobs@nami.org for more information)

Other resources

Leaders section

The Leader's section of the Web site is the place to access resources from NAMI National on an ongoing basis for governing, managing, and leading your NAMI organization.

Visit www.nami.org/leaders

Microsites

The microsite program is a do-it-yourself opportunity that allows NAMI states and affiliates to quickly set-up and easily manage their own Web sites. NAMI National provides the site template, hosting, and access management, and the site is yours to manage and update.

For more information, visit www.nami.org/microsites

Logos and Templates

In order for NAMI to become a household name from coast-to-coast, it is important that we achieve a visual consistency across all levels. To assist in that effort, the NAMI online identity guide was created.

NAMI's online identity guide is the place to access NAMI logos, download templates, and find the editorial style guide. Here, you'll find templates for letterhead, business cards, PowerPoint presentations, and more, with the NAMI logo already built in. For anything you produce electronically or in print, a visit to the online identity guide should be your first step.

Visit www.nami.org/identity

Program-specific resources

Many of NAMI's education and support programs have special areas online for teachers, trainers, and administrators. Access to these areas is granted as needed. For more information, contact NAMI's Education, Training, and Peer Support center.

Your State/Affiliate listing

Contact information for each NAMI organization is listed in the "State and Local NAMI" section of the NAMI Web site. This is a frequently visited area of the site, so it is important that you keep the information here current. To update your listing, you may use the Webmembership system, or contact webmembership@nami.org with your changes.

Visit www.nami.org/local

Computer Support

Before personal computers became so common, small businesses and organizations relied entirely on handwritten customer or member data and financial records in ledger books and journals. These days computers are essential to keep up with the amount of information available on mental illness. The computer can help you organize affiliate business; produce mailing labels for your newsletter, link you to the World Wide Web of information, and much, much more.

Here are a few of the ways your affiliate can use a computer—

Word-processing

- Meeting minutes
- General correspondence
- Newsletters (Most word processing programs support desktop publishing features suitable for newsletters.)

Database management

- Member records

- Donor records
- Bookkeeping and budgeting

Internet access

- NAMI Web-based membership system
- NAMI website www.nami.org
- Your state NAMI website
- Email to and from members
- Email to and from the state and national office staff members
- Special-interest email mailing lists dealing with various disorders and mental health issues
- Research on mental health issues at World Wide Web sites
- Email reminders about upcoming meeting

Email List Serves

The following are NAMI sponsored email list serves that you will want to receive:

- NAMI Stigmabusters – Periodic reports of current media actions that stigmatize mental illness – to subscribe go to: <http://www.nami.org/campaign/stigmabust.html>
- Public Policy E-News – Periodic updates, alerts, and action-calls on federal public policy issues – to subscribe go to: <http://www.nami.org/update/enewslist.htm>
- Friday Facts – A weekly briefing of current happenings in NAMI – to subscribe or remove your name please visit www.nami.org/subscribe, sign in and mark your preferences.

Recommended Software

As 501c3 organizations, NAMI affiliates and state offices qualify for steep (90%+) discounts on all Microsoft software. To qualify for the discount, you will need to provide proof of your certification to your software vendor. The NAMI office is standardized on Microsoft Office Professional Edition, so this is also the recommended package for state offices and local affiliates.

Other software manufacturers offer discounts to 501c3 organizations. Be sure to ask your vendor before you make a purchase if such a discount may be available.

Finally, TechSoup.org (<http://www.techsoup.org/>) is an IT organization dedicated to assisting nonprofits. They offer discounts for most major software packages, as long as your licensing requirements are modest (less than 5 copies).

Get Some Help

Despite what the television commercials suggest, there is more to using a personal computer than just plugging it in. We strongly recommend identifying an experienced computer user from among your members and asking him or her to serve as your affiliate's computer trainer and consultant.

If none of your affiliate members has the time and expertise you need, consider—

- A community volunteer
- A volunteer service bureau
- A civic club
- Boy Scouts or Girl Scouts
- A local computer club (check with a high school computer teacher)
- A high school computer whiz (ask the teacher)
- A college service fraternity
- Service Corps of Retired Executives (SCORE)

If you are unable to recruit a volunteer, consider hiring a high school student with computer skills. The student will probably work for a rather small fee and will appreciate the chance to show off his or her skills in a real-world application.

Affiliates or state offices with more than five full-time employees should consider a more formal arrangement with a local professional computer support company.



Part III: Affiliate Programs

*A Guide to the General
Activities of a NAMI Affiliate*



Part III

Affiliate Programs

Opportunities to Serve

As a grassroots organization, NAMI derives its strength and delivers most of its services through local affiliates like yours. You and your fellow affiliate members truly are on the front lines in our battle to improve the quality of life for people and families living mental illness and to eliminate prejudice and unfair discrimination against them. NAMI National is committed to supporting programs and initiatives at the grassroots level.

You can encourage newcomers and potential members to advocacy by planning ongoing advocacy projects and public awareness events involving issues of interest to the community. As their interest and confidence grow, recommend further leadership training to interested members to improve advocacy skills, such as attending the NAMI Leadership Institute Conferences.

Key Affiliate Programs

Because of the critical role support and education services play in our organization's health and well being, NAMI has traditionally encouraged each of its affiliates to offer both support groups and education courses. Additionally, the importance of integrating community advocacy opportunities is known to be a critical part of affiliate programming.

With well-developed family/consumer support, education programs, and community action opportunities in place, your affiliate can offer the best possible service to your community. Since new members are vital to your affiliate, you will benefit from the steady stream of prospective members these programs provide.

Educational programs should to be available for all members who desire them.

Support

Support comes in many forms including, crisis assistance, information on local resources, taking part in a community action project, allowing anonymity while getting help, and much more. As a local affiliate, make sure you are prepared to address the varied ways members and potential members seek support. Your state and national offices are here to help.

Affiliate Contact Person(s)

The importance of this critical role for all affiliates is often underestimated. How you handle your response to the first contact determines the caller's first and lasting impression of our entire organization. In a crisis, your ability to respond quickly and effectively to a caller who needs immediate help can even save lives.

Besides helping callers solve problems, the affiliate contact is critical to the long-term health and vitality of the affiliate. *Whether the caller ultimately becomes a productive affiliate member often depends on the quality of your affiliate's telephone support services.* If you provide excellent support services at this early stage, you'll be laying the groundwork for your affiliate's future growth and success.

Because of the importance of this role, and the often-taxing duties that come with it, we highly recommend your affiliate enlists two affiliate contacts to share the responsibilities.

Affiliate Contact Duties and Responsibilities

- Answers all calls to the affiliate's contact number within 24 hours.
- Understands support services offered by the affiliate and promotes them to callers by inviting them to attend an upcoming support group meeting.
- Knows about the affiliate's upcoming educational programs and, when appropriate, invites the caller to attend.
- Researches and develops relationships with local and area mental health care providers and agencies for referrals.
- Provides basic information to the caller about available resources.
- Refers the caller to other individuals and organizations as needed.
- Consults with the state and national Helplines as needed to solve callers' problems.
- Mails the affiliate's brochure to callers.
- Records callers' names and contact information to be added to the affiliate's mailing list.

Affiliate Contact: Getting the Job Done

If you agree to be the affiliate contact—

- You must be willing to receive telephone calls.
- You must be knowledgeable about community services and referral procedures.
- You must be willing to see that callers receive appropriate support materials, such as brochures and newsletters.

- If you are away from your telephone often or for hours at a time, you need an answering machine or voice mail service.
- Return calls as promptly as possible.

Other options:

- Some affiliates have two or three contact persons who share responsibility for responding to inquiries.
- A natural division of labor could be between a telephone contact, a U.S. mail contact and an email contact.
- You may prefer to allocate responsibilities based on the contact person's knowledge or experiences with a particular disorder.
- You may wish to assign one contact person to handle questions concerning adults and or/children with mental illnesses, or another to provide information for people with mental illness.

Answering Calls

- Your first message to callers should be, "You are not alone." Listen patiently and sympathetically to callers' problems and concerns. For some callers, simply talking to another person who understands is their reason for contacting you.
- Besides listening to and comforting callers, you have a job to do for your affiliate as well. Before hanging up, you need to have—
 - Written down the caller's name, telephone number and mailing address.
 - Offered to mail a brochure.
 - Offered to add the caller to the newsletter mailing list.
 - Described all affiliate services that might be helpful to the caller.
 - Invited the caller to attend an upcoming meeting.
- You're not expected to know the answers to all the callers' questions. You just have to know which people and organizations *do* have the answers. Your job is to *refer* the callers to the best sources of help.
- Many callers have first contacted the state office. Your state office staff has suggested they call you for help with accessing local services, including those of your affiliate. It's especially important for you to learn as much as you can about local resources.
- Keep a list of referral contacts and affiliate members willing to provide telephone support in their areas of experience or expertise (see Affiliate Contact Template attached)
- You can always call the national or state Helpline yourself on behalf of callers for suggestions on how to answer more difficult questions.
- After you conclude the call, get any materials you said you'd send into the mail.
- Pass the caller's name and address along to whoever maintains your mailing list.
- Follow up with the caller as needed.
- The NAMI Helpline (1-800-950-6264) is available to assist with guidance and information requests.

Support Groups

If providing support group is one way your affiliate chooses to offer support then you will want to arrange for one or more of your members to be trained as a support group facilitator. By having trained facilitators guide your support meetings, you vastly improve the quality and effectiveness of the support your members receive. NAMI has training for all type of support groups
Support Group Coordinators:

- Organize and conduct support group meetings.
- Make sure a trained facilitator is available to lead all meetings.
- Encourage experienced affiliate members to attend and share their insights at support group meetings

Education

After participating in a state or national training program, affiliate members teach members of the community about the nature and treatment of mental illnesses affecting their families. Your affiliate also identifies and educates individuals and organizations in your community who come in frequent contact with people living with mental illnesses, such as mental health care providers, employers, educators and law enforcement officers.

NAMI Signature Programs

NAMI signature programs are programs that have been specifically developed and piloted by NAMI, to be used by NAMI state organizations and their affiliates. NAMI signature programs are staffed at the national level and offer consistent consultation and technical assistance. These programs are updated regularly to reflect changes and advances in science, medicine and practice.

NAMI Signature Programs include:

For Consumers

- Peer-to-Peer
a free course for consumers containing individual relapse prevention planning, a debriefing/storytelling week, and an advance directive for psychiatric care.
- NAMI Connection Recovery Support Group
a 90-minute weekly support group run by persons who live with mental illness for other persons with any diagnosis who also live with mental illness.
- Hearts & Minds
a multimedia program about healthy, accessible, and affordable lifestyle changes designed to reduce cardiac risk among people with mental illness.
- In Our Own Voice
a one-and-a-half hour interactive, multimedia presentation by consumers that offers hope and provides insight into the recovery now possible for people with mental illness.

For Families & Caregivers

- Family-to-Family
a free 12-week course for family caregivers of individuals with severe mental illnesses that discusses the clinical treatment of these illnesses and teaches the knowledge and skills that family members need to cope more effectively.

- Hearts & Minds
a multimedia program about healthy, accessible, and affordable lifestyle changes designed to reduce cardiac risk among people with mental illness.

For the General Public

- In Our Own Voice
a one-and-a-half hour interactive, multimedia presentation by consumers that offers hope and provides insight into the recovery now possible for people with mental illness.

For Providers

- Provider Education
an education program for mental health service providers co-taught by consumers, professionals, and family members.

The Family-to-Family Education Program has an established evidence-base of its effectiveness; the other signature programs listed above are in the process of securing well-designed studies to test their effectiveness in the field. For more information go to: www.nami.org/edprograms

Check with your state office for other programs that are supported by your state organization.

Public Education/Community Relations

Sometimes referred to as a public relations or public affairs function, the community relations tasks your affiliate undertakes may include—

- Establishing and maintaining mutually beneficial relationships with selected individuals and organizations in the community.
- Drafting letters to editors of area newspapers to address key issues.
- Drafting news releases about affiliate programs, services and special events.
- Coordinating the affiliate's participation in community special events.
- Organizing and operating a Speakers Bureau for the affiliate.
- Encouraging interested members to receive training to present the NAMI Campaign to End Discrimination Science & Treatment Kit program for business and civic groups.
- Encouraging interested members to teach educators about working with students who have severe emotional disorders and mental illnesses.
- Scheduling IOOV (In Our Own Voice) presentations to be given in the community.

As a community service and advocacy organization, your affiliate must reach out to other organizations and individuals. The community relation's function involves developing mutually beneficial relationships with specific groups within the greater community you share.

Some community relations' targets might include—

- Prospective members
- A specific cultural, ethnic or socioeconomic group
- The state psychiatric hospital serving your county

- The State Mental Health Agency (in cooperation with your NAMI State office)
- Mental health care providers
- Government officials (in cooperation with your NAMI state and national office)
- Local Editors and reporters
- Other local and regional advocacy groups
- Hospitals and primary care physicians
- Churches
- Colleges and universities
- Businesses and civic groups
- Jails and prisons might be considered as an additional bullet point.

NAMI encourages affiliates to cultivate meaningful working relationships with a variety of people and groups. Over time, your goal is to create a strong network of contacts who know you, respond to your questions and requests and refer prospective members to you for service.

Your Affiliate's Relationship with Your State Mental Health Agency and Medicaid Authority

- **Any activities with state governmental agencies must be coordinated with your state and/or national office staff**
- The best measure of the effectiveness of your affiliate's community relations effort is your relationship with your community mental health center, your state mental health agency and your state Medicaid authority.
- In dealing with agency staff members, remember they are usually overworked and underpaid.
- Unless you have clear, unquestionable evidence to the contrary, give agency staff members the benefit of the doubt, assume they have consumers' and families' best interests at heart.
- Remember, it is in everyone's best interests to maintain good, productive, relationships with staff members
- Encourage staff members to refer prospective members to your affiliate.
- Take a positive, problem-solving approach when you have questions or are lodging complaints.
- Try to find ways you can work together to resolve problems to everyone's satisfaction.
- Don't limit your contact with agency staff members to complaints. Be sure to pass along compliments and thank them when you hear they've been especially helpful to an affiliate member.
- Identify common goals, such as better funding for mental health care services in your community, and work cooperatively to achieve them.
- Ask staff members to suggest projects your affiliate could undertake to help them provide better care for people with mental illness.

Other Advocacy Groups

As a NAMI affiliate, you have much in common with local chapters of other groups, such as the Mental Health Association, the Psychiatric Association, the Psychological Association, Law Enforcement groups, the League of Women Voters and other Mental Health Organization. While NAMI shares many goals with these organizations, there are definite, sometimes subtle

differences in philosophies, mission and opinions about the best approaches to achieving those goals.

Here are a few examples of differences—

- The Alzheimer’s Disease Association does not refer to Alzheimer’s as a mental illness, even though Alzheimer’s is a biologically based disease of the brain.
- The Epilepsy Association does not refer to epilepsy as a mental illness, although epilepsy can cause symptoms of mental illness.
- The Mental Health Association, the Psychiatric Association, and the Psychological Association are committed to addressing all sorts of emotional disturbances, as well as illnesses designated as severe and persistent. They advocate for talk therapy for those suffering personal difficulties (whose crises may indeed be debilitating) with the same zeal as they advocate for services for those who have severe and persistent mental illness.
- The Head Injury Foundation does not refer to their clients as having mental illness, although they might have the same symptoms as persons with mental illness. They do not offer services to individuals who suffered brain damage before birth who may also have mental illness resulting from that brain damage.

To work most effectively with other groups, your affiliate must understand and acknowledge key differences between those groups and NAMI. Contact your state office for guidance and information on collaborating with other groups in your area.

Other Community Contacts

- Identify people in your community who come in frequent contact with mental health consumers and their families and establish relationships with them.
- Before you approach potential community contacts, think through the benefits of a relationship with your affiliate from the prospective contact’s perspective.
- Emphasize the benefits your affiliate can provide to the individual or organization when you approach a potential contact.
- Provide community contacts with clear, concise information about your affiliate’s services.
- Ask your newsletter editor to put the community contact on the mailing list and ask to be placed on the contact’s mailing list.
- Follow up with contacts periodically.

Media Contacts

- Contact area newspapers and television news departments to compile a list of health and medical reporters, features editors and community calendar editors by name and establish relationships with them.
- Develop some basic fact sheets listing officers’ names, contact information, services provided, a brief description of your mission and purpose, highlights of your history, etc.

Providing this information in writing helps cut down on errors, misspelled names and misleading or incomplete program descriptions.

- Bring major news concerning mental illness to media contacts' attention with a brief call or letter.
- Offer to provide more information if they're interested, and if you say you'll send information, do so promptly.
- Refer reporters to the state or national NAMI office when appropriate, or get the information the reporter needs from the state or national office yourself and forward it to the reporter.
- Be prepared to respond immediately to requests from editors and reporters working on deadline.
- **After publication or broadcast, send a thank you note to editors and reporters who cover your events or use your story ideas.**
- Share all successful media contact with your state and national office.
- If your affiliate is contacted by a national media source please contact the NAMI National Media Relations department at 888-999-6264 ext. 7924.
- Add local editors and reports to your newsletter mailing list.

Your Affiliate Newsletter

*Please note that there are NAMI Newsletter templates in color and in black and white ready for downloads at: www.nami.org/identity

Your affiliate newsletter editor is responsible for—

- Tracking other publications for news and information of interest to members
- Planning story lists for each issue
- Writing and/or editing stories
- Developing and maintaining a graphic design format
- Establishing and maintaining a regular publication schedule
- Printing, addressing and mailing the newsletter

You may find yourself completing all tasks yourself, you may also consider sending your newsletter in email format.

Your members depend on your newsletter to keep track of meeting dates, affiliate programs and activities, news of other members and local events and issues. They also depend on the newsletter to help them interpret news and understand how issues affect them.

As an advocacy group, your affiliate has a definite viewpoint, and your newsletter stories should reflect that. You're not trying to present stories objectively. You're trying to represent the *under-represented* viewpoints and interests of people with mental illness and their families. You are writing specifically and solely for them.

Newsletter Goals

You can help your affiliate achieve its larger support, education, and advocacy goals by setting supporting goals for your publication and planning content accordingly. Your goals might include—

- Keeping members informed about upcoming affiliate meetings and events.
- Reporting on the local aspects or impact of state and national news stories of interest to members.
- Recognizing and expressing appreciation for member contributions to affiliate projects.
- Encouraging members to use a full range of affiliate services.
- Providing information readers can use to follow up on stories, such as telephone numbers and addresses, magazine and journal article citations, book titles and publication information, etc.
- Promoting NAMI programs and encouraging members to seek the training they need to participate.
- Promoting a sense of ownership and belonging in the affiliate for all members.
- Keeping members informed about pending legislation and opportunities for advocacy.
- Informing prospective members, mental health care professionals and other targeted audiences about the affiliate and encouraging them to join.
- Recruiting new members and donors

Story Lists

Plan newsletter contents based on the goals.

First, sketch out plans for a year's worth of lead stories. Some stories will fall naturally into a particular issue. For example, you'll want to publish a report of an affiliate fund-raising event in the next issue after the event. The timing for other stories can be more flexible. For example, you can publish stories on general interest topics—medical research, treatments, services—any time.

Why plan ahead?

- You're more likely to achieve a balanced mix of stories over time.
- You can scan other publications for the topics you plan to cover and file clippings or photocopies as you find them. When you're ready to write the story, much of your research will already be done.
- It's easier to work with other contributors to the newsletter if you can assign stories well in advance of the publication date.
- You'll minimize last minute scrambling to meet your publication deadline.

As a general rule, include only information not readily available in other publications. Remember that your purpose is to support the affiliate's goals and serve as a resource for the members of your affiliate—not to duplicate the efforts of scientific journals and magazines.

Certainly, if you find a book or article that would interest your readers, summarize it in the newsletter and direct those who want more information to the source. Don't waste your affiliate's resources reprinting materials your readers could easily find in another publication. Make your newsletter complement NAMI's "Advocate" and your state organization's newsletter by focusing on news of your affiliate and local angles of state and national stories.

While the content will vary from issue to issue, the *types* of information you publish will be fairly consistent from issue to issue. By establishing standard “departments” that carry over from issue to issue, you can simplify the planning process for each issue and help your readers find the information they’re looking for quickly and easily.

Possible departments you may wish to include in every issue—

- A President’s letter
- Business meeting minutes
- A calendar listing upcoming affiliate support, educational and business meetings and their programs and/or agendas
- Treatment update
- Legislative update
- Community advocacy and action reports and updates
- Current news about your State Mental Health Agency and other resources and services in your community

Provide readers the information they need to take action after reading a story. If you suggest they write a legislator, provide the address. If you review a new book, give readers the information they need to order it or find it at the bookstore.

Writing & Editing

As editor of your affiliate’s newsletter, you plan each issue’s content. You will probably serve as chief reporter and copywriter as well. Ideally, a number of members will contribute newsletter content.

- Your secretary will supply business-meeting minutes.
- Committee chairs can provide monthly reports of their activities.
- Your president can write a monthly column about affiliate programs and activities.
- Other members may write articles about personal experiences.
- A local agency staff member may be willing to write an article or column specifically for your members.
- Other local professionals, such as therapists, doctors, lawyers and law enforcement officers can write articles of interest to your readers.

As editor, you assign stories, set deadlines and keep each issue on track. You also edit.

Since your contributors are volunteers, you may feel reluctant to make changes in their copy. Still, you should at least check spelling and grammar and use consistent abbreviations, capitalization and other style variables. For example, most newspapers follow the *Associated Press Stylebook* custom of referring to people by their surname after the first reference. *The Wall Street Journal* uses a different style, referring to people using a title (Mr., Ms., Dr., etc.) with the surname.

The particulars of the style you follow for your newsletter are not so important as consistency. If you abbreviate days of the week in one article, abbreviate them in all articles. If you capitalize job titles in one story, capitalize them in all stories.

You may edit copy to make it more readable or more easily understandable. You may edit a story to make it fit—ideally by making a number of small cuts throughout the piece, rather than simply dropping the final paragraphs.

You may also add notes, such as contact information, additional resources on the topic or suggested actions the readers can take.

Finally, check the language used. Replace any references to “mentally ill people” or “the mentally ill” with “people with a mental illness.”

Graphic Design

A fundamental rule of design states, “Form follows function.” Another important design principle: “Less is more.”

The function of graphic design is to help you communicate most effectively. The form your newsletter takes should support the newsletter’s communications goals as simply and directly as possible.

There’s seldom any functional purpose served by fussy borders, decorative clip art or computer-rendered type effects. You’re trying to inform, educate and motivate your readers—not demonstrate the features of your design software to them.

Your design should look and be easy to read.

- A series of short paragraphs is easier to read than a solid block of text.
- A familiar typeface is easier to read than an unfamiliar one, so choose a simple, standard type for story text. Use novelty faces sparingly, if at all.
- Roman or upright type is easier to read than italic type, which tends to slow the reader down. That’s why it’s good to use Italics for emphasis, but not for long passages of text.
- Words written in all-capital letters are the most difficult to read because readers recognize words by their shape—not by their individual letters. Words in all caps have essentially the same rectangular outline.
- Type set in columns is easier to read than type set the full width of the page.
- As a general rule, a line of type should be no longer than one and one-half times the width of the alphabet set in that type at that size.
- The longer the line of type, the more space you should put between each line. The standard is to space lines at 120 percent the size of the type. Usually, this is the default or automatic setting on word processing, graphic design and desktop publishing software.

Printing

For most affiliates, photocopying is the most cost-efficient printing method. Use a high-resolution laser printer and smooth paper to make a sharp master copy. If you use an ink jet printer to create your master copy, use premium-grade paper made especially for ink jet printers. The paper’s coating will keep the ink from soaking into the paper, resulting in sharper lines and edges.

NAMI Logo Specifications

All logo digital files can be downloaded from the NAMI web site. Go to www.nami.org/identity

The on line identity guidelines and art files will be routinely updated by NAMI web team.

Circulation

Your mailing list should include—

- All current members by household
- State office address and your state president
- **NAMI National office (2107 Wilson Blvd, Suite 300, Arlington, VA 22201)**
- Local reporters and editors who cover mental health issues
- Editors of newsletters for other affiliates (who send you copies of their newsletters, too)
- State Mental Health Agency contacts
- Any social worker, psychiatrist or psychologist who has an interest in your affiliate
- Opinion leaders, such as ministers, hospital discharge planners, editors and reporters
- Teachers, school counselors and school psychologists
- Other organizations with compatible missions, such as the local branches of the Mental Health Association, the Depression and Bipolar Support Alliance, Legal Aid or organizations for mental health care consumers

You should maintain a separate list of prospective members and establish a time limit of three to six months for their free subscriptions. Otherwise, your mailing list and your printing and postage expenses will keep growing at the expense of your dues-paying members.

Certainly, use the newsletter to give prospective members a sample of your member benefits. Just remember the purpose of a sample is to make the prospect buy the product—or, in your case—join the affiliate.

The most likely prospective members include—

- Education course participants
- Support group visitors
- Callers to your local contact number

*** Remember: Some people may not be able to come to the affiliate meetings but will join your affiliate just to receive the newsletters and other forms of communication and information.

Advocacy

Your affiliate helps educate the general public about severe and persistent brain disorders to help reduce the stigma associated with mental illnesses and to build understanding and support for key issues.

As an advocacy organization, NAMI tracks and keeps members informed about important political and social issues affecting people with mental illnesses and their families.

For information and fact sheets on national advocacy issues visit the NAMI National policy website at <http://www.nami.org/policy.htm>. NAMI also issues the NAMI e-news electronic alerts on legislative issues. The NAMI public policy platform is available online at <http://www.nami.org/update/platform/toc.htm>.

Through the NAMI Policy Institute, NAMI is meeting the demands of driving the local, state and national debate on mental illness systems reform. The staff of the institute is available to review legislation, provide guidance on policy agendas and track state legislation on a number of policy issues.

** Individual members advocating for their own causes should not mention or imply they represent a NAMI affiliate, state or national organization.

Advocacy at the Affiliate Level

Advocacy is most effective when we all speak with a unified voice, that means policymakers hear the same message at all levels around the nation. Remember:

- The NAMI National board sets the public policy for national issues
- Your NAMI State office and board sets the public policy agenda and positions on the state level
- Before creating any type of public policy position you should check with your state and the national policy institute for what already exists. (See NAMI Menu of services for contact information)

Community Action Initiatives

Many affiliates engage in community action initiatives and projects that have a clear purpose for increasing public awareness and/or fighting for social justice for persons with mental illness. Some examples of such projects are:

- Working with a local Habitat for Humanity chapter to build a house for a consumer/family affected by mental illness
- Engaging the media to take on a local criminal justice situation that is not providing proper mental healthcare to citizens with a mental illness
- Partnering with a local college to sponsor mental illness awareness activities on campus

For more information or to request technical assistance on organizing a community action initiative contact your state NAMI office or NAMI National State Relations at 888-999-6264.

Legislative Contact

Your board appoints a legislative contact for your affiliate to receive and pass along information from the state and national offices concerning political issues, key legislative events and votes.

Among the legislative contact's responsibilities are—

- Passing along information and recommendations to members from the state and national offices for appropriate actions.
- Cultivating direct, personal relationships with their representatives and senators from both parties in the state legislature and the United States Congress. Ideally, you should be able to call a legislator's office and have the staff and the legislator recognize your name and recall your association with NAMI.
- Following actions by city and county governments and local agencies and alerts the state office staff or board of directors to events and situations of concern within the community.

Helping Affiliate Members Understand the Issues

- While the state office is responsible for helping you understand critical issues, you are responsible for helping your affiliate members understand them.
- Most important issues of statewide and local interest are covered in the newsletter.
- If you have questions or don't understand an issue, call the state or national office staff and ask for an explanation.

Issuing Alerts to Affiliate Members

- From time to time, the affiliate's legislative contact will need to issue a Legislative Alert to all affiliate members.
- Alerts from the state office to the legislative contact are bare-bones directives for action. They assume the legislative contact fully understands the issues involved.
- The legislative contact is responsible for educating affiliate members about the issues.

Tips for Effective Legislative Interaction

Develop personal relationships. Legislators value the information and opinions they receive from constituents. Do not underestimate this. Begin to develop a personal relationship so that when the state office or your affiliate needs you, you can act quickly.

Be brief. Legislators receive information on many hundreds of subjects. Be brief, concise and clear with your message.

Be timely. Contact your legislators early. Even if they can't commit on your issue, they will know that it will be coming up and can contact you. Once they do commit, it is very hard for them to change and still maintain credibility.

Be honest and don't bluff. If you don't know the answer to a question, say so. Then research the question and get the answer to the legislator promptly. If you conceal important facts or give legislators bad information, your case is dead.

Be clear. As generalists, legislators and staff are not up on the jargon of the mental health system. Don't use acronyms that only some of us understand. At the same time, don't be condescending or talk down to them. Be concise and straightforward.

Explain how the general public will benefit. Legislators know the majority of individuals who come to them have a personal interest in the legislation they are supporting. Besides explaining how the legislation affects your family or friends, explain how it will benefit the general public. For example, you may talk about how legislation to help your family member will also benefit our state and our society by reducing the costs of mental illness.

Avoid becoming defensive or angry. The majority of legislators are trying to do a good job under pressure. So give legislators the benefit of the doubt and do not become defensive or angry if a legislator disagrees with your position. Be polite and straightforward. Remember, in politics, today's opponent can be tomorrow's ally—unless you have made a permanent enemy.

Contacting Legislators

For contact information for your state legislators call your state office or visit your state government website. Maintain current, accurate contact information for your local elected officials and share this with your members.

Telephone calls. Try to talk with the legislator directly. Most do not mind receiving calls at home, but only at reasonable hours. If you encounter a staff person, communicate the same information to him or her, but tactfully request a return call from the legislator.

Written communication. Address the letter properly. Confine your message to a single page. Do not use form letters. Ask for a response. ** Don't forget to put your legislators on your newsletter mailing list.

Face-to-face meetings. Set up the contact at a convenient time. Breakfast is a good time because legislators may be more available. Take a fellow member with you for support, but let the legislator know in advance. Explain NAMI's goals, and be brief.

Follow-up. Follow up your contact with a thank you letter, whether or not the legislator supported your bill and whether not it passed.

Feedback. Share correspondence with the state office or your affiliate and send a note detailing the contact and the result.

How to Contact U.S. Legislators

All members of Congress can be reached by calling the Capitol Switchboard at 202-224-3121 or by visiting Write to Congress:
<http://www.congress.org/congressorg/mail/compose/>



Affiliate Checklist for Excellence

NAMI affiliates are expected to strive to achieve excellence in their support, education and advocacy activities. Your NAMI state and national offices will help guide and support you in these endeavors. The following checklist will help you determine if your affiliate is meeting the challenges of operating a NAMI affiliate.

| | |
|--|--|
| | Organizational: |
| | Board of Directors and working committees, with job descriptions |
| | Current bylaws in compliance with State and National |
| | Current NAMI Affiliation Agreement |
| | Articles of incorporation that meet NAMI standards |
| | Non-profit 501©3 status and IRS letter of determination or acceptable arrangement with state |
| | Regular business meetings |
| | Designated consumer representative active at State level and/or state consumer council |
| | Notice & minutes of all meetings |
| | Operating policies and procedures |
| | Annual tax filings, business license and other legal requirements all met |
| | Operational: |
| | Annual budget |
| | Annual audit (if you are a 501 c (3)) |
| | Bank account |
| | Program/business plan and/or strategic plan for affiliate |
| | Post Office Box |
| | Bulk mail permit |
| | Regular newsletter |
| | Communication strategy for reaching all members |
| | Consistent, accessible meeting sites |
| | Web access, email address; preferably Web site, use of email, list servs |
| | Use of technology systems (answering machines, financial software, etc.) |
| | Engaged in fund raising |
| | Work relationship with media representatives |
| | Active membership growth |
| | Use of NAMI Web Membership |
| | Two-way communications and information sharing with State and National |
| | Appropriate and continual community relations activities |
| | Programs: |
| | Support: |
| | Offering one or more venues for support |
| | Outreach and support for families of children/youth |
| | Outreach to and support for people with mental illness |
| | One or more affiliate contacts identified and equipped to handle public inquiries |
| | Education: |
| | Educational forums and presentations for public |
| | Outreach to underserved and priority populations |
| | Information and referral services |
| | Education programs for family members |
| | Education programs for consumers |
| | MIAW/anti-stigma educational efforts |
| | Advocacy: |
| | Advocacy in local community and at state level |
| | Representatives on local/state governing, agency, and service boards |
| | Relationships with colleague organizations and service providers |
| | Community Action opportunities available to engage members and the public |
| | Regular contact with elected officials |

Time for a Tune Up

It's natural for long-time members to have a strong sense of ownership in their affiliate. Often, they've devoted many hours in establishing the affiliate. They may have served as president since the affiliate's founding, or they may have held every office at one time or another. Their dedication to the affiliate is beyond question.

Unfortunately, the closeness and familiarity these members share can sometimes, over time, cause their affiliate to stagnate. Newcomers feel unwelcome. Members outside the inner circle lose interest, feeling their ideas will not be accepted.

When an affiliate stagnates and fails to function as a service organization should, the community is deprived of the support, education and advocacy services they need.

If you suspect your affiliate needs a tune-up, you should consider formulating an action plan to revitalize your affiliate and redefine the roles within it. Contact the state or national office for help.

Signs Your Affiliate Needs a Tune-Up

- The same people serve as officers year after year.
- If one of your officers becomes ill or leaves town for more than a day or two, you have no back-up, and important affiliate operations grind to a halt.
- Membership numbers are low, static or declining.
- First-time visitors to your meetings leave early and never come back again.
- While you may have support group meetings, you no longer have regular business or educational meetings, or the meetings you have are poorly attended.
- Your telephone contact person has stopped returning calls.
- None of your members has spoken with a state office staff member in recent memory.
- Your local state mental health agency has never heard of your group.
- None of your affiliate leaders uses the Internet or has e-mail access.
- Your affiliate does not have opportunities for people to engage in community action projects.
- Your Affiliate Checklist for Excellence is scarcely marked.
- You send people with mental illness or young families to another organization for their support.
- People with mental illness or young families don't feel welcome in affiliate meetings.

Signs Your Tune-Up Worked

- Membership is growing steadily.
- Membership includes a mix of newcomers, experienced members and affiliate veterans.
- Mental health care providers refer families and consumers to you for help.
- Your Board of Directors varies from year to year to include a variety of members.
- Board members and committee chairs delegate tasks to give more members a chance to be involved.
- You offer support groups that meet regularly.
- You have monthly educational meetings.
- You have a monthly newsletter.
- You know the people at your State and local Mental Health Agency and they know you.
- You have identified local community action activities for members and non-members to engage in.
- You conduct fund-raising events.
- Your contact person returns all calls within 24 hours.
- You have a means for contacting members quickly to respond to alerts by phone and e-mail.
- Your Affiliate checklist for Excellence is almost completely filled in.



Part IV: NAMI “State”

*Information about
Your State NAMI Organization*



Part IV

NAMI (State)

The state office staff and the State Board of Directors are here to serve you and help you strengthen your affiliate. Please contact us for help with all your affiliate operations, programs, activities and concerns.

Contact Information and Staff

Insert information including: All contact information, email and website; list of programs and responsible staff; all staff and how to contact.

Board of Directors

Insert the state NAMI Board of Directors roster

Bylaws

Insert up-to-date state bylaws; remember to send replacement copies when amendments are made

Current Strategic Plan

Insert current strategic plan; remember to send regular updates.

Affiliate Contact List

Insert a copy of your state Affiliate Contract or Agreement.



Part V: NAMI National

*Information about
Your National NAMI Organization*

Part V

NAMI National



In April 1979, six independent support groups for parents of adults with severe and persistent mental illnesses from around the country joined forces in Madison, Wisconsin, to hold the first conference of the National Alliance for the Mentally Ill. Attendance for this historic meeting was 284.

As NAMI has evolved, interest and membership has extended beyond parents to include spouses, siblings, children and friends of people with mental illness, people with mental illness and mental health care professionals. NAMI currently has more than 220,000 members in 1,200 affiliates across the country.

Contact Information

NAMI - National Alliance for the Mentally Ill
Colonial Place Three
2107 Wilson Blvd., Suite 300
Arlington, VA 22201-3042
NAMI Information and Service Center Line – 1-888-999-6264 (www-nami.org)
Main: (703) 524-7600
Fax: (703) 524-9094
TDD: (703) 516-7227
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2007 – 2008 NAMI Board of Directors

| | |
|---|--|
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National Bylaws

Effective June 23, 2007

**2107 Wilson Blvd., Suite 300
Arlington, VA 22201
www.nami.org**

BYLAWS

PREAMBLE

NAMI is dedicated to the eradication of mental illnesses and to the improvement of the quality of life of all whose lives are affected by these diseases

NAMI will accomplish its mission through the following:

- Coordination of activities of state and local advocacy groups
- Serving as an information collection and dissemination center
- Monitoring existing health care facilities, staff, and programming for adequacy and accountability, influencing the pre-professional and continuing education of mental health service providers
- Promotion of new and remedial legislation
- Fostering public education
- Pressing for quality recovery-oriented care and individualized services for persons with mental illness at all times in residential, extended care, outpatient, inpatient, and criminal justice settings
- Promotion of community support programs, including appropriate living arrangements linked with supportive social, vocational rehabilitation and employment programs
- Improvement of private and governmental funding for mental health facilities and services, care and treatment, and residential and research programs
- Collaboration with other national and international mental health and substance abuse organizations and advocacy groups
- Delineation and enforcement of rights of persons with serious mental illness and their families
- Soliciting and receiving funds in support of all of the above

ARTICLE I
Membership

Section 1. There shall be three categories of members:

- (1) Members ("Members")
- (2) Local Affiliates ("Affiliates")
- (3) State Organization ("Organization")

Section 2. Voting Members. The following categories shall be voting members as provided below:

- (1) Members,
- (2) Affiliates, and
- (3) Organization

that accept the mission of the NAMI organization and pay the annual dues in the amount and manner established from time to time for voting members by resolution of the Board of Directors of NAMI.

(1) Members

- (a) Definition - a Member is:
 - (i) a person with a mental illness, or
 - (ii) a relative of a person with a mental illness, or
 - (iii) a friend of a person with a mental illness

A Member may be one individual or a family of individuals living in one household that is counted as one for the purposes of paying dues and voting. A Member accepts the mission of NAMI and shall have paid dues to an Affiliate unless waived by the Affiliate. A Member shall have had his or her annual dues paid by the respective Affiliate to the respective Organization and to NAMI.

Members may become members through an "Open Door" policy that allows for a reduced dues payment. "Open Door" Members are defined by income or economic necessity, at the discretion of the Affiliate member or State Organization. "Open Door" Members shall have all the rights and privileges of members who pay full dues.

- (b) Voting rights - Members (i) shall be the voting members of Affiliates, (ii) shall nominate and elect the members of the Board of Directors and adopt and amend the bylaws of their respective Organization, and (iii) may otherwise be voting members of their Organization, all as prescribed by the Bylaws of their Organization, and (iv) shall also be the unit for purposes of determining the number of votes to be allocated to Affiliates in their voting by proportional representation within NAMI. A Member may support and work within several Affiliates but shall be a voting member of only one (1) Affiliate for NAMI and Organization purposes.

(2) Local Affiliates ("Affiliates")

- (a) Definition - Affiliates shall be groups of five or more Members that have (i) become members of NAMI prior to the issuance of a NAMI state charter to their respective Organization, or (ii) become members of their respective Organization after the Organization having been chartered by NAMI pursuant to the provisions of Section 6 (2).
- (b) Roles - The roles of Affiliates may include, among other things, to organize and assist local support groups, to provide local information and referral services, to conduct community education by serving on local committees and boards, to interact with local professionals, to involve other community groups in the NAMI agenda, to work with the local media on matters relating to mental illness, to report on local issues and needs to their Organization, to engage in fund raising for Affiliate,

Organization, and NAMI offices and programs, and to engage in grass roots advocacy on local, state and federal issues.

(c) Affiliation with State Organization - Within one year of the date of chartering by NAMI as the State Organization, all existing and new Affiliates shall become members of their respective NAMI chartered State Organization.

(d) Voting rights

(i) Within Organizations - Each Affiliate in good standing may be a voting member in any election or other vote on Organizational matters, excepting the nomination and election of members of the Board of Directors and the adoption and amendment of bylaws of the Organization, as may be prescribed by the bylaws of its Organization.

(ii) Within NAMI - Each Affiliate in good standing shall be entitled to cast, in any election or other vote on NAMI matters the number of votes determined by the following table:

| Number of current Members in the Affiliate ninety (90) days prior to the date of the meeting at which votes are cast | Number of Votes |
|--|-----------------|
| 5-50 | 1 |
| 51-100 | 2 |
| 101-200 | 3 |
| 201-300 | 4 |
| 301-400 | 5 |
| 401-500 | 6 |
| 501-600 | 7 |
| 601-700 | 8 |
| 701-800 | 9 |
| 801 or more | 10 |

(iii) Good Standing - For purposes of determining an Affiliate's entitlement to vote, an Affiliate in "good standing" shall be defined as one in which the dues of at least 5 of its members shall have been paid to its Organization and to NAMI during the 12 months preceding the credentialing date ninety (90) days prior to the annual meeting of NAMI. A list of local voting members constituting the voting membership of the Affiliate shall accompany the dues payment.

(e) Organization Endorsement of Affiliate Applications for Membership - All applications to NAMI for Affiliate membership in NAMI shall be endorsed by their respective Organization. Failure or refusal of an Organization to endorse favorably a membership application of a proposed Affiliate within sixty (60) days of the date of the Organization's receipt of the application from NAMI may, at the election of the Applicant, be deemed a dispute to be resolved through the provisions of Section 2(3)(f)vii) below.

(3) State Organizations

(a) Definition - Organizations shall be groups of at least three (3) geographically dispersed Affiliates within one state, territory, foreign country or the District of Columbia ("state(s)"). Affiliates and Members in states in which there are fewer than three (3) such Affiliates shall be deemed members of NAMI under these Bylaws notwithstanding any other provisions of these Bylaws to the contrary.

(b) Roles - The roles of Organizations may be, among other things, to develop a mental illness agenda within their respective states which reflects the needs of all areas of their respective states, to conduct advocacy

at state level within the legislative, executive and judicial branches, to monitor the activities and the budgets of state agencies, to encourage coordination of local advocacy, to support Affiliates by (i) organizing new Affiliates, (ii) providing a state information and referral service, (iii) providing technical assistance to Affiliates, (iv) conducting state conferences, and to report on state issues to NAMI.

- (c) Eligibility for Application for Organization Charter - All Organizations existing and recognized by the NAMI Board of Directors as of August 1, 1991, may commence the process, as prescribed by the NAMI Board, of applying for a NAMI Organization Charter. A charter shall be granted to Organizations that meet the criteria established by the NAMI Board. Any three or more geographically dispersed Affiliates of NAMI within a state that a) does not have an Organization existing and recognized by the NAMI Board of Directors as of July, 1991, or b) in which the previously recognized Organization shall fail i) to commence the chartering process as prescribed by the NAMI Board or ii) to meet the criteria for state chartering by August 1, 1994 shall apply to the NAMI Board for NAMI Organization charter for that state.
- (d) Number of Organizations per State - There shall be one (1) chartered NAMI Organization in each state with three (3) or more geographically dispersed Affiliates.
- (e) Incorporation - Organizations shall be incorporated as not-for-profit corporations under the laws of their respective state, and shall meet the requirements of, and, during the period of the chartering process, shall have applied for status as a tax exempt organization under the provisions of the Federal Internal Revenue Code.
- (f) Bylaws - In addition to meeting the requirements of the laws of its state of incorporation, the bylaws of each Organization shall at a minimum contain provisions relating to the following subject matters:
 - (i) Mission statement - A mission statement consistent with NAMI's mission and means to accomplish it as stated in the preamble of these NAMI Bylaws.
 - (ii) Membership - All Affiliates and all Members of Affiliates shall be members of the Organization of the State in which the Affiliates are situated, provided that they pay the prescribed dues to NAMI and to the Organization.
 - (iii) Voting Members - Each Organization shall prescribe the method and formula by which its membership shall vote in matters internal to the Organization. The method and formula for voting shall insure that Members shall have equal access to the process of nominating and electing the members of the Organization's Board of Directors and adoption and amendment of the Organization's Bylaws, and that Members and/or voting Affiliates shall have equal access to the process of voting upon other internal matters of the Organization, and shall further insure representation of the interests of, among others, consumers, minorities, ages, urban, rural, and other geographical areas within the state.
 - (iv) Dues - The Bylaws of each Organization shall prescribe the method of determining dues to be paid by its members to the Organization.
 - (v) Name and Logo - All Organizations and their Affiliate members shall include in their names the words "NAMI." Each Organization shall acknowledge that NAMI controls the use of the name, acronym and logo of NAMI and AMI, that their uses shall be in accordance with NAMI policy, and that upon termination of affiliation with or charter by NAMI, the uses of these names, acronyms and logo by an Affiliate member or Organization shall cease.
 - (vi) Resolution of Disputes Between Members and Proposed Affiliates - The Board of Directors of the Organization shall be invested with authority to mediate disputes between its member Affiliates, between its proposed Affiliates and between its members and proposed Affiliates by procedures and standards established by the Organization Bylaws. In the event the resolution of the dispute cannot be achieved within ninety (90) days from the receipt by the president of the Organization of a written

notice from the Board of Directors of any member Affiliate or organizers of a proposed Affiliate of the existence of a dispute, or by agreement sooner, the dispute, together with the names of the persons authorized to act on the behalf of the member or proposed Affiliate, shall be referred by the Organization Board to the NAMI Board for final and binding resolution by the NAMI Board.

(vii) Resolution of Disputes Between the Organization and Its Member Affiliates or Proposed Affiliates - The Bylaws of each Organization shall provide for a procedure for the mediation of disputes between the Organization and one or more of its proposed or member Affiliates; in the event that a resolution of the dispute cannot be achieved within ninety (90) days from the receipt by the president of NAMI of a written notice from the organizers of a proposed Affiliate or from the Board of Directors of an Affiliate or an Organization of the existence of the dispute, or by agreement sooner, the dispute, together with the names of the persons authorized to act on behalf of the disputants, shall be referred to the NAMI Board of Directors for final and binding resolution of the NAMI Board.

(viii) Non-Discrimination - The Bylaws of each Organization shall provide that neither it nor any member Affiliate shall discriminate against any person or group of persons on the basis of race, disability, creed, sex, religion, or age in the requirements for membership, its policies, or actions.

(ix) Adoption/Ratification of Bylaws - The adoption or ratification of the Organization Bylaws approved for purposes of chartering by NAMI shall be by a two-thirds (2/3) majority of all Members of all NAMI member Affiliates within that state voting.

(g) Organization Vote - Each Organization in good standing shall be entitled to cast one vote in any matter before a NAMI meeting. An Organization "in good standing" shall be one in which dues of the Organization shall have been paid to NAMI pursuant to a resolution of the NAMI Board for the current fiscal year at least ninety (90) days prior to the annual meeting.

(h) Independence - Organizations and Affiliates shall be independent of other agencies and advocacy groups not affiliated with NAMI, and shall not share bylaws, articles of incorporation, or boards of directors with such other groups.

Section 3. Supporters. Affiliates, State Organizations, and NAMI National may recognize, for their contributions, individuals, associations, and corporations that support the mission of NAMI.

Section 4. Procedure.

- (1) The NAMI Board of Directors shall grant Affiliate status to Affiliates and shall charter Organizations. It shall charter no more than one State Organization for each state or territory of the United States.
- (2) In states in which an Organization has been chartered, disputes between applicants for Affiliate membership, between an Affiliate and a proposed Affiliate, or between an Organization and a proposed or member Affiliate shall be resolved as provided in Section 2(3)(f), above.
- (3) In states in which no Organization has been chartered
 - (a) Disputes between applicants for Affiliate membership, between an Affiliate and a proposed Affiliate, and disputes between Affiliates which cannot be resolved within ninety (90) days from the receipt by the president of NAMI of a written notice from the Board of Directors of any member Affiliate or organizers of a proposed Affiliate of the existence of a dispute, or by agreement sooner, together with the names of persons authorized to act on behalf of the member Affiliate or proposed Affiliate, shall be referred to the NAMI Board for final and binding resolution.
 - (b) Disputes between applicants for an Organization charter which cannot be resolved with ninety (90) days from the receipt by the president of NAMI of a written notice from the president of any of the

applicants of the existence of the dispute, or by agreement sooner, together with the names of persons authorized to act on behalf of the disputants, shall be referred to the NAMI Board for final and binding resolution.

Section 5. Continuation / Termination of Status.

- (1) Unless and until an Organization shall fail to apply for or shall be denied a charter as an Organization, or an Affiliate shall fail to apply for or be denied membership in an Organization, within the time prescribed by these Bylaws, no change in their membership in NAMI shall occur, excepting by voluntary dissolution, or by termination of its affiliation or charter by the NAMI Board.
- (2) Termination of an Organization's charter shall not result in termination of the status of its Affiliate members as members of NAMI.
- (3) Failure of an Affiliate or Organization to comply with the NAMI Bylaws and affiliation or chartering criteria of the NAMI Board may result in termination of affiliation or charter, or such other actions as the Board may deem appropriate.

Section 6. Implementation Authority of the NAMI Board. In implementation of the provisions of this Article, the NAMI Board shall prescribe (1) procedures for the granting of membership status to Affiliate and charters to Organization, (2) procedures for the resolution of disputes by the NAMI Board, including allocation of responsibility for expenses incurred, and (3) procedures for the termination of the membership of Affiliates and the charter of Organization or the taking of other actions upon failure of an Affiliate or Organization to comply with these Bylaws and chartering criteria.

ARTICLE II
Finance

Section 1. Dues shall be set at the annual meeting of the Board of Directors.

Section 2. The fiscal year shall be from July 1 through June 30.

ARTICLE III
Meetings

Section 1. The annual meeting of the members of the corporation shall be held in the summer unless otherwise directed by the Board of Directors, on such dates and at such place as the Board of Directors shall designate. Voting members representing twenty (20%) per cent of the voting power of the membership shall constitute a quorum at any meeting of the members. Voting members shall designate delegates to vote at the annual meeting. Voting members may be represented by written proxy. The delegates shall act by majority vote at any meeting of the voting members at which a quorum is present, except as may be specifically provided to the contrary elsewhere in these Bylaws. All meetings of the Board, its committees and the corporation shall be governed by Roberts' Rules of Order.

Section 2. Special Meetings. Special meetings of the members may be called by a majority of the Board of Directors. Special meetings may also be called by petition of one-eighth of the general membership.

Section 3. Resolutions. All resolutions proposed to be acted upon at annual meetings shall be proposed only by voting members, the Board of Directors, or duly constituted committees of the meeting. All proposed resolutions shall be submitted to a Resolutions Committee appointed pursuant to Article VI, Section 2 of the bylaws, in writing and in advance of the meeting session at which they are to be considered. Proposed resolutions must be received by the national office not less than 90 days prior to the meeting. Such resolution shall be forwarded to each voting member in good standing not less than 30 days prior to the meeting. Resolutions shall be sent to the

national office by United States Postal Service, either by registered mail, certified mail, Express Mail or Priority Mail, or any other USPS service offering Return Receipts or Signature Confirmation.

ARTICLE IV Board of Directors

Section 1. Directors. The Board of Directors shall consist of sixteen (16) in number, including fifteen (15) regular directors elected by the membership and one (1) Consumer Council director elected by the Consumer Council.

Section 2. Qualifications. The Board of Directors shall be NAMI members and consist of, at least seventy-five percent, persons who have or have had mental illness, or parents or other relatives thereof. Directors may serve no more than two consecutive full terms.

Section 3. Terms of Office. Commencing in 1990 and at each annual meeting thereafter, the membership shall elect five (5) regular directors for a term of three (3) years or until their respective successors shall have been duly elected and qualified to succeed the class of regular directors whose term will expire at the end of such meeting; commencing in 1992 and at each third annual meeting thereafter, the Consumer Council shall elect from its members the Consumer Council director for a term of three (3) years or until his or her successor shall have been elected and duly qualified to fill the vacancy of the Consumer Council director whose term shall have expired that year.

Section 4. Nominating Procedure for Regular Directors. Nominations for regular directors shall be made by Affiliates and Organizations. No Affiliate or Organization may nominate more than one individual for regular director per election. Nominations shall be in writing and forwarded to the office of the president of the corporation not less than ninety (90) days prior to the commencement of the next annual meeting. The office of the president shall submit to each voting member the name, nominator, and resume of each individual so nominated.

Section 5. Vacancy. In case of any vacancy of one or more regular members of the Board of Directors, the Board of Directors shall elect the person or persons who shall fill the vacancy or vacancies until the next annual meeting, at which meeting the voting members shall elect the person or persons for the then remaining unexpired term or terms. In the event of a vacancy that occurs after the close of the 90-day nomination period prior to an annual meeting, but still prior to the annual meeting, the Board of Directors shall elect a replacement to serve until the subsequent annual meeting (that is, the annual meeting that takes place after the next cycle of the nominating period). In case of any vacancy of the Consumer Council member of the Board of Directors, the Executive Committee of the Consumer Council shall elect a Consumer Council member to fill the vacancy for the unexpired term.

Section 6. Consumer Council. There shall be a Consumer Council of persons who have or have had mental illness. Each state voting member, or if there is no state voting member in a state, then the local voting members of that state, by consensus, shall elect a person who has or has had mental illness to the Consumer Council. The Consumer Council shall serve in an advisory capacity to the Board of Directors and shall elect one of its members to the Board of Directors. All Consumer Council members shall be members in good standing of a state or local voting member.

ARTICLE V Directors Meetings

Section 1. Annual Meeting. After each annual meeting of the members, the Board of Directors shall meet and organize by electing, from among the directors, the officers. Such officers shall hold office until the next annual meeting or until their successors shall have been duly appointed.

Section 2. Regular Meetings. In addition to the Annual Meeting, the Board of Directors shall hold at least two regular meetings annually, the times and places therefor to be designated by the President.

Section 3. Special Meetings. Special meetings of the Board of Directors may be called by the President or any three members of the Board of Directors.

Section 4. Quorum. A majority of the Board of Directors shall constitute a quorum at any meeting; and a majority of those present in either case shall have power to act in all matters, except as specifically provided to the contrary elsewhere in these Bylaws, provided, however, that no real estate of the corporation shall be sold, leased, mortgaged, or otherwise disposed of, except by resolution approved by not less than a majority of the Board of Directors.

Section 5. Duties. In addition to the responsibilities vested in them by these Bylaws, the directors shall be vested with the responsibility to execute the corporate purposes as stated in the Statement of Purpose contained in the Articles of Incorporation and the expressed consensus of the members. It shall be the continuing responsibility of the Board of Directors to evaluate the overall function of the organization to ensure that the purposes are being adequately served.

Section 6. Consent to Corporate Action. If the directors of the corporation, acting without a meeting, shall severally or collectively consent in writing to any action to be taken by the directors, such consents shall have the same force and effect as a unanimous vote of the directors at a meeting duly held. Any certificate in respect of action taken by the written consent of the directors shall state that such action was taken in accordance with this Bylaw and has the same force and effect as a unanimous vote of the directors at a meeting duly held.

Section 7. Removal for Non-attendance at Board Meetings. The failure by an individual Director to attend two consecutive meetings of the Board of Directors without excuse may serve as a basis for removal of that individual from the Board. The determination of whether a particular individual should be removed for non-attendance shall include consideration of contributions that the individual has made to the organization in his or her capacity as a Director in lieu of attendance at Board meetings. When the Board of Directors determines that an individual should be removed, that individual shall be provided with notice of the intention to remove and shall have the opportunity to respond and object to such removal before the full Board within 10 days of receipt of notice. This will become effective for Directors elected beginning 1993.

ARTICLE VI Committees

Section 1. Executive Committee. The Executive Committee shall be comprised of the President, the two Vice-Presidents, the Secretary, the Treasurer and the Executive Director ex officio. The President shall act as Chairman and the Secretary as Secretary of the Committee. In the interim between the meetings of the Board of Directors, the Executive Committee shall have and shall exercise all of the powers of the Board save and except only the powers to fill vacancies in the Board of Directors, and to remove officers elected or appointed by the Board of Directors. Three of the regular members of the Committee shall constitute a quorum. All actions shall require a majority vote of the regular members present. The Committee shall keep minutes of all of its meetings and transactions, and such minutes shall be reported at each meeting of the Board for approval and ratification by the Board of actions taken by the Executive Committee.

Section 2. Standing Committees. The Board of Directors by resolution adopted by a majority of the Directors in office may designate Standing Committees of the Directors. Such committees, to the extent provided in such resolution, shall have and exercise the authority of the Board of Directors in the management of the corporation.

Section 3. Other Committees. Other committees not having and exercising the authority of the Board of Directors and not necessarily having a Director as a member thereof may be designated by resolution adopted by a majority of the Directors in office.

ARTICLE VII

Officers

Section 1. General. The corporation shall have a President, two Vice-Presidents, a Secretary and Treasurer, and such other officers as the Board of Directors shall deem necessary for the proper management of the corporation.

Section 2. President. The President shall preside at all meetings. The President shall exercise such authority and perform such duties as the Board of Directors may from time to time assign. The President shall appoint committee chairs, at his or her discretion, no later than thirty (30) days after the annual meeting.

Section 3. Vice-Presidents. In the event of the death, absence, incapacity, inability or refusal to act of the President, then the first Vice-President, then the second Vice-President, shall perform such other duties and exercise such other authority as may be from time to time imposed upon or assigned to them by the Board of Directors.

Section 4. Secretary. The Secretary shall attend all meetings of the Board of Directors and shall record all votes taken and the minutes of all proceedings in a minute book of the corporation to be kept for that purpose. The Secretary shall give notice of meeting and shall perform such other duties as are incident to the office of Secretary and as may be assigned to the Secretary by the Board of Directors or President of the Corporation. The Secretary shall retain in the minute book of the corporation all written consents of the Directors adopted in accordance with Section 6 of Article V. The Secretary shall attest the signatures of authorized officers of the corporation on any instrument requiring attestation. The Secretary may, with the consent of the Board of Directors, assign such duties to the staff of the corporation with the exception of the attestation of the signatures of authorized offices of the corporation.

Section 5. Treasurer. The Treasurer shall have supervision and custody of all monies, securities and other valuable properties of the corporation and shall cause to be kept full and accurate accounts of the receipts and disbursement of the corporation in books belonging to it. The Treasurer shall cause all monies and other valuable effects to be deposited in the name and to the credit of the corporation in such accounts and in such depositories as may be designated by the Board of Directors. The Treasurer shall disburse and supervise the disbursement of funds of the corporation in accordance with authority of the Board of Directors, taking proper vouchers therefore. The Treasurer shall render to the President and Directors, whenever required, a written detailed account of his transactions as Treasurer and of the financial condition of the corporation, including a statement of all its assets, liabilities, and financial transactions. The Treasurer shall further perform such other duties as the President or Board of Directors direct and such other duties as usually pertain to the office of treasurer. The Treasurer may, with the consent of the Board of Directors, assign such duties to the staff of the corporation. The Treasurer shall be relieved of all of the responsibility for any securities or monies or the disbursement thereof committed by the directors to the custody of any other person or corporation, or the supervision of which is delegated by the Board of Directors to any other officer, agent or employee, and the Treasurer shall not be responsible for any action of any officer, agent or employee of the corporation.

ARTICLE VIII

Executive Director

An Executive Director may be employed by the Board of Directors and shall have general direction of and supervision over the day-to-day affairs of the corporation. The Executive Director shall exercise such authority and perform such duties as the Board of Directors may from time to time assign to the Executive Director.

ARTICLE IX

Indemnification of Directors, Officers, Employees and Agents

Section 1. Each person who is or was a director, officer, employee or agent of the corporation, or is or was serving at the request of the corporation as a director, officer, employee, trustee or agent of another corporation, partnership, joint venture, trust or other enterprise shall be indemnified by the corporation in the manner and to the full extent that the corporation has power to indemnify such person under section 351.355 of the General and Business Corporation Law of Missouri as now in effect or hereafter amended; provided, however, that the corporation shall not so indemnify such person, or purchase or maintain indemnity insurance for the benefit of such person, in the event such indemnification or expenditure would either (i) then constitute an act of "self-dealing" or a "taxable expenditure," as defined by Sections 4941 (d)(1) and 4945 (d), respectively, of the Internal Revenue Code of 1954, as amended (or the corresponding provision of any future United States Internal Revenue Code, as amended), or (ii) violate the provision of Section 355.530 or any other section of the Revised Statutes of Missouri as then in effect.

ARTICLE X

Notice of Time and Place of Meetings

Section 1. Notices. Written notice stating the place, day and hour of the meeting and, in the case of special meetings, the purpose or purposes for which the meeting is called, shall be delivered or given, either personally or by mail, to each member or director of record at such address as appears on the books of the corporation, not less than two (2) weeks before the date of the meeting in the case of the annual meetings of the members or Board of Directors, and not less than one (1) week before the date of the meeting in the case of any other meetings of members or meetings of the Board of Directors. Notice given by mailing shall be deemed given at the time such notice is postmarked. Whenever any notice is required to be given, a waiver thereof in writing signed by the person or persons entitled to such notice, whether before or after the time stated therein, shall be deemed equivalent thereto.

Section 2. Time and Place. Except where the Bylaws elsewhere provide for a specific time or place, the caller or callers of a meeting of the members or of the Board of Directors shall designate the time and place of such meeting.

ARTICLE XI

Revision or Amendment of Bylaws

Revisions or amendments may be proposed by any voting member, or by any Director. Any such proposed amendments shall be submitted in writing by United States Postal Service, either by registered mail, certified mail, Express Mail or Priority Mail, or any other USPS service offering Return Receipts or Signature Confirmation to a Bylaws Committee not less than ninety (90) days prior to the date of the next annual meeting. Each voting member shall receive all proposed revisions or amendments to the Bylaws not less than thirty (30) days prior to the next annual meeting. A two-thirds majority of the voting power of the membership voting shall be required to amend the Bylaws.

ARTICLE XII

Seal

The corporation shall have no seal.

ARTICLE XIII

Whenever not otherwise provided in the Bylaws, the internal affairs of the corporation shall be governed by the procedures established in the General Not-For-Profit Corporation law of the State of Missouri.

NAMI's 2007 - 2010 Strategic Plan

Charting Our Course from Good to Great



**Adopted by
NAMI National Board of Directors
March 2007**



The Nation's Voice on Mental Illness
NAMI Affiliate Toolkit Part v NAMI National

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A Letter from the NAMI Board

As we began drafting our 2007 - 2010 Strategic Plan, we gathered input from internal and external stakeholders. One of the external participants said, quite plainly, "NAMI is the only group that really cares about serious mental illness—and you always will." No truer words were ever spoken. Our dedication to our mission - eradication of mental illness and improvement in the quality of life for people who live with mental illness - is as strong now as ever. As recovery, and the tremendous hope that it represents, becomes not just a possibility but a probability, we continue to push for more and better treatments—for a cure—not resting until we reach all whose lives have been affected by serious mental illnesses. We are ever mindful of those whose illnesses are the most severe and needs the greatest.

The Board was pleased and proud to present its draft plan for members' comment and input. We invited members to join us in Town Hall calls, online, and via email to share their reactions and thoughts. We hope members and leaders will see evidence of their input in this final version. Scores of members joined us for our calls and sent comments. We thank all who participated in that dialogue: our final plan is stronger and clearer for your efforts.

No strategic plan can address the entire work of an organization. This document, while highlighting key initiatives for the next three years, should not be read as the sum of all of NAMI's many marvelous parts. Critical work continues, often outside the limelight. For example, our exemplary signature support, education, and training programs continue to be critical to our mission and service; we continue to provide a wealth of information and resources and services on the Web, in print, and through our wonderful toll-free HelpLine; our tenacious federal advocacy on such issues as parity and access to services flourishes. This plan does not attempt to specify all the particulars of implementation, rather it provides a brief view of the plans proposed. We look forward to members' continued engagement, suggestions and recommendations as we develop the operational plans that will make this vision real.

Reality was very much on our minds as we considered this plan. We sought to craft a plan that is genuinely achievable - while demanding that we stretch ourselves to accomplish its goals. We know all too acutely the importance of ensuring adequate resources to support implementation and you will see reference to those initiatives that we recognize will require new infusions of staff and/or dollars.

In this plan, we have turned our attention to strengthening NAMI's core. We understand that to be successful in the long run, we must invest in our infrastructure, both with time and money. We pay particular attention to our health as a grassroots membership organization. We build on the success we have achieved in recent years. The Multicultural Action Center and our Child and Adolescent Action Center, both created as part of our previous strategic plan, have become integral parts of the NAMI "whole" and serve as models for future activity. Through them, we have learned the great value of interdisciplinary work, of policy and program developed in concert. Consequently, this plan puts specific emphasis, for instance, on meeting the needs of Veterans and the importance of NAMI's increased attention to the systems of care for our military service personnel.

NAMI cannot accomplish all that we hope without the help of others. Even as we seek to be the dominant force in serious mental illness advocacy, we understand the importance of strategic partnerships with others who share our goals. We have made great strides in this respect in recent years and we hold these new relationships in great regard. We celebrate the successes they have brought and will continue these collaborations.

We dedicate ourselves to growing NAMI in number and in strength. We will do this through effective member cultivation and retention, and purposeful outreach into under-served communities. We will change the face of NAMI, not by abandoning who we are, but by becoming more diverse to reflect the nation around us. When we speak of *diversity*, we include race, ethnicity, age, gender, sexual orientation, disability, families with children with a serious mental illness, and the unique needs of rural, frontier and border communities. Serious mental illness has a profound impact in these communities, and so must NAMI.

Most importantly, of course, we cannot accomplish all that we hope without each other. As the nation's largest family and consumer organization in our field, we have a special duty to succeed. If not NAMI, then who? Throughout these pages you will see evidence of our commitment to work collaboratively, across all levels of the organization, to make our alliance the best we can be. We will work to build organizational structures that "make sense on the ground" and that facilitate our work. In the "active listening" that led to this final plan, NAMI's grassroots called for clarity in these areas and pledged to work collaboratively to this end. We will ensure the strength of NAMI at the State and Affiliate level as we move forward.

Within this plan are exciting visions of our potential realized. Please continue to join us in this work. We look forward to your involvement!

The NAMI National Board of Directors
March 10, 2007

Executive Summary

NAMI has made a commitment to greatness. Through our strategic planning process, we have dedicated ourselves to moving from being a good, solid organization, to one that is truly great. By “great” we mean that *NAMI will deliver superior performance that makes a distinctive impact over a long period of time.*

To achieve greatness, we have selected five goals that can apply equally well to NAMI at the national, state and local levels and on which we will focus our efforts for the next three years:

- 1. NAMI is a dynamic, well-run organization that seeks and engages a diverse and growing membership.**
- 2. NAMI is financially secure and independent.**
- 3. NAMI is the dominant force in serious mental illness advocacy.**
- 4. NAMI is the leader in crafting and implementing state-of-the-art education and information.**
- 5. NAMI is building and incorporating the largest consumer movement in the country.**

We have selected these goals because they express what *must be true* for NAMI to move from good to great.

We will approach our goals keeping in mind the essential elements of progressing from good to great: finding, keeping and nurturing disciplined people; demanding of ourselves disciplined thought; and taking only disciplined action. We understand discipline in a positive light—not as punitive or constraining—but as the force that will set NAMI free to achieve success. In that light, we have identified a limited list of strategies that we will use, across all our goals, to ensure our path to greatness. We will achieve our goals and greatness by:

- **Increasing and diversifying funding at all levels**
- **Making NAMI a household word**
- **Confronting failures**
- **Describing and promoting best practices**
- **Increasing training and learning opportunities**
- **Embracing and empowering leaders and members from diverse communities**
- **Embracing and empowering consumer leaders and members**
- **Embracing and empowering families of children and youth.**

The strategies we will use to reach our goals represent the *choices we make* about *how* we will achieve our goals. The substance of NAMI’s strategic plan lies at the intersection of our goals and these strategies.

Our goals and strategic choices dictate continuation of many of NAMI’s existing initiatives, refinement and redirection of others, and creation of a select few more. For each goal, we have identified key initiatives that serve as result measures against which we can monitor our forward movement.

NAMI's 2007- 2010 Strategic Plan

Charting our Course from Good to Great

NAMI is dedicated to the eradication of mental illnesses and to improving the quality of life for all whose lives are affected by these illnesses. Through support, education, advocacy, and research, NAMI serves the nation and our communities by empowering consumers and families to confront the profound injustices brought by serious mental illness. Through this strategic plan, we chart a course to meaningful systems change and the promise of recovery.

Background

The NAMI Strategic Planning Group (SPG), a representative group appointed by the Board and charged with drafting NAMI's strategic plan, convened first in March 2006, engaging in a now well-established NAMI tradition of "active listening" to gather members' input and ensure that the NAMI planning process remained inclusive, interactive and iterative.¹

Active Listening began in the spring and reached its greatest level of activity at the NAMI Convention, when members were able to complete surveys, attend special "listening sessions", networking sessions' concerns were recorded, and NAMI's Advisory Councils held special meetings and teleconferences to offer additional input.

The SPG met for its initial planning retreat in August, for a three-day facilitated session that yielded the proposed plan's goals and strategies and revealed the need for more time to align the plan with NAMI's budget process, to allow more informed decision-making based on cost projections.

The theoretical framework for the plan, based on Jim Collins' work *Good to Great*, proved even more compelling and constructive than the SPG had anticipated. Since the retreat, Board members and NAMI leaders at the Affiliate and State levels have been introduced to the "good to great" framework, which permeates the plan document.²

SPG's work was reported to the National Board in September. Board members were engaged in an "active listening" session of their own as they recommended elements that they felt would be critical to NAMI's progress over the next three years.

In November, the SPG convened again and wrestled with the task of narrowing their brainstorming to a few key efforts that best reflected the goals and strategies already identified, and against which NAMI's progress from good to great could be measured.

The SPG offered its draft to the Board in early December. The Board reviewed, refined and accepted the SPG's work as NAMI's Draft 2007 - 2010 Strategic Plan and then sought members' input. A "public comment" phase ran from December 2006 through February 2007. The Board reviewed all comments, revised the plan based on that input, and approved the final plan in early March 2007.

¹ See Appendix I for mission and composition of NAMI's Strategic Planning Group (SPG)

² Jim Collins *Good to Great and the Social Sectors*, 2005.

NAMI's Strategic Vision

NAMI has made a commitment to greatness. Through our strategic planning process, we have dedicated ourselves to moving from being a good, solid organization, to one that is truly great. By “great” we mean that *NAMI will deliver superior performance that makes a distinctive impact over a long period of time.*

Five years from now, we envision NAMI as a great organization characterized by clarity, vitality, visibility, stability, and strength in our infrastructure, funding, advocacy, and education efforts. We will find and remain steadfast at the intersection of our passion (our profound rejection of the injustices created by serious mental illness) with our greatest strength (our unique ability to articulate both the experience of those injustices and of recovery through our advocacy, education and programs) and our resources (NAMI's remarkable volunteers and staff, our funding, and the NAMI brand).

As an expression of our envisioned future, we have selected five goals that can apply equally well to NAMI at the national, state and local levels and on which we will focus our efforts for the next three years:

1. NAMI is a dynamic, well-run organization that seeks and engages a diverse and growing membership.
2. NAMI is financially secure and independent.
3. NAMI is the dominant force in serious mental illness advocacy.
4. NAMI is the leader in crafting and implementing state-of-the-art education and information.
5. NAMI is building and incorporating the largest consumer movement in the country.

We have selected these goals because they express what *must be true* for NAMI to move from good to great.

Throughout the planning process, discussion returned to ensuring that NAMI be “real on the ground”—that time and resources be dedicated to strengthening, empowering and supporting NAMI at the Affiliate and State levels, with particular attention to needs of NAMI's in rural, frontier, and border communities. “Being real on the ground” also requires attention to the needs of our local Affiliates and the importance of branding NAMI, our products, and our services, and building the organization's visibility overall. These priorities find expression throughout the plan and, even when not explicitly mentioned, should be assumed as underlying premises in all NAMI undertakings: we are as strong as our smallest support group and we dedicate ourselves to strengthening the entire NAMI “family”. Ultimately, all our work will depend on adequate resources—hence our first goal and recurring emphasis on the importance of ensuring financial strength at all levels of the NAMI organization.

Realizing Our Vision

We will approach our goals keeping in mind the essential elements of progressing from good to great: finding, keeping and nurturing disciplined people; demanding of ourselves disciplined thought; and taking only disciplined action. We understand discipline in a positive light—not as punitive or constraining—but as the force that will set NAMI free to achieve success. In that light, we have identified a limited list of strategies that we will use, across all our goals, to ensure our path to greatness. We will achieve our goals and greatness by:

- Increasing and diversifying funding at all levels
- Making NAMI a household word
- Confronting failures

- Describing and promoting best practices
- Increasing training and learning opportunities
- Embracing and empowering leaders and members from diverse communities
- Embracing and empowering consumer leaders and members
- Embracing and empowering families of children and youth.

The strategies we will use represent the *choices we make* about *how* we will achieve our goals. The substance of NAMI's strategic plan lies at the intersection of our goals and these strategies.

We selected these particular strategies because they reinforce important work already underway (engaging diverse communities, consumers, and families of children and youth), as well as build on approaches that have proven successful in recent years (teaching ourselves and one another to face the hard facts if efforts that aren't as successful as might have been hoped, and identifying and articulating better approaches).

First and foremost, we must ensure our viability by strengthening funding at all levels of the organization. *Increasing and diversifying funding at all levels* will make us less vulnerable to the vagaries of any particular funder's interest and enable us to provide more and better programs and services. This strengthening must be realized at all levels of the organization, but especially on the local level where NAMI existence can be unremittingly "hand to mouth."

We understand the importance of building the NAMI "brand" by *making ourselves a household word*. We will do this through unrelenting advocacy, pro-active marketing/outreach, and providing only the highest caliber of programming, publications, and training. Every strategic implementation will serve to build the NAMI brand and increase our visibility nationwide.

The *Good to Great* framework emphasizes the critical and strategic value of brutal honesty in the face of daunting facts. We embrace the strategy of *confronting failures* both in our external demands for systems change, as well as in our internal assessment of our own shortcomings. We will not flinch from the realities before us, nor will we shy from holding ourselves and others accountable for the failings we see.

Simply pointing out what is wrong or inadequate is, in itself, an inadequate approach. For this reason, we will couple our *confronting failures* strategy with *describing and promoting best practices* and *increasing training and learning opportunities* to offer viable alternatives to current failed systems. We will enrich and enhance capacity within the organization not simply for its own sake, but to ensure we cultivate a grassroots leadership that is genuinely equipped for greatness.

NAMI's 2001 – 2006 Strategic Plan placed a newfound emphasis on multicultural outreach, cultural competence, and inclusion of families of children and youth. These efforts proved to be more than simple window-dressing and have set into motion a radical transformation of the face of NAMI. In this plan, we will continue this exciting and important momentum, further imbedding these efforts in absolutely every element of NAMI programming and advocacy. Our last strategies, then, demonstrate our rededication to these efforts as we work to *embrace and empower members and leaders from diverse communities and families of children and youth*. And, finally, the same is true for growing our consumer membership. Always an integral part of the NAMI "family", we will continue to offer increasingly relevant and meaningful ways to engage and empower new consumer members and leaders.

As we move to implement our goals and strategies, NAMI will draw on the power of its own history, as well as on the power of new opportunities before us. Our rich history as a person-first movement, which took shape first as a family organization concerned primarily with adults with severe and persistent mental illnesses who shared a profound interest in research, is equally relevant today. We

enhance our heritage with increasing attention to the needs of children and youth, recognizing what science has told us about the impact of early onset and the importance of early intervention.

We rejoice in the expanded engagement of consumers in NAMI because it is evidence of recovery and the resilience we know to be possible, even as some individuals and families still struggle with illnesses so pernicious that currently available treatments are utterly insufficient. Our dedication to meeting the needs of these individuals—and to supporting the research to overcome existing limitations or even to find cures—is unswerving. NAMI serves families—parents, siblings, spouses, children of people who live with serious mental illnesses, and those individuals themselves—across the lifespan, with full appreciation for the varying but equally valid experiences every member brings to the lived experience of serious mental illness within the family.

We embrace the success of new approaches, such as the NAMI Walks, to draw new members and fresh attention to NAMI and the impact of serious mental illness. Our NAMI Walks program, which has evolved to be a remarkable multi-faceted asset to the entire NAMI movement, offers important lessons: program templates that brand NAMI in the community have tremendous structural value; we can—and do—attract thousands of new members, volunteers and donors to our cause; organizational capacity building, membership growth and funding raising can—and do—happen all at once, with a little effort. Web-based programs and technology also hold breathtaking possibilities for NAMI. The NAMI Web site and Web-based programs and services are already proving to be critical public conduits to NAMI's wealth of information and offerings. We will build on what our experience has taught us works.

Progressing from Good to Great

In the planning process, NAMI's need for baseline data for many goals became very apparent. Throughout the plan, establishing a baseline is often the first implementation effort identified for action. We recognize and embrace the organizational and administrative challenges inherent in accomplishing these baselines, especially in an entrepreneurial grassroots organization such as NAMI. In our public comment phase, these challenges were often remarked upon. Particularly in light of the needs in the field, we are committed to providing the resources and systems to support this information gathering and ongoing measurement. From baselines, we can make genuine measures of progress. Without them, we can only speculate.

We recognize that some of our work is measurable in quantitative ways, while other portions are more subjective and rely on qualitative assessments. Either way, we will hold ourselves accountable to demonstrable progress. We will rigorously collect evidence to evaluate our progress, wherever we may find it.

Our goals and strategic choices dictate continuation of many of NAMI's existing initiatives, refinement and redirection of others, and creation of a select few more. For each goal we have identified key initiatives that serve as result measures against which we can monitor our forward movement. We have selected measures that address outcomes and outputs, rather than simply tallying inputs.

This document does not contain the implementation work plans that will operationalize this strategic vision. Those plans will come annually, in conjunction with NAMI's annual budgeting process. Narrative attached to each initiative helps provide the Board's thinking and context for selection and may hint at implementation options or preferences, but is in no way exhaustive. It is the Board's role to determine annual priorities and to approve and oversee the budget that will make attaining these goals possible. Public comment and input from NAMI's Advisory Councils help inform this process.

The selected initiatives contained in this plan are chosen because we view them as critical to our success—critical to our movement toward greatness—and because progress in these areas is measurable in ways that will be meaningful as we move through implementation. Ideally, these efforts

are SMART (specific, measurable, achievable, realistic, and time-limited). To ensure continuous performance improvement, we will employ several of our own strategies as we move forward: we will confront our own failures or short-comings, employ best practices, and capitalize on our learning experiences. In evaluating our efforts, we seek to be our own greatest critic.

Ultimately we will judge our work against whether it genuinely moves NAMI toward greatness: *how effectively do we deliver on our mission and make a distinctive impact, relative to our resources?*

~ ~ ~



Goal 1

NAMI is a dynamic, well-run organization that seeks and engages a diverse and growing membership.

NAMI's Envisioned Future

NAMI is a thriving organization, characterized by clarity, vitality, stability and strength.

NAMI is truly inclusive and welcomes members from all walks of life, and from across the lifespan. NAMI attracts and retains more members, from increasingly varied communities, and is genuinely representative of our nations' great diversity. We enjoy a vibrant and entirely culturally competent and linguistically appropriate presence in African-American, Asian-American/Pacific Islander, Native American, Native Alaskan, and Latino/Hispanic communities all across the country.

We have collaborated thoughtfully to define standards for our organizational operations. We cultivate a culture of healthy interdependence between NAMI at the National, State and Affiliate levels. All facets of NAMI function freely, within a framework of clearly articulated roles and responsibilities. We have succeeded in creating organizational structures that are wholly viable even in rural and frontier communities.

We seek and recognize excellence among our own ranks, as well as avail ourselves of best practices in organizational management and leadership development. We face with honesty our own organizational shortcomings and develop strategies to address them so that we may move "from good to great."

Realizing the Vision

NAMI's strategic plan is our expression of how we hope and expect to get to our envisioned future. In looking at the intersections of this goal and our strategies, we pay particular attention to efforts that will help NAMI deliver superior performance as an organization, that will have a distinct impact within the organization, and that can endure within the ever-changing world of a lively and growing grassroots movement.

In working toward this goal, NAMI will focus particularly on incorporating these strategies:

- confronting failures;
- describing and promoting best practices;
- increasing training and learning opportunities; and
- embracing and empowering leaders and members from diverse communities, consumer leaders and members, and families of children and youth.

This goal requires that we look systemically and address first the fundamentals of good organizational management. We place this goal first because we view success here as primary and sequentially essential to success elsewhere.

Progressing from Good to Great

NAMI's need for a baseline for this goal underscores the importance of data gathering and confronting the current challenges in our organizational structure. Recognizing that without sound organizational

structures, we cannot hope to succeed in our other goals. We will address these “infrastructure issues” first. These are not the most exciting elements of our plan, but we view them as among the most strategic.

We will measure our progress through these initiatives:

A. NAMI is increasing membership by 10% per year.

- **Task: establish membership baseline**
- **Target: 10% growth each year**
- **Evidence of Progress: increasing velocity of new membership growth; improving capacity of organization to manage membership; improving member retention**

NAMI's potential membership is enormous—as is our possible attendant power—yet, for a variety of reasons, we lack a full grasp of our current membership numbers. Getting a firm hand on the true scope of NAMI's membership count has always challenged this three-tier, grassroots, membership organization. Leaders at all levels have given clear indication that they are ready to grapple with this challenge, allowing NAMI to establish common membership structures and a baseline from which growth can honestly be measured. Access to and comfort with using information and Web-based technology will have to be taken into account as NAMI develops membership data systems that can be used at all levels of the organization.

B. The NAMI organization is jointly defining, implementing, and functioning within agreed-upon standards of operation.

- **Target: establish baseline of operating standards at all levels, including basic non-profit requirements and best practices, by 2008**
- **Target: timeline for implementing standards established by 2008**
- **Target: timeline and process for rechartering established by 2008**
- **Task: collect membership's cultural, ethnic, and geographic data**
- **Evidence of Progress: increasing number and percentage of States and Affiliates adhering to standards; documenting organizational growth and increasing well-being as a result of adherence to standards; documenting development of standards**

While essential to our mission and history, NAMI's entrepreneurial, grassroots structure has presented unique challenges for our organizational growth. NAMI recognizes that the best solutions to these challenges will come from collaborative thinking and that “one size won't fit all.” The standards we develop must accommodate variety and be appropriate for NAMI groups at various stages of development, and in urban, suburban, and rural/frontier/border settings. Leaders at all levels have expressed desire to resolve lingering role confusion and ambiguity, so that organizational energy can be saved for NAMI's true passions—support, education, advocacy and research. NAMI will invest the resources necessary to help the grassroots meet these agreed-upon standards.

C. NAMI is operating a Veteran's Action Center.

- **Task: development or work plan, staffing, annual budget**
- **Target: formation of Center in 2007**
- **Target: establish strategy for reaching out to service personnel returning from Iraq and Afghanistan, and their families**
- **Evidence of Progress: advocacy increasingly visible and having demonstrable impact; increasingly effective Veterans Council engagement; NAMIs increasingly engaging with VA and needs/concerns of veterans**

NAMI recognizes both the tremendous need among veterans for the services and supports available from NAMI—and the huge membership potential represented by the ten million military veterans in this country. Building on the success of other NAMI Action Centers, the Veteran's Action Center is expected to help grow the organization both in numbers and in the scope of its reach and impact.

D. NAMI is conducting periodic assessments of key organizational indices.

- **Task: identify indices and organizational health assessment tools**
- **Task: document performance of assessments**
- **Task: include cultural competence assessment among indices**

- **Evidence of Progress: positive progress on indices**

Documented “best practices” in non-profit business operation offer numerous assessment tools for measuring institutional health and for managing organizational risk. NAMI will avail itself of these instruments and conduct periodic evaluation of our operations with an eye toward continuous improvement. These assessments will be periodic, rather than annual, to reduce any disruptive burden to State Organizations and Affiliates. Their performance will be geared to constructive engagement and be approached as learning opportunities for leaders and the organization alike. The tools and indices employed will be shared across the organization so State Organizations and Affiliates may select the instruments most helpful to them in conducting their own self-assessments.

E. NAMI is increasing involvement and leadership of diverse populations at all levels.

- **Task: establish baseline of cultural, ethnic, and demographic membership data**
- **Evidence of Progress: increasing active participation and assumption of leadership roles**

NAMI must represent the communities in which we exist. Achieving a diversity that genuinely reflects the community will require purposeful effort, including seeking and identifying emerging leaders, membership recruitment and retention efforts, development of culturally appropriate resources and materials. In speaking of diversity, we include race, ethnicity, age, gender, sexual orientation, disability, families with children with a serious mental illness, and the unique needs of rural, frontier and border communities. We will pay particular attention to providing culturally competent and linguistically appropriate programs and resources in African-American, Asian-American/ Pacific Islander, Native American, Native Alaskan, and Hispanic/Latino communities. Success in this area can be measured objectively through demographic data collection.



Goal 2

**NAMI is financially secure
and independent.**

NAMI's Envisioned Future

NAMIs at all levels have achieved financial stability, without compromise to mission or goals. Funding streams are diverse and tap unrestricted dollars for maximum flexibility. Financial support comes from increasing and increasingly diverse sources, including individuals, corporations, governmental sources, and foundations.

NAMI has developed exciting funding sources, such as the NAMIWalks, which tap new donors and dollars. Sponsorship has become commonplace for NAMI events and activities, including the existence of national non-vested-interest corporate sponsors. Potential competition between National, State and Affiliate levels of the organization has been eliminated through partnerships and clear communication.

NAMI's potential donors and funders believe not only in our mission but also in our capacity to deliver, without compromise, on that mission. National, State and Local NAMIs are—and are unequivocally perceived as being—independent of funding sources that might influence or otherwise impede our advocacy and programming. NAMIs make especially effective use of the funds available to them, demonstrating exceptional stewardship of funds.

Realizing the Vision

Without adequate resources, little is possible in non-profits' competitive environment. Just as our infrastructure issues must be addressed, so too must our resource challenges. Financial security at the National level must be leveraged to help create comparable stability at the State and Affiliate levels. We will avail ourselves of the opportunities created by our Leadership Institute, Executive Directors' Leadership Exchange, and the newly created regional conferences to provide skills-building and technical assistance to our vital grassroots.

The intersections of our fiscal goal and our strategies are pragmatic, with particular attention to the need for equipping all levels of the organization to find and maintain stable funding streams. In working toward this goal, NAMI will focus particularly on incorporating these strategies:

- increasing and diversifying funding at all levels;
- making NAMI a household word;
- confronting failures;
- describing and promoting best practices; and
- increasing training and learning opportunities.

Progressing from Good to Great

NAMI has a well-established baseline of National funding data from which progress can be measured, but less has been documented about the funding sources of NAMIs at the State and Affiliate levels. In

addition to quantifiable data, evidence of financial diversification, demonstrable fiscal stability, increasing budgets and demonstrated stewardship will be viewed as important indicators of organizational health and progress toward greatness.

We will measure our progress through these initiatives:

A. NAMI is increasing the diversity of direct corporate support and increasing direct mail income.

- **Target: increase funding from direct mail, individual contributions, foundations, memorials, and major donors to 65% of total revenue by 2010**
- **Evidence of Progress: funding ratios adjusting positively; total revenues continuing to increase; potential donors are increasingly receptive to cultivation, or actively seek out NAMI**

Securing unrestricted and diversified funding is “priority one” for NAMI. We wish to strengthen our fiscal position through a greater variety of funding sources. Direct mail represents a growth opportunity for NAMI at all levels, if done effectively. Care must be taken to address the needs at State and Affiliate levels, perhaps through partnership or other use agreements, so that one level’s gain in this area is not another’s loss.

B. NAMI is developing and implementing pilot “shared” fundraising opportunities with State Organizations that have the capacity and interest in working with National on joint fundraising.

- **Task: determine number of State Organizations with capacity and interest to undertake effort**
- **Task: track number of State Organizations participating**
- **Task: track projects undertaken and revenue generated**
- **Evidence of Progress: increasing frequency of requests for partnerships; successful outcomes from partnerships, including funds raised and positive experiences for all parties; building fund development capacity in State Organizations to expand NAMI signature programs**

Collaboration has been the secret to much recent NAMI success, not least in fund raising. With a specific goal of increasing States’ and Affiliates’ levels of sophistication in fund development, this initiative assumes large amounts of technical assistance to the field and a long term goal of increasing National’s ability to

share increasing resources with State Organizations and Affiliates. This activity will exceed current capacity and staffing of NAMI's Center for Leadership Development and Development teams and will require additional resources.

C. NAMI is seeking and securing funding from previously unidentified or new sources.

- **Task: research and develop cultivation prospects**
- **Task: document requests**
- **Evidence of Progress: increasing familiarity with and receptivity to NAMI in new arenas; successful securing of new funding sources; Leadership Alliance membership and donations increasing**

Diversification will also necessitate identification of new—and potentially previously unimagined—funding sources, including: foundations, new membership programs, special events, faith-based communities, increased fundraising from corporate sponsors other than pharmaceutical companies, and expansion of NAMI's Mind of America Foundation outreach. Success in this arena can be measured through documentation of cultivation, requests, and ultimate yield from these new funding sources.

D. NAMI is managing a growing endowment.

- **Target: campaign to support endowment established by 2008**
- **Target: endowment reaches \$5,000,000 by 2010**
- **Evidence of Progress: donors increasingly familiar with and supportive of endowment; increasing available capital**

Endowments are restricted dollars, but with careful management they lend an organization a critical degree of stability and permanence that NAMI desires and can reasonably expect to achieve.

E. NAMI National is providing technical assistance to State Organizations and Affiliates to improve their fundraising capacity.

- **Task: establish baseline of current support and technical assistance at State and Affiliate levels**
- **Evidence of Progress: increasingly sophisticated fund development successfully employed at State and Affiliate levels; increasing fiscal stability among State and Affiliate participants**

This initiative assumes expansion of staff and other resources to provide technical assistance and learning opportunities for State and Affiliate leaders. Through the Leadership Institute, tool kits, event templates, and consultative assistance, field leaders will be equipped to make NAMI more financially secure and independent. Fundraising will be built into the fabric of NAMI's ongoing technical assistance to States.

F. NAMI is increasing NAMIWalks sites by 10 each year.

- **Task: track sites, revenue, walkers**
- **Target: increase 10 sites each year**
- **Evidence of Progress: increasing stability, participation, and revenue from all sites; demonstrated interest in participating from potential sites; penetration in major media markets**

NAMIWalks has proven to be a remarkable source of financial independence for State Organizations and Affiliates. NAMI will expand this program to a growing number of sites.



Goal 3

**NAMI is the dominant force
in serious mental illness advocacy.**

NAMI's Envisioned Future

NAMI is the “go to” organization when it comes to contemplating systems change. NAMI is a force to be reckoned with in political and advocacy circles. Policy makers secure NAMI’s input before drafting public policy and politicians similarly seek NAMI endorsement and approval.

NAMI has a well-earned reputation for taking on hard battles—and winning them—and for addressing the needs of people living with serious mental illness. We are visible and formidable as we put the “human face” on serious mental illness and recovery. We demand the highest quality research and services for people with serious mental illness—and we expect them to be funded appropriately.

We reject failed “systems of care” and hold accountable those responsible for such failures. NAMI leads the way in addressing and correcting systems failures in critical areas such as employment, housing, and the “criminalization” of people with serious mental illness, finding innovative answers to problems too-long viewed as intractable by others.

NAMI has successfully integrated serious mental illness into the wider “disability community” and takes full advantage of legislation and regulations designed to assist members of this community.

NAMI State Organizations and Affiliates are well-equipped to mobilize for systems change. We provide and readily exchange tools and resources that enable members to become strong and effective advocates. We make a priority of mobilizing for change.

Realizing the Vision

NAMI National was originally founded at least in part to provide federal-level advocacy leadership. NAMI’s capacity to deliver on that charge is directly tied to the skills and resources available at the State and Affiliate levels. NAMI is unique among advocacy groups for the authenticity of our voice as service system end users. Our ability to articulate the experience of serious mental illness—its impact, as well as the consequences of failures in services, treatment, and public policy—defines our value to this public debate.

The intersections of NAMI’s advocacy goal and our strategies hone NAMI’s advocacy presence, furthering our stature as a force to be reckoned with. In working toward this goal, NAMI will focus particularly on incorporating these strategies:

- making NAMI a household word;
- confronting failures;
- describing and promoting best practices;
- increasing training and learning opportunities; and
- embracing and empowering leaders and members from diverse communities, consumer leaders and members, and families of children and youth.

Progressing from Good to Great

We will measure our progress through these initiatives:

- A. NAMI is “Grading the States” and defining a gold standard for shaping public mental health services in the US.**
- **2006 report forms baseline**
 - **Target: next report in 2008**
 - **Target: develop a framework for a *Grading the States* report on children and adolescents by 2010**
 - **Evidence of Progress: state policymakers (bureaucrats and elected officials) are utilizing the report’s scoring criteria as road maps in developing public mental health services; individual states demonstrate improvement in areas identified as deficient in NAMI’s 2006 report.**

NAMI’s 2006 return to “Grading the States” proved as monumental as any might have anticipated. Policy makers, service providers, other advocates and media alike continue to reverberate to the report’s findings. Original plans to undertake the next report in 2009 have been met with a push to perform this task sooner—an important indicator of the report’s impact and import, but one which will require an even more aggressive ramp up of staff and additional funding. We will continue to make a priority of leveraging the report’s data compilation and release as learning opportunities for State and Affiliate leaders. NAMI’s grading criteria will continue to reflect organizational public policy priorities, including attention to disparities in services to communities of color and the critical importance of culturally competent and linguistically appropriate services.

- B. NAMI is leading a multi-faceted campaign to reduce the incarceration of youth and adults with serious mental illness in jail or prison.**
- **Task: establish baseline data (build on 2006 Department of Justice study)**
 - **Task: develop and document tool kits, training, mobilization of advocates**
 - **Evidence of Progress: data revealing declines in incarceration, recidivism, and appropriate diversion to services; evidence of increasing use of early intervention strategies; increase in a full range of community services including: CIT, mental health courts, ACT services, dual-diagnosis programs, crisis response teams, supported housing, vocational rehabilitation, social rehabilitation, and availability of acute care in the community, access to acute, intermediate, and long-term inpatient care when needed, and supported outpatient treatment when needed; data revealing declines in incarceration and appropriate diversion to services; existence of re-entry programs; existence of screening and assessment for youth and adults entering the criminal justice system**

Criminalization of people who live with serious mental illness has staggering implications for both the individual and society at large. NAMI vehemently rejects this trend and will bring its advocacy force to bear in confronting this systems failure. We will demand to see substantial declines in these daunting statistics, including the alarming recidivism too often associated with people with serious mental illness. In conjunction with NAMI’s CIT and other law and criminal justice activities, this effort will provide a rallying cry for systems change.

- C. NAMI is implementing strategies to increase and focus NIMH funding of research relevant to serious mental illness in children and adults.**
- **Target: annual budget increases, above inflation, by 2010**
 - **Evidence of Progress: NIMH budget growing and increasingly focused on serious mental illness; NAMI engaging early and in meaningful ways in budgeting process**

Research is at the heart of NAMI’s mission. While huge portions of research are funded by private concerns, NIMH still plays a pivotal role in advancing our knowledge of serious mental illness. With

this public funding can come improved public and Congressional understanding of the impact of scientific advances. In real dollars, the NIMH budget has declined unacceptably in recent years. We will fight this downward trend. While the political climate has changed and substantial budget increases may be harder to achieve, NAMI must not flinch from pushing a serious mental illness agenda at the NIMH. We will not fight for funds that are misspent. NAMI calls for NIMH to increase research on the long-term safety, efficacy and effectiveness of psychotropic medications for children and adolescents.

D. NAMI is increasing the effectiveness of its advocacy.

- **Task: establish baseline of members' engagement**
- **Task: develop and document increasingly available tools for grassroots advocates**
- **Evidence of Progress: grassroots responding to NAMI legislative alerts with increasing frequency and fervor; increasing frequency with which NAMI is sought by Congress and Executive Branch to testify, advise, consult; public policy initiatives supported by NAMI are successful**

NAMI's advocacy strength comes from both its federal presence and its grassroots credibility. While our historic successes are many, we must dedicate ourselves to a course of constant self-improvement as we seek, find, and use ever-more effective advocacy strategies, including use of new technologies and training and equipping members and leaders to become more vociferous and effective advocates at the local, state, and national levels.

E. NAMI is increasing capacity among NAMI State Organizations to exchange effective strategies for systems change for children and adults.

- **Task: establish baseline – document existing practices via Leadership Institute, Leadership Exchange, online bulletin board**
- **Evidence of Progress: demonstrably less “re-invention of wheel”; improving mechanisms for exchange, including better use of Web-based reference and resource systems**

As an association of State Organizations and Affiliates, NAMI has a special challenge to help leaders help themselves and others through leveraging the effort of others. Tool kits, templates, and venues for networking and exchange will be critical to this sharing. Equally important will be identification and use of effective ways to communicate the availability of these resources for a widely dispersed grassroots membership.

F. NAMI is leading a multi-faceted campaign to facilitate employment and financial independence for persons with serious mental illness.

- **Target: increase focus on employment in the next *Grading the States* report**
- **Target: convene panel of experts to advise NAMI on steps that can be taken in federal and state policies to increase access to meaningful employment options for people with serious mental illness and issue recommendations from convened panel**
- **Evidence of Progress: increasing recognition within the broad disability community of serious mental illness as a legitimate disability; increasing familiarity with employment options and considerations among members; emerging strategies**

Employment is a critical part of the path to recovery. NAMI will elevate its existing efforts by infusing an emphasis on employment throughout our federal advocacy efforts and in our policy support to State Organizations and Affiliates. Recognizing that important work is being done by others in this area, we will use our unique convening status to bring together experts in the field to inform the future course of employment advocacy.

G. NAMI is influencing presidential platforms and elevating serious mental illness on elected officials' agendas.

- **Target: revive NAMI's / Vote, / Count. Campaign for 2008 election**
- **Target: collect and report Presidential candidates' positions on key mental health issues.**
- **Evidence of Progress: proactive serious mental illness planks included in platforms; candidates speak directly and substantively to issues; voters seek and care about candidates' views on NAMI issues; media take note and cover public interest on campaign trail**

As an advocacy organization, NAMI must achieve high visibility for our issues and insert ourselves in the public debate at election time. As we have with the "Grading the States" report, we will continue to hold public officials accountable for the shameful state of services for people living with serious mental illness in this country.

H. NAMI is developing and employing a national media and marketing program that supports our advocacy voice and the NAMI brand and reflects the increasingly diverse nature of the organization.

- **Target: integrated PSAs for radio, TV, and print piloted**
- **Target: print materials developed, including posters, brochures, and templates**
- **Target: marketing planning is available via coaching, mentoring, and training**
- **Target: best practices are identified and promoted**
- **Target: spokesperson and public speaking initiatives are operational**
- **Evidence of Progress: increasing number of thought leaders, politicians and well-known people enlisted to speak; growing number of consumer recovery stories used in public messages; increasing numbers of media exposes generated by NAMI; thought leaders perceiving NAMI as a dominant advocacy force**

A well-crafted and expertly executed marketing strategy will play a vital role in elevating NAMI's general visibility and supporting our advocacy impact. Such a plan will—indeed, must—also serve to promote NAMI's programs and other services. This program will incorporate a multi-media campaign that involves upgrades and expansion of existing resources and introduction of new and much-sought-after components such as radio and TV PSAs. This marketing strategy will be the product of externally contracted media professionals. Such branding efforts are expensive and will require substantial resources as well as increased internal capacity.



Goal 4

NAMI is the leader in crafting and implementing state-of-the-art education and public information.

NAMI's Envisioned Future

NAMI is the first place people turn when they have questions or are seeking information about serious mental illness.

Having come to NAMI, people find exceptional educational and informational resources that meet their needs and level of interest. Our Web site, HelpLine services, print materials and education programs are second to none and are widely recognized as “state of the art”—indeed, they serve as critical components in NAMI’s increasing public and popular visibility.

NAMI’s signature education programs have a high degree of penetration in forums where family- and consumer-education are offered—and regularly expand those venues through their value and quality delivery. We seek, find, recognize and promote other excellent education and information innovations around serious mental illness in an effort to saturate the country with high quality learning opportunities.

We avail ourselves of the advantages and advances available through Web-based and telephonic technologies to speed and facilitate access to the information and education programs we provide. We have sought, found, and consistently employ highly effective program adaptations to meet the unique needs of rural and frontier communities. We unfailingly ensure cultural and linguistic appropriateness for diverse and multicultural audiences.

Realizing the Vision

NAMI’s education programs have exploded in recent years, both drawing new members to the NAMI fold and providing invaluable leadership development opportunities for the field. We are faced with the challenge of maintaining capacity in the field, however, and in finding new ways to deliver training and teaching materials. Education programs and public information make heavy resource demands which must be addressed at all levels of NAMI.

NAMI will build its brand through improved quality print and electronic materials, with special attention to developing the NAMI “voice” in print and upgrading presentation to reflect the quality of our content.

In working toward this goal, NAMI will particularly focus on incorporating these strategies:

- making NAMI a household word;
- describing and promoting best practices;
- increasing training and learning opportunities; and
- embracing and empowering leaders and members from diverse communities, consumer leaders and members, and families of children and youth.

Progressing from Good to Great

NAMI is rightly proud of its current education and information efforts and has a substantial body of data on the success of each. The challenge going forward—in getting from good to great—will be in documenting and improving efficacy and expanding programs to meet continuing and growing needs,

especially in underserved populations such as in multicultural communities and with families of children and youth, and in capitalizing on new technologies for effective, and cost-effective, content delivery.

We will measure our progress through these initiatives:

A. NAMI's signature programs are demonstrating their positive impact on promoting recovery and expanding consumer and family empowerment through incorporation of research components.

- **Target: evaluation and efficacy assessment research component incorporated in every signature program by 2010**
- **Evidence of Progress: State Organizations and Affiliates experience improving receptivity to programs due to established efficacy research base; data reported and relied upon among providers and service administrators; programs constantly refined based on findings and demonstrating continuous improvement in promoting recovery.**

Achieving "evidence-based practice" status through federally-supported research is a costly proposition. Recognizing that NAMI can and does have a growing body of evidence that supports the efficacy of its programs, we will put continuing priority on developing efficacy assessment components into our support and education programs.

B. NAMI's public information materials and electronic resources are state-of-the-art and sought by decision-makers and individuals, all of whom recognize NAMI as a primary resource regarding serious mental illness.

- **Task: establish a baseline**
- **Target: inventory of materials' quantity and quality by 2008**
- **Evidence of Progress: materials reflecting the NAMI "voice" of consumer/family empowerment; materials increasingly reflect cultural diversity**

Recent progress in conceptualizing and producing exceptionally high-quality NAMI materials will continue. We will make a conscious effort to become "The Source" for information on serious mental illness. These efforts will include both continuing overhaul and upgrade of existing materials, as well as identification and development of new resources that meet public information needs.

C. NAMI is establishing an inventory of educational programs that have been developed by NAMI State Organizations and Affiliates.

- **Task: identify those programs that represent promising practices**
- **Task: share information about programs within NAMI**
- **Task: determine next steps**
- **Target: inventory complete by close of 2008**
- **Evidence of Progress: increasing familiarity within NAMI with promising practices in the field; information about programs and initiatives readily available from NAMI; future course of action becomes clear**

Much is being done in the field for families of children and youth—and much more needs to be done. To chart a truly strategic course for our own actions, NAMI will first survey existing offerings and make that information broadly available. The inventory that NAMI develops will look particularly at programs that incorporate support groups and social activities for teens and young adults, for which there is a great need in many communities around the country. We will find ways to meet the challenges presented by the bewildering systemic obstacles that confront families of children and youth.

D. NAMI is developing and implementing a NAMI children's signature program.

- **Target: first pilot site training of trainers in 2007; program rollout, 2008**

- **Target: implementation in 10 states by 2010**
- **Target: develop internet and technology-based program format**
- **Evidence of Progress: evaluation of existing programs and best practices for selection/development of NAMI program; increasing interest in and demand for a children's program**

The especially high risks of the transitional years and our knowledge that serious mental illness does not suddenly emerge when a child turns 18 motivate our information collection and underscore the importance of this work. The program that NAMI develops will be flexible and adaptable to meet the challenging needs of families with children with serious mental illnesses. It will also take advantage of technology to connect program participants/families and to provide them with information that will help them to best address their child's needs.

E. NAMI is increasing participation in NAMI signature education and support programs.

- **Target: increase enrollment 25% above current baseline by 2008**
- **Target: increase enrollment 50% above current baseline by 2010**
- **Target: all programs available in Spanish by 2010**
- **Target: assess need for signature programs to be developed in other languages**
- **Evidence of Progress: expanding variety of sites where programs are delivered; Affiliates and State Organizations have expanding capacity for program; increasing number of teachers available to deliver programs in Spanish**

While new programs are needed and much important work is being done at the State and Affiliate levels, NAMI takes tremendous pride in our "signature" education and support programs, all of which are primed for expansion. Early success in developing culturally competent materials and offering training and presentation in Spanish will continue. We will work to overcome the perennial constraints of program delivery—time and money. We will continue to seek dedicated funding to support and grow these programs in other languages, with an eye toward finding and using new strategies for program dissemination. NAMI's signature programs include:

- *Family-to-Family Education Program*
- *Provider Education Program*
- *Peer-to-Peer Recovery Education Program*
- *in Our Own Voice: Living with Mental Illness*
- *NAMI C.A.R.E.*
- *Support Group Facilitators Skills Training Program*
- *Hearts and Minds*
- *Parents and Teachers as Allies*



Goal 5

NAMI is building and incorporating the largest consumer movement in the country.

NAMI's Envisioned Future

The NAMI “family” is inclusive and confers high value on all members of families in which someone happens to live with a serious mental illness. NAMI is widely recognized and honored as the largest and most empowering organization for consumers.

Participation in NAMI is a healing and energizing experience that contributes profoundly to individuals’ recovery and resilience.

Families and consumers work together effectively to improve the lives of people who live with serious mental illness, especially those for whom recovery does not yet feel possible.

Every consumer who shares NAMI mission and vision of recovery is an active member and has found a meaningful way to participate in NAMI’s growth—whether through advocacy, program, or assuming a leadership role.

Realizing the Vision

NAMI is already the largest consumer organization in the country, but we have not positioned ourselves in that manner. We will work to educate the public and potential members about the value and power of family/consumer collaboration. We recognize that sometimes the interests of families and consumers appear to diverge or compete, but we are dedicated to finding and holding common ground, recognizing that what unites us far outweighs what might divide us.

In working toward this goal, NAMI will focus primarily on incorporating these strategies:

- making NAMI a household word;
- confronting failures;
- describing and promoting best practices;
- increasing training and learning opportunities; and
- embracing and empowering leaders and members from diverse communities and consumer leaders and members.

Progressing from Good to Great

We will measure our progress through these initiatives:

- A. Having established a consumer membership baseline, NAMI is increasing consumer membership by 20%.**
 - **Task: establish baseline data on consumer membership**
 - **Target: 20% increase over baseline by 2010**

- **Evidence of Progress: consumers increasingly in evidence at NAMI events and gatherings; consumers increasingly in leadership positions within organization; external perceptions of NAMI as welcoming and inclusive of consumers**

Consumers are welcome members of the NAMI community and are already a growing constituency within the organization. This membership drive will capitalize on interest that already exists. NAMI will begin with “spot assessments” to get a short-term grasp on consumer membership numbers and then build to a reliable baseline. Membership logistics and fundamentals such as membership forms will have to be addressed, as will collection of memberships’ household data for full reflection of consumer membership within the organization.

B. NAMI is conceiving and instituting standards for consumer-friendly Affiliates.

- **Task: establish baseline data on consumer-specific groups**
- **Task: develop and distribute standards for “consumer friendliness”**
- **Evidence of Progress: increasing consumer membership in Affiliates; external perceptions of NAMI as welcoming and inclusive of consumers; increasing numbers of consumers in leadership positions across organization; increasing investment in consumer-oriented programming**

As the nation’s largest consumer and family organization, NAMI will work to increase consumers’ comfort in joining NAMI groups and meetings. Recognizing that an authentic consumer culture exists, we will work to incorporate that culture into the family structure and may develop mechanisms for consumer-centered affiliates where appropriate.

C. NAMI is partnering with State Organizations to develop and implement pilot programs that outreach to people who are homeless, veterans, and into state hospitals, jails and prisons to increase consumer membership and participation in NAMI.

- **Task: compile list of current programs**
- **Task: identify promising practices**
- **Target: three states piloting distinct programs by 2010**
- **Evidence of Progress: improving organizational familiarity with programs in state hospitals, jails and prisons; consumer membership and involvement in programs increasing; hospital and penal system administrators seeking and valuing NAMI engagement and presence in their facilities**

NAMI’s dedication to the most ill and most at risk is reflected in this effort to explore using NAMI’s programs and other services to reach out to those whom we may not yet have reached. In this effort, we will seek strategic partnerships and we will explore peer roles as “ombudsmen”. This effort will also be designed to increase NAMI consumer membership. We will seek three quite distinct programs in the initial pilot states.

D. NAMI is establishing best practices for State Consumer Councils.

- **Target: establish baseline data on Consumer Council functioning and structure in each state, completed by 2008**
- **Target: fully operational in 10 states by 2010**
- **Target: components include manual and implementation guidelines**
- **Evidence of Progress: more State Organizations have established Consumer Councils; State Organizations increasingly well equipped to capitalize on Consumer Councils’ involvement; consumer voice effectively integrating in NAMI policy making at all levels**

Consumer Councils can and should provide valuable support to the work of State Organizations and Boards. To be most effective, Councils must have clearly defined roles and charges. NAMI will strengthen its infrastructure by providing clear guidance on how to capitalize on consumer

engagement through Councils. Implementation will almost certainly require additional resources for States, both in human and financial terms.

- E. NAMI is creating and implementing an academy to develop emerging consumer leaders.**
- **Target: hold two academy gatherings each year in three of the five NAMI regions**
 - **Target: train at least 300 emerging consumer leaders each year**
 - **Evidence of progress: more consumers assuming roles within NAMI, employing skills acquired through academy; increasing number of consumers seek and acquire certification through academy**

Constructive engagement in NAMI has proven to be a cornerstone for many consumers' recovery. NAMI will support consumers in this process—and build the pipeline of our emerging future leaders and members—by equipping consumers with organizational and leadership skills, including making presentations and finding ones niche in the NAMI movement. Building on the success of the Leadership Institute and what many State Organizations and Affiliates already do, de facto, to develop consumer members, NAMI will draw on seasoned consumer leaders' expertise and develop materials and mechanisms for cultivating these skills among others. NAMI will take advantage of new technologies and peer role models in this important work.

- F. NAMI is significantly expanding its support group program for people with serious mental illnesses in all 50 states and Puerto Rico.**
- **Task: strategic introduction of major program mobilization and marketing effort**
 - **Task: immediate “staffing-up” for program rollout**
 - **Task: extensive training opportunities and use of locally-based consumer/consultants**
 - **Target: first year expansion and implementation in 15 states**
 - **Target: in all 50 states by close of 2009**
 - **Evidence of progress: increasing consumer participation in NAMI-sponsored support groups; improving accessibility of support groups in metropolitan areas, including proximity of group meetings, frequency of meetings; increasing organization visibility**

NAMI C.A.R.E. provides the foundation for this newly revised program. In this recovery support model, individuals who live with serious mental illnesses share experiences in safe, confidential environments and learn coping skills. The weekly 90-minute meetings will help overcome the isolation often experience by consumers. This major expansion effort will require extensive support and resources in the field. Implementation will also present exciting and challenging organizational growth that will be addressed directly through other Plan components such as development of standards, provisions of technical assistance and training, and increasing consumer involvement within NAMI.

Glossary

ACT – Assertive Community Treatment: Service-delivery model that provides comprehensive, locally based treatment to people with serious and persistent mental illnesses.

Best Practice – Best practices are practices that incorporate the best objective information currently available from recognized experts regarding effectiveness and acceptability.

CIT – Crisis Intervention Training/Team: Intensive training of law enforcement officers to respond effectively to people experiencing psychiatric crises.

Consumer – NAMI uses this broadly recognized term to describe people who live with a mental illness. We recognize the limitations of this terminology.

Cultural Competence – Delivery of services that are responsive to the cultural concerns of racial and ethnic minority groups, including their language, histories, traditions, beliefs and values.

Evidence-Based – Programs or initiatives that have a replicated and published research body showing them to be effective.

Frontier – The smallest and most geographically isolated communities in the United States.

Goal – In this document we use “goal” as a statement of a targeted outcome that must be true for NAMI to achieve greatness. Goals are not necessarily achievable within the period of the plan, but their constant and aggressive pursuit is the hallmark of plan implementation.

“Good to Great” – Theoretical framework used by NAMI to organize our strategic vision and plan, derived from Jim Collins *Good to Great and the Social Sectors*, 2005.

Key Initiative – Measurable activity against which we can monitor forward movement toward plan goals. Each goal statement has a half-dozen or more implementation activities that serve as Key Initiatives.

Linguistic Competence -- Capacity to communicate effectively, and convey information in a manner that is easily understood by diverse audiences, including persons of limited English proficiency, those who have low literacy skills or are not literate, and individuals with disabilities.

Research-Based – Programs or other initiatives that research evidence has shown to be effective

Rural – Sparsely settled places away from the influence of large cities and towns.

Strategy – Choices we make about *how* we will reach goals contained in this plan. Strategies are expressions of our organizational values.

NAMI Strategic Planning Timeline

| | | |
|--------------------------------|---|---|
| August 2006 | Planning Retreat | SPG meeting to develop plan |
| September | Board Meeting | Planning Committee report on progress to date |
| September - November | Working Phase | SPG continued work <i>refining strategies, setting metrics, reviewing initiatives</i> Staff perform resourcing assessment <i>what will these proposals cost?</i> |
| November | Strategic Planning Group Reconvening | SPG reconvened to review staff assessments, identify priorities |
| December | Board Meeting | Planning Committee presented SPG draft plan to Board <i>Goal: Board acceptance of draft to go forward for public comment</i> |
| January – February 2007 | Active Listening | Planning Committee hosted Town Hall calls for public comment phase; Board incorporation of input into final version on plan |
| March | Board Meeting | Planning Committee presented final version of plan for Board review <i>Goal: Board approval of plan</i> |

NAMI 2006 Strategic Planning Group

Mission

The Strategic Planning Group was charged with developing NAMI's 2007 – 2010 Strategic Plan.

Composition

Strategic Planning Group (SPG) members were selected to represent key stakeholders at each level of the NAMI organization – local, state, and national. The SPG is a representative and diverse group, composed of members of the Consumer Council, State Presidents Council, Executive Directors Group, Veterans Council, leaders from unstaffed Affiliates, national Board members, and national staff.

NAMI National Board's Planning Committee

- Fred Sandoval, *chair*
- Carol Caruso
- Guyla Daley
- Gloria Walker
- Eileen White
- Sheila Amdur [*joined Committee June 2006, co-chair*]
- Suzanne Vogel-Scibilia, *board president*
- Don Muller, *State Presidents Council chair 2005-2006*
- Judith Evans, *State Presidents Council chair 2006-2007*
- David Seay, *Executive Directors Group chair 2005-2006*
- Sue Abderholden, *Executive Directors group chair 2006-2007*
- Marty Raaymakers, *Consumer Council chair*
- Tom Shade, *Veterans Council representative*
- Mary Gibson, *Veterans Council chair*

Volunteer Affiliate Leadership

- Nancy Carter, *NAMI Urban Los Angeles (CA) [elected to National Board, June 2006]*
- Jean Key, *NAMI Cookeville (TN)*
- Gretchen Meyer, *NAMI Southhaven (MS)*
- Lupe Morin, *NAMI San Antonio (TX)*
- Jim Randall, *NAMI San Fernando Valley (CA)*
- Janet Susin, *NAMI Nassau Queens (NY)*

NAMI National Staff Leadership

- Mike Fitzpatrick, *executive director*
- Lynn Borton, *chief operating officer*
- Ron Honberg, *policy director*
- Joyce Burland, *education and programs director*
- Katrina Gay, *communications director*
- Darcy Taylor, *development director*