Join our Veterans Day webinar this evening

Tomorrow, November 11th, 2020, is Veterans Day. On this day, we remember and reflect on the sacrifices of our military veterans and also thank them for their service. We take action to support the mental health of veterans, whose commitment to the common good has often exposed them to unique challenges.

If you're wondering what you can do, we encourage you to read this blog on 5 Ways You Can Support Veterans' Mental Health, and take action.

Tonight at 6 pm CT, NAMI Texas is hosting a webinar on bipolar disorder, with a special focus on veterans' mental health. The webinar will feature Ben Beck, a NAMI volunteer and a veteran of the U.S. Army. Please join!

Join our National Family Caregivers Month webinar next week

On Tuesday, November 17th at 1:00 pm CT, NAMI Texas will present The Power of Connections: Combatting Isolation and Aging Successfully with Annette Juba, Deputy Director of AGE of Central Texas. This webinar is presented in recognition of National Family Caregivers Month.

Staying connected was a challenge for older adults, with 43% of persons over the age of 60 reporting they feel socially isolated, even before the coronavirus outbreak. Physical distancing requirements are heightening that isolation and raising awareness among all ages of the harmful effects of isolation and loneliness. This presentation will highlight recent research about the effect of social isolation and offer best practices on building strong connections so that caregivers and professionals feel more equipped to support older adults in aging successfully. Register today!
Supreme Court Hears Case on the Affordable Care Act

Today, the U.S. Supreme Court is hearing oral arguments in California v. Texas (also called Texas v. United States in lower court cases), and will, once again, decide the fate of the Affordable Care Act (ACA).

Last year, a federal appeals court ruled that the ACA’s requirement for individuals to purchase health insurance was unconstitutional. Known as the “individual mandate,” this part of the ACA required that most Americans have a basic level of health insurance coverage. Congress eliminated the penalty for the individual mandate in 2017, and a group of states, led by Texas, argued that without a penalty, the individual mandate is now unconstitutional. They further argued the entire law was unconstitutional because this mandate is so essential to the ACA that it was not “severable” from the rest of the ACA.

The Court could decide that all of the ACA — including key provisions that protect people with pre-existing conditions, like mental health conditions — is invalid, putting coverage and protections at risk, particularly for people with mental health conditions. However, the case will not be decided until the spring of 2021, meaning no one will be immediately impacted.

It is important to remember that no one will lose their health coverage or have protections stripped away at this time. Additionally, open enrollment in the federal health insurance marketplace at HealthCare.gov is now open and will not be impacted. Open enrollment runs until Dec. 15.

If the Supreme Court rules that the ACA is unconstitutional, it would impact nearly every corner of the health care system and affect virtually every person in the U.S. Earlier this year, NAMI, along with nineteen patient groups representing millions of people with pre-existing conditions filed an amicus curiae (“friend-of-the-court”) brief urging the Supreme Court to uphold the law and preserve access to care for millions of people.

The ACA’s Impact on People with Mental Health Conditions

Today, NAMI released the What the Affordable Care Act Has Meant for People with Mental Health Conditions – And What Could be Lost, an issue brief on the impact of the ACA on our community.

As the brief discusses, the ACA has played an important role in helping people access mental health care through the expansion of comprehensive health insurance and Medicaid. Because of the ACA, 20 million people have gained insurance coverage, including 15.3 million who became eligible for Medicaid. The ACA has also significantly reduced the uninsured rate for people with mental health conditions.

Engage in ACA Advocacy

NAMI Texas eagerly hopes that the ACA is upheld, and that the next Administration and Congress continue to improve access to health coverage, but we will be closely monitoring the decision from the Supreme Court.

Additionally, NAMI Texas is preparing for possible future advocacy should the ACA be ruled unconstitutional. To help in that effort, NAMI is collecting video submissions from NAMI members on how the ACA has impacted them.
To help, please see [this overview](#) and record your video. To participate, advocates can:

1. Participate in one of the following short informational calls if you would like to learn more about the benefits of the ACA and how to participate in this campaign:
   - Friday, Nov. 13 at 10 AM CST: [Click to join meeting](#) OR dial: (833) 765-3382 (code: 207402813#)
   - Monday, Nov. 16 at 2 PM CST: [Click to join meeting](#) OR dial: (833) 765-3382 (code: 292561539#)

2. Record a short 30-60 second video on your cell phone in landscape (horizontal) orientation, sharing:
   - You name and city/state where you live at the beginning of the video.
   - How the ACA has helped you (see more details [here](#))
   - End the video by saying the phrase: “We can’t go back.”

3. Visit [this page](#) to upload the video.

**These videos will help power our advocacy to remind the public and lawmakers of how critical the ACA’s protections and coverage expansions have been to helping people access mental health care.**

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**Join NAMI Texas’ Circle of Hope**

The [Circle of Hope](#) is a passionate group of monthly givers who are on a mission to improve the quality of life of all individuals living with mental illness and their families. The current crisis situation has created an unprecedented demand for NAMI Texas’ no-cost mental health resources. Your monthly gift helps NAMI Texas continue to bring hope and recovery through support, education, and advocacy to thousands of Texans living with mental illness and their families. Join [here](#)!

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