



Advocacy Day 2012: Preparing to Make a Difference

NAMI Maryland Teleconferences

January 12, 2012 12:00 PM

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First, A Request

- Please mute your phone line during the presentation.
- Press *6 to mute you line.
- We will wait a minute while all phones are muted.
- Following the presentation we will let you know when to unmute your line for questions.

Today's Presenters

- Executive Director of NAMI MC, Katie Slye-Griffin, along her Advocacy Associate, Samantha Gordin, will be directing and presenting this call.
- Following the call the Advocacy Day team at NAMI Maryland will answer any questions you might have.
- Email or call NAMI MD at 410-884-8691 or namiadmin@namimd.org



Teleconference Agenda

- What is Advocacy Day?
- Why Participate?
- One Voice
- Important Issues
- One Message
- The Legislative Session
- Before Advocacy Day
- During Advocacy Day
- After Advocacy Day
- The County Level
- Crucial Resources

What Is Advocacy Day?

- Advocacy Day is an opportunity for NAMI stakeholders in Maryland to join together, meet with elected officials, and tell our stories to make a difference for our communities
- This is our opportunity to persuade legislators that our entire State is strengthened when we address the needs of individuals impacted by mental illness
- Tuesday January 24, 2012
- Meet at 9AM at the Miller Conference Rm on the 1st Fl of the Miller Senate Bldg (11 Bladen St)
- Check the NAMI Maryland website for details.

Why Participate?

- Advocacy Day offers you an unique opportunity to pass on the lessons you have learned as a person impacted by mental illness.
- Elected Officials MUST hear from you if we are to make a difference in the State of Maryland and in our communities.
- **Your story is the most powerful tool in the arsenal available to mental health advocates!**
- **Give yourself credit – YOU ARE THE EXPERT!**

One Voice

- We must all provide the same platform to legislators.
- It is more effective to speak with One Voice than discuss issues which are of personal interest to you – no matter how important they are.
- Often the issues that resonate with us individually are not the issues to discuss with a State Legislator.
- **Impacting the legislative agenda is our singular goal for Advocacy Day.**



Important Issues

- Fund our public mental health services
- Prioritize services for the severely mentally ill
- Support reforms to ensure effective delivery of all integrated mental health, substance abuse, and physical health services.
- Support services that allow people to live successfully in our communities (e.g. housing, employment, education)



One Message

- "Individuals and families impacted by mental illness need your support to live healthy and balanced lives as active participants in our community. Your support can protect mental health services and preserve the hope of recovery. Thank you."
- **Memorize and repeat this message!**

The Legislative Session

- January 9th - Governor releases his budget to the General Assembly
- January 11th - General Assembly convenes
- January 24th - NAMI MD Advocacy Day
- February 3rd - Senate bill submission closes
- February 10th - Senate Budget Hearings on MHA
- February 11th - House bill submission closes
- February 13th - House Budget Hearings on MHA
- April 9th - “Sine Die” (last day of the legislative session)

Throughout January, February and March (until Sine Die) NAMI Maryland needs your support to ensure that the needs of individuals impacted by mental illness are properly and effectively met in both the State budget and potential legislation.

Before Advocacy Day

- Identify YOUR legislators (see Resource List)
- Research YOUR legislators (committees, bios, etc)
- If you are in Montgomery or Howard Counties - make appointments with YOUR legislators for January 24th. Schedule them no earlier than 11 AM. Other affiliates will be scheduled by NAMI Maryland.
- Write out Your Story (see Telling Your Story Worksheet in Crucial Resources)
- Practice telling your story to your friends, family, local NAMI leaders be sure to include the “One Message”.
- Contact NAMI Maryland if you need help with your appointments.
- Send your local NAMI and NAMI Maryland a list of your appointments so that we are sure all legislators are reached.

During Advocacy Day: Basics

- Get a good night's sleep
- Wear comfortable yet professional shoes
- Wear professional clothing (no jeans or sweatshirts please!)
- Dress warmly – double check the weather
- Eat breakfast (your brain needs energy!)
- Arrive early! The trip to Annapolis can take longer than expected.
- You MUST bring a photo ID or you will not be allowed into the bldg. You must pass through security.
- Plan on bringing your lunch or bring cash for the cafeteria in the Assembly buildings.

During Advocacy Day: Morning

- Meet with your NAMI Maryland peers at 9AM in Miller Conf Rm on the 1st Fl of the Miller Senate Bldg (11 Bladen St)
- We will practice telling our stories and NAMI leaders will be available to help you fine-tune your message for maximum effectiveness and impact
- The NAMI Maryland team will convey any important last-minute messages to the group and pass out materials to be provided to your legislators before we disperse to our meetings

During Advocacy Day: Meetings

- Introduce yourself.
- Be professional and respectful.
- Remember:
 - Your audience is NOT your therapist.
 - Hope + Aspiration = Inspiration & Remembrance
 - Stay brief - Have a clear purpose
 - If you feel comfortable doing so, ask the legislator if they have any questions for you.
 - Do not guess answers - Refer to NAMI Maryland
 - Repeat the “One Message”
- Thank your legislators for their time. Being polite goes a long way.
- Give the legislator the folder of NAMI Maryland materials.

After Advocacy Day

- Give your feedback to NAMI Maryland. There will be a form for you to complete on each visit you make.
- Thank your legislator! Send an email or (even better) a handwritten note of thanks to your legislator.
- This is a second chance to remind them of the “One Message” and why they should support individuals impacted by mental illness.
- Join NAMI Maryland's Advocacy Alert Network to stay abreast of the latest legislative news



The County Level

- Your local NAMI affiliate will be in contact with you to review how you can help at the local level.
- The County budgets and legislation generally lag a month or so behind the state timeline.
- The County level can be critical to ensuring the local mental health services remain effective and accessible.

Crucial Resources

- Advocacy Day Logistics (namimd.org/NAMIMarylandAdvocacyDay.htm)
- Find Your Legislator (<http://mdelect.net/>)
- Research Your Legislator (tinyurl.com/namimd2012leg)
- Telling Your Story Worksheet (tinyurl.com/namimdstory)
- Tips & Tools Worksheet (tinyurl.com/namimdtipstools)
- NAMI: State Advocacy (www.nami.org/stateadvocacy)
- NAMI Maryland (www.namimd.org)
- Your local NAMI affiliate (http://namimd.org/aboutus/aboutus_affiliates.htm)

You can always call NAMI Maryland or your local NAMI affiliate for assistance. Don't be afraid of contacting us – we'

Any Questions?

- Please unmute your line now.
- Press *6 to unmute.
- Please state your name and affiliate before asking a question.

Thank You!
**We look forward to seeing
you at Advocacy Day on
January 24th!**

Citations

- This presentation was created on behalf of NAMI Maryland by Katie Slye-Griffin of NAMI Montgomery County with assistance from Samantha Gordin .
- Special thanks to Lynn Albizo for sharing her presentation "Mental Health Boot Camp"
- NAMI's "NAMI Smarts" and "Telling Your Story" presentation were also referenced in the creation of this presentation.