

NAMI PINELLAS COUNTY, FLORIDA, INC.

DATE IMPLEMENTED: 02/22/2013

POLICY NUMBER: 400-02 *NAMI COURSES and PARTICIPANTS*

PURPOSE: This operating procedure establishes guidelines for selecting participants to receive services.

POLICY: It is the Policy of NAMI Pinellas County to offer educational programs and support groups to individuals with mental illness and families who have expressed interest in participating.

PROCEDURE: *PEER-TO-PEER*

1. Individuals who are interested in attending our support groups or participating in our educational programs can do so without regard to race, color, religious creed, sex, national origin, ancestry, citizenship status, pregnancy, childbirth, physical disability, mental disability, age, military status or status as a Vietnam-era or special disabled veteran, marital status, registered domestic partner or civil union status, gender (including sex stereotyping and gender identity or expression), medical condition (including, but not limited to, cancer related or HIV/AIDS related) or sexual orientation in accordance with applicable federal, state and local laws.
2. The multi-week educational programs Peer-to-Peer and Family-to-Family are typically held twice yearly. Start dates depend on facilitator availability, as well as course interest.
3. Anyone with a mental illness diagnosis is eligible to take the 10-week Peer-to-Peer class. Participants are not required to be members of NAMI; however, if someone is interested in becoming a member, they are given a membership form. There is an affordable membership fee of \$3.00 a year for consumers who have financial considerations.
4. Once they notify NAMI staff or volunteers of their interest, they are placed on a waiting list until the next class is scheduled.
5. NAMI Pinellas has determined a course must have a minimum of 18 participants to be more beneficial to the 'students' in the class, as well as to be cost and time effective. Once the list has reached at least 18, a course is scheduled and those on the waiting list are notified when the start-date has been determined.

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6. Once a course is scheduled, those on the waiting list are contacted and a brief telephone screening tool is used. The tool was developed by the national NAMI office and is used to ascertain their interest in the course, their willingness to participate voluntarily, their agreement to keep course discussions confidential, and their willingness to attend all 10 sessions.
7. Once a course has begun, it will continue for the 10 weeks of classes, regardless of how many individuals might drop out of the class or miss sessions.
8. There is no cost for the course, and all course materials are provided free of charge.
9. Participants are required to provide their own transportation to class.
10. The Spring class is typically held on Saturdays at a location in the center of the county. Locations vary.
11. The Fall class is typically held evenings during the week. Locations vary.
1. Classes must be facilitated by NAMI consumers who have taken a "Train the Trainers" class, which is a course led by NAMI National endorsed trainers, who have been certified to teach this NAMI signature course.
12. If a class is held at Bay Pines VA, it is held in addition to the community classes. However, VA participants must be enrolled in VA mental health programs, as no non-VA individuals can participate, per the regulations of Bay Pines VA.
13. Courses are advertised at NAMI events, on the NAMI Facebook page, announced at coalition meetings, through e-mail communications, on the NAMI Pinellas website, and with notices to all the community mental health providers.

PROCEDURE:

FAMILY-TO-FAMILY

2. Anyone who is a family member, friend, loved one, or caregiver of an individual with a mental illness diagnosis is eligible to take the 12-week Family-to-Family class. Participants are not required to be members of NAMI; however, if someone is interested in becoming a member, they are given a membership form. There is an affordable membership fee of \$3.00 a year for those who might have financial considerations.
3. Once they notify NAMI staff or volunteers of their interest, they are placed on a waiting list until the next class is scheduled.

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4. NAMI Pinellas has determined a course must have a minimum of 15 participants to be more beneficial to the 'students' in the class, as well as to be cost and time effective. Once the list has reached at least 15, a course is scheduled and those on the waiting list are notified when the start-date has been determined.
5. No screening tool is used. The only requirement for participating is a willingness to learn more about coping with the issues of loving someone with a mental illness.
6. Once a course has begun, it will continue for the 12 weeks of classes, regardless of how many individuals might drop out of the class or miss sessions.
7. There is no cost for the course, and all course materials are provided free of charge.
8. Participants are required to provide their own transportation to class. Locations vary.
9. Classes must be facilitated by NAMI family members/loved ones who have taken a "Train the Trainers" class, which is a course led by NAMI National trainers who have been certified to teach this NAMI signature "best practices" course.
10. If a class is held at Bay Pines VA, it is held in addition to the community classes. Participants at VA must have a loved one who participates in a VA mental health program, per the regulations of Bay Pines VA.
11. Courses are advertised at NAMI events, on the NAMI Facebook page, announced at coalition meetings, through e-mail communications, on the NAMI Pinellas website, and with notices to all the community mental health providers.

PROCEDURE: *EDUCATION MEETINGS*

1. Education Meetings are held monthly on the second Thursday of the month beginning at 7 p.m. at the Suncoast Hospice campus at 5771 Roosevelt Blvd in Clearwater.
2. The meetings are open to the general public, as well as NAMI members and others interested in NAMI.
3. Meetings are free of charge. Light refreshments are provided.
4. Those interested in attending provide their own transportation.

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5. Topics vary but typically feature a guest speaker. The NAMI Board of Directors determines the topics and guests for the meetings. Topics cover a range of mental illness issues, including but not limited to diagnosis, treatment, medications, coping skills, legal issues, financial considerations, community services, and recovery.
6. Guest speakers are not paid for their presentations, and they provide their own transportation. There is no requirement for training presenters.
7. The November meeting is a “Salute to Veterans”.
8. The December meeting is a Holiday Reception.
9. Courses are advertised at NAMI events, on the NAMI Facebook page, announced at coalition meetings, through e-mail communications, on the NAMI Pinellas website, and with notices to all the community mental health providers.

PROCEDURE: *BREAKING THE SILENCE*

1. *Breaking the Silence* is a 45-minute curriculum designed for middle school and high school students which teaches about stigma and the signs and symptoms of major mental illnesses.
2. The program has been reviewed by and accepted by the Pinellas County School Board to offer at any school in the county, by invitation of any teacher in any discipline for grades 6-12.
3. Course content is based on a program developed by a NAMI affiliate in New York.
4. When invited by a teacher, a team of two NAMI staff/consumers/family members will go to the school and teach each session of the teacher’s classes that day, repeating the information for each class period. The classes are typically taught by a consumer/family member team; although, this can be changed to whatever NAMI volunteers/staff are available to cover all the day’s classes.
5. NAMI individuals who teach the classes have been trained on the model used by members of the NAMI Pinellas Board of Directors, who were originally trained by an educator with the Pinellas Count Schools.
6. Speakers are asked to participate in the “Great American Teach-In” each November, as well as at other times throughout the year.

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PROCEDURE: *SPEAKERS BUREAU*

1. NAMI staff and volunteers can address a variety of mental illness related issues, depending on their backgrounds and education.
2. Speakers can be scheduled by contacting the NAMI Pinellas Executive Director.
3. Speakers do not get paid for speaking engagements.
4. If the hosts insist on “paying” a speaker, the NAMI volunteer/staff should suggest a donation to NAMI rather than a speaker payment.