



National Alliance on Mental Illness

NAMI

Michigan

**Racial Disparities
The Power of Advocacy**



NAMI Walks

WHO/WHAT IS NAMI?

WHY TALK
ABOUT
MENTAL
ILLNESS ?

NAMI, the National Alliance on Mental Illness, is the nation's largest grassroots mental health organization dedicated to building better lives for the millions of Americans affected by mental illness.

What started as a small group of families gathered around a kitchen table in 1979 has blossomed into the nation's leading voice on mental health. Today, we are an alliance of more than 600 local Affiliates and 48 State Organizations who work in your community to raise awareness and provide support and education that was not previously available to those in need.

WHY DISCUSS MENTAL ILLNESS?

WHY TALK
ABOUT
MENTAL
ILLNESS ?

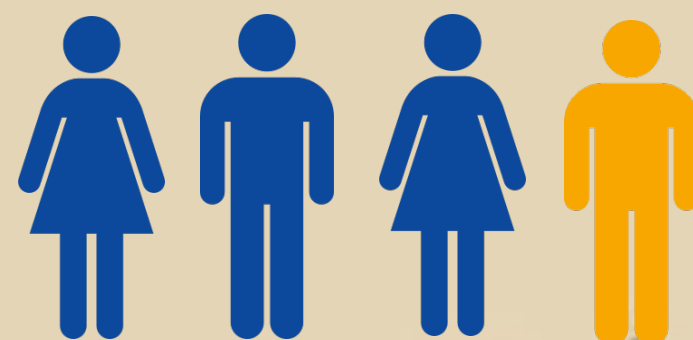
Facts About Mental Health Advocacy:

Mental illness does not discriminate; not by race, religion socioeconomic status party affiliation, sex/sexual identification, or location (urban, suburban or rural).

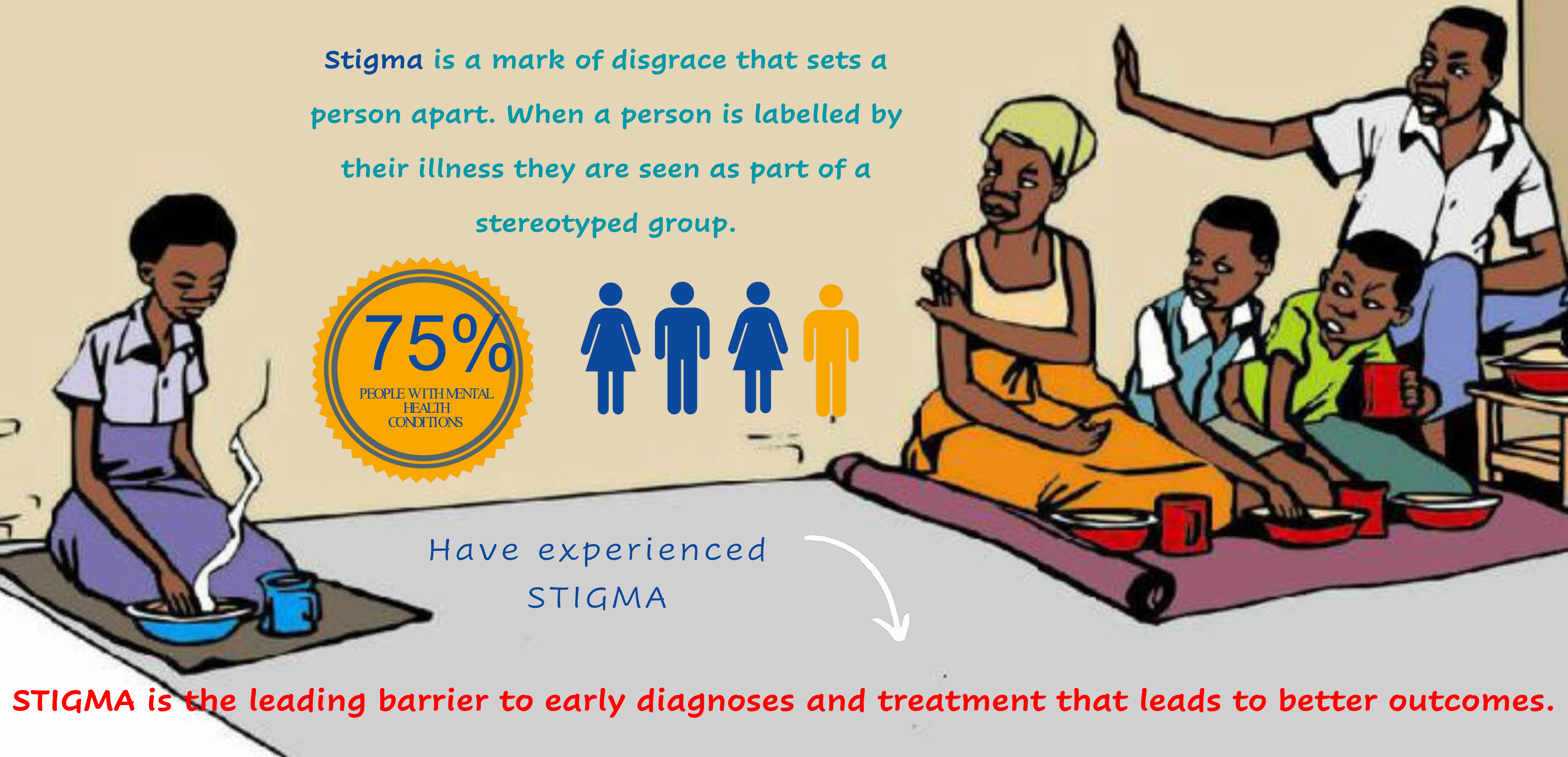
60
MILLION
PEOPLE

WHAT IS STIGMA?

Stigma is a mark of disgrace that sets a person apart. When a person is labelled by their illness they are seen as part of a stereotyped group.

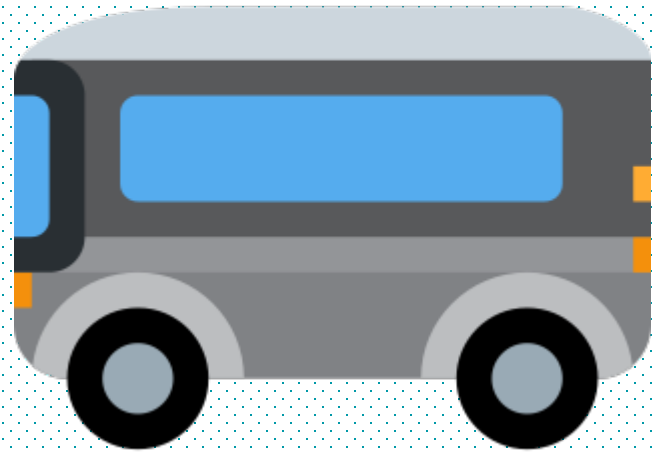


Have experienced
STIGMA



STIGMA is the leading barrier to early diagnoses and treatment that leads to better outcomes.

CRITICAL ISSUES FACING MULTICULTURAL COMMUNITIES



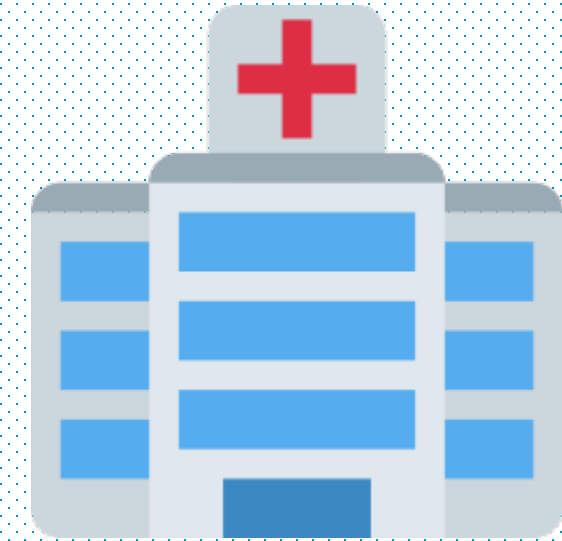
Less access to treatment



Less likely to receive treatment



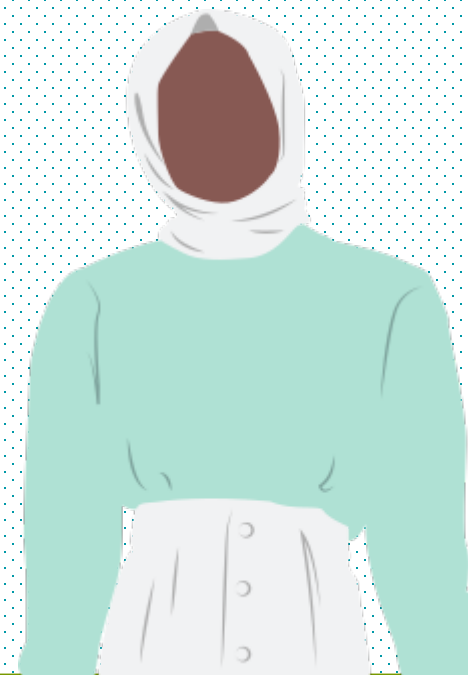
Lower rates of health insurance



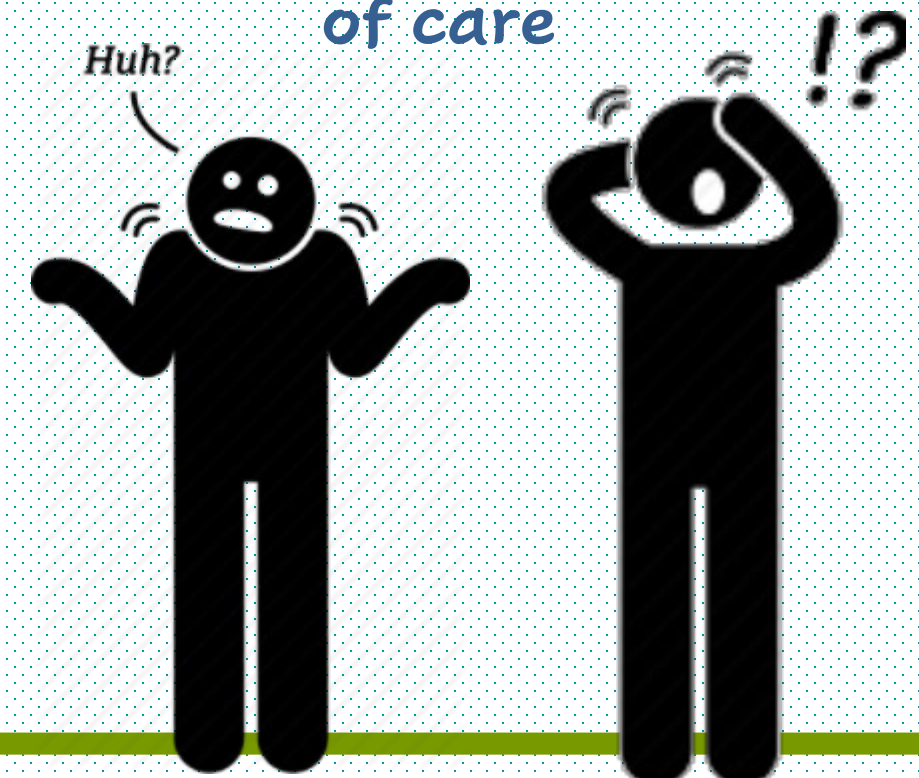
Poorer quality of care



Higher levels of stigma



Racism, bias, homophobia, or discrimination in treatment settings



Culturally insensitive healthcare system

STIGMA KILLED MY SON!



“Racism is a public health crisis!”

“While there is much we need to do to address racism in our country, we must not forget the importance of mental health as we do so.”

“The effect of racism and racial trauma on mental health is real and cannot be ignored. The disparity in access to mental health care in communities of color cannot be ignored. The inequality and lack of cultural competency in mental health treatment cannot be ignored.”

Daniel H. Gillison, Jr., CEO NAMI

“Racism is a public health crisis!”

What happens at the intersection of mental health and one’s experience as a member of the Black community? While the experience of being Black in America varies tremendously, there are shared cultural factors that play a role in helping define mental health and supporting well-being, resiliency and healing.

Part of this shared cultural experience — family connections, values, expression through spirituality or music, reliance on community and religious networks — are enriching and can be great sources of strength and support.

“Racism is a public health crisis!”

However, another part of this shared experience is facing racism, discrimination and inequity that can significantly affect a person’s mental health. Being treated or perceived as “less than” because of the color of your skin can be stressful and even traumatizing. Additionally, members of the Black community face structural challenges accessing the care and treatment they need.

Despite the needs, only one in three Black adults who need mental health care receive it. African Americans are:

- Less likely to receive guideline-consistent care
- Less frequently included in research
- More likely to use emergency rooms or primary care (rather than mental health specialists)

“Racism is a public health crisis!”

While rates of mental illnesses in African Americans are similar with those of the general population, disparities exist in regard to mental health care services. African Americans often receive poorer quality of care and lack access to culturally competent care.

Compared with non-Hispanic whites, African Americans with any mental illness have lower rates of any mental health service use including prescriptions medications and outpatient services, but higher use of inpatient services.

“Barriers to Care”

Despite recent efforts to improve mental health services for African Americans and other minority groups, barriers remain regarding access to and quality of care. The barriers include:

- Stigma associated with mental illness
- Distrust of the health care system
- Lack of providers from diverse racial/ethnic backgrounds
- Lack of culturally competent providers
- Lack of insurance, underinsurance

“Barriers to Care”

Other common barriers include: the importance of family privacy, lack of knowledge regarding available treatments, and denial of mental health problems. Concerns about stigma, medications, not receiving appropriate information about services, and dehumanizing services have also been reported to hinder African Americans from accessing mental health services.



“Barriers to Care”

Physician-patient communication differs for African Americans and whites. One study found that physicians were 23% more verbally dominant and engaged in 33% less patient-centered communication with African American patients than with white patients.

Black people with mental health conditions, particularly schizophrenia, bipolar disorders, and other psychoses are more likely to be incarcerated than people of other races.

"STOP RACISM; STOP STIGMA"



EVERYBODY
-VS-
STIGMA

Stigma and judgment prevent Black and African American people from seeking treatment for their mental illnesses. Research indicates that Blacks and African Americans believe that mild depression or anxiety would be considered “crazy” in their social circles. Furthermore, many believe that discussions about mental illness would not be appropriate even among family.

“Where do we go from HERE?”

WE EDUCATE:

We must confront and really address systemic racial discrimination and racial disparities in behavioral healthcare.

We must encourage young people of color to pursue careers in behavioral healthcare.

We must educate and advocate in communities of color; eliminating the STIGMA of mental illness.

When people of color are ready to receive behavioral healthcare, we must treat them with dignity and respect.



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Every year people overcome the challenges of mental illness to do the things they enjoy. Through developing and following a treatment plan, you can dramatically reduce many of your symptoms. People with mental health conditions can and do pursue higher education, succeed in their careers, make friends and have relationships. Mental illness can slow us down, but we don't need to let it stop us.





National Alliance on Mental Illness

nami

Michigan

ADVOCACY & EDUCATION

REDIMAGING A DIVERSE PUBLIC BEHAVIORAL HEALTH SYSTEM

IMPLEMENTATION OF MENTAL HEALTH DIVERSION PROGRAMS

ENFORCEMENT OF MENTAL HEALTH PARITY ACT (1996)

EXPANDED USE OF ASSISTED OUTPATIENT TREATMENT

EXPANDED USE OF SPECIALITY COURTS

ADDRESSING RACIAL DISPARITIES

FIRST EPISODE PSYCHOSIS (FEP)

SUICIDE PREVENTION



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National Alliance on Mental Illness

Michigan

National Suicide
Prevention Lifeline
1-800-273-8255

Text NAM
to
741741

NAM Helpline
800-950-NAM (6264)
www.nami.org

NAM Mchigan at
517-485-4049
www.namimi.org



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