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NAMI Santa Clara County

October 2021



**nami**  
National Alliance on Mental Illness

**NEWS**

## Dr. Kalpana Nathan: Covid-19 Rewrote the Book on Mental Health Balance

By Moryt Milo

Throughout the COVID-19 pandemic, El Camino Hospital's behavioral health department never stopped admitting patients in mental health crisis, and the hospital saw a significant increase in first-time admittances. Many individuals suffered from depression and suicide ideation due to severe stress, said **Dr. Kalpana Nathan**, Chief Medical Director at El Camino Hospital's Scrivner Center, Mental Health and Addiction Services.

More than 61 percent of Americans struggle with both a mental illness and substance use disorder. "Collaborative care is the key to wellness. Much more can be done if we interconnect with community services," Dr. Nathan said.

For example, those entering the detox program through a 72-hour involuntary hold, continuity of care remains problematic. After one to two days of detox, these individuals leave the hospital and discover a complicated web of community services. Often times, the most vulnerable relapse and land back in the hospital.

"We need a stronger integration of community services to meet the need," Dr. Nathan said.

It's a daunting task when statistically 48.6 percent of the U.S. population receives either mental health or addiction treatment, due to a siloed approach to care. To tackle the problem, Dr. Nathan said, psychiatric and substance use disorders should be considered a joint problem and treated simultaneously, using options that include pharmacology, psychosocial, and behavioral interventions.

Strengthening these outcomes means trying to put the brakes on a new problem that has reared in recent years. The heavy use of marijuana among children age 12 and up. As of 2017, cannabis use has increased nationwide by 15 percent to 40.9 million in this demographic, according to the Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration (SAMHSA).

Prepandemic daily use of cannabis has shot up 30 percent in conjunction with major depressive episodes. Mental health professionals have voiced concern about the drug's impact on adolescent brains, as legalization increases.

Cannabis potency in excess of 10 percent can lead to more than a four-fold risk for being diagnosed with psychosis, Dr. Nathan said.

She noted that "up to nearly half of initial substance-induced psychosis may later change to schizophrenia." Part of the problem is that marijuana stays in the body up to 30 days, and continuous use results in an accumulative effect with long-range ramifications. This includes cognitive impairment of attention and executive functions.

The pandemic accelerated a full menu of mental health issues, yet Dr. Nathan remains optimistic and said the right tools can help. She emphasizes the need for strong coping skills through meditation and good habits such as exercise, sleep, and nutrition along with staying connected to family and friends.

"Investing in one's own wellbeing and promoting it is the best investment one can make. This will also benefit one's family and work environment," Dr. Nathan said.

*Dr. Kalpana Nathan presented at the Sept. 12, 2021, NAMI-Santa Clara County General Meeting. To watch Dr. Nathan's presentation, please click here [Mental health and substance use in the time of COVID](#)*

## NAMIWalks Silicon Valley 2021 — October 9, 2021

What are you waiting for? Do you know that NAMIWalks Silicon Valley takes place in less than 2 weeks? We encourage you to REGISTER today—it's fast, free, and simple. And if you register by midnight on Thursday, Sept. 30, you'll be entered to win a \$45 Starbucks Gift Card. Simply go to [www.namiwalks.org/events/siliconvalley](http://www.namiwalks.org/events/siliconvalley) right now!

But what does NAMIWalks Your Way *mean*?

It's like the regular NAMIWalks, only virtual and with a greater reach. You can participate wherever you are in a fun and safe way that works for you!

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# Mental Illness Awareness Week (MIAW)

Oct. 3–9, 2021

Each year, millions of Americans face the reality of living with a mental health condition. However, mental illness affects *every-one* directly or indirectly through family, friends, or coworkers. Despite mental illness's reach and prevalence, stigma and misunderstanding are also, sadly, widespread.

That is why each year during the first week of October, NAMI and participants across the country work to raise awareness of mental illness. We educate the public, fight stigma, and provide support. And each year, our movement grows stronger.

We believe that mental health conditions are important to discuss year-round, but highlighting them during Mental Illness Awareness Week provides a dedicated time for mental health advocates across the country to come together as one unified voice. Since 1990, when Congress established the first full week of October as Mental Illness Awareness Week, advocates have worked together to sponsor activities, large or small, to educate the public about mental illness.

This year's MIAW is centered around a new awareness campaign, "Together for Mental Health," where we will focus on the importance of advocating for better care for people with serious mental illness (SMI). Each day throughout the week, we will be raising the voices of people with lived experience to talk about SMI and the need for improved crisis response and mental health care.

Here are important related events:

**Tuesday, Oct. 5:** National Day of Prayer for Mental Illness Recovery and Understanding

**Thursday, Oct. 7:** National Depression Screening Day

**Saturday, Oct. 9:** NAMI Walks National Day of Hope

**Sunday, Oct. 10:** World Mental Health Day

## NAMI-Santa Clara County FaithNet Project

By Cindy McCalmont

**Jane Christol** had a simple idea, born from her compassionate heart: to ask Faith Communities located near psychiatric facilities to pray for residents there.

FaithNet staff hand-delivered packets to 51 of these Faith Communities with information about Suicide Prevention Awareness Month in September and Mental Health Awareness Week October 3-9, as well as with sample prayers, one of which was written by **Tom Jurgensen** and included in these intercessions:

*Knowing that we are all failed and fallible human beings in some aspect of our lives, let us look with compassion and love upon those struggling to recover from mental health and addiction issues.*

*When we are tempted to fall into harsh judgments or indifference towards persons who are struggling profoundly, let us remember that our own health and wellbeing is tenuous and vulnerable.*

## NAMI California Conference — October 14–15, 2021



Each year NAMI California hosts a conference to examine important trends, best practices, new treatments, activities in mental health, and ways to work together to improve care and services. The theme of the 2021

Engaging Diverse Communities.

Registration fee: \$10 for young adults and peers, \$15 for NAMI members, \$25 for nonmembers.

All workshops will be recorded and available after the conference has ended.

For more information about the conference and registration, go to [NAMICALIFORNIA.ORG/REGISTRATION](https://namicalifornia.org/registration)

conference is **Embracing Change and Transformation**.

There will be workshops in five areas: Advocacy, Consumers & Families, Criminal Justice, Early Intervention/ Prevention, and

## October 12 General Meeting



### A Conversation with Dr. Tom Insel on the Future of Mental Health

In 2015, after thirteen years as the Director of the National Institute of Mental Health, **Dr. Tom Insel** decided to leave the government's scientific approach to mental health and look deeper into the problems

and treatment for those with severe mental illness. He moved to California where he led the mental health team at Verily, a Google X spinoff, and then went on to cofound several mental health startups, integrating technology with tools to help those with severe mental illness. Most recently, he cofounded Humanest Care, a therapeutic online community for recovery.

Dr. Insel serves as a special advisor to California Gov. Gavin Newsom and is the Chair of the Board for the Steinberg Institute. He is currently developing MindSite News, a nonprofit digital publication focused on mental health issues. The website is slated to launch this fall.

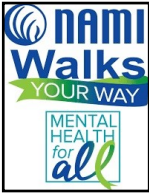
Dr. Insel is a member of the National Academy of Medicine and has received numerous national and international awards including honorary degrees in the U.S. and Europe.

The General Meeting on October 12 will feature a Q&A session with Dr. Insel on his vision for the future of mental health with NAMI Board member and journalist **Moryt Milo**.

**NOTE:** Past General Meeting presentations can be viewed by going to our website [www.namisanclara.org](https://www.namisanclara.org) under News & Events and clicking "General Meetings."

# NAMIWalks Silicon Valley 2021

(continued from p. 1)



Walk around your neighborhood, do a yoga class, go for a bike ride, do an art project—it's totally up to you! And...make sure you join us on our YouTube Channel starting at **10 A.M.** to enjoy activities and entertainment. You won't want to miss out on the fun!

NAMIWalks Your Way Silicon Valley will be held on **October 9** in solidarity with more than 50 other NAMI affiliates across the country and promises to be a day to remember. Let's make sure our voices are heard across the country—raising awareness of our mission — **#mentalhealthforall** Together we can!

As one of NAMI-Santa Clara County's largest fundraisers, the money raised by NAMIWalks helps fund our vital programs.

Help NAMI-Santa Clara County continue to be a safe place and a resource for our community—in a time when mental health services are more important than perhaps ever before. We can't do it without YOU!

Right now, we are at 68% of our goal with fewer than 2 weeks remaining. We know with your help, we can reach our goal of raising \$230,000 for NAMI-Santa Clara County.

During times of crisis, such as we are all going through right now, even more people in our community rely on NAMI-Santa Clara County for support and assistance.

The outreach you do when you fundraise lets people know that even in these uncertain times, NAMI-SCC is here to help.

## Inaugural VISN\* 21 Mental Health Summit “Foundations for Recovery: A Path Forward”

A Mental Health Summit via Zoom will be held on **Thursday, October 7, 10:30 A.M.–3 P.M. (PST)** Topics will include:

- ◆ Supportive risk-taking
- ◆ Peer support specialists panel
- ◆ Connecting with others to prevent suicide
- ◆ Allies in resiliency

This is a free event and all community members (including veterans, providers, and families) are welcome to participate.

Registration is required in Eventbrite:

<https://www.eventbrite.com/e/2021-visn-21-mental-health-summit-registration-166110865069>

RSVP as soon as possible.

For more information, contact **DiAnn Aiello** at [diann.aiello@va.gov](mailto:diann.aiello@va.gov)

\*VISN stands for Veterans Integrated Service Networks, meaning that this event is sponsored by several VAs in the same network.



## TARA4BPD Family Empowerment Workshop Learn How to Avoid Triggers and Repair Relationships



TARA4BPD Family Empowerment Workshop is a 10-week workshop teaching evidence-based neurobiology and techniques to help you become a therapeutic ally.

Learn to:

- ◆ decrease escalations
- ◆ repair relationships
- ◆ avoid triggers
- ◆ develop trust
- ◆ decrease Borderline Personality Disorder (BPD) isolation

This 10-week workshop will be online and begins on October 27, 2021 at 4 P.M. and runs till January 12, 2022. Each session is two hours.

The workshop is based on **Overcoming Borderline Personality Disorder** by Valerie Porr.

[Click here to learn more about the 10 Week Empowerment Workshops and to Register.](#)

You can also call 212-966-6514.

## Warmline Volunteer Spotlight: Jeanette Langdell



**Jeanette Langdell** first came to the NAMI Family-to-Family class to learn how to support her son who was battling mental illness. She found the class extremely helpful. Unfortunately, mental illness claimed her son's life last year. When she was seeking a way to honor her son's memory, she immediately thought of NAMI.

Jeanette volunteers on NAMI's Warmline. Her goal is to provide resources to address the challenges faced by those with mental illness, as well as to provide a “listening ear” to family members and others supporting individuals with mental illness. Jeanette is married and has two grown children. She recently retired after 35 years with NOVA and the City of Sunnyvale. Retirement is allowing her more time to pursue her passions of music and dance. She's an amateur flutist and is also a member of a local performing ballroom dance group.

## 4th Annual Maternal Mental Health Symposium



El Camino Health will present the 4th Annual Maternal Mental Health Symposium hosted by generous sponsorship from the El Camino Health Foundation. This event will be virtual.

**Katherine L. Wisner, MD, MS**, will be featured as one of the keynote speakers at this event discussing perinatal psychopharmacology.

**Friday, October 8 / 9 A.M.–3 P.M.**

To register or for more information and updates, visit <https://maternalmentalhealth.elcaminohealth.org/>

**Cost:** Free to attend

**Continuing Education Units:** Continuing education units may be provided for this event.

## Gun Safety Suicide Prevention Campaign

The Santa Clara County Suicide Prevention Program is developing a public awareness campaign to promote suicide prevention through gun violence prevention and gun safety. The program hopes to feature authentic video testimonials as central campaign assets to communicate with county firearm owners.

Testimonials sought include:

- ♦ A firearm owner (preferably white male, ~45–65 years old) discussing why they practice gun safety, like safe storage, and how they stand as a proud gun owner while doing so; and/or
- ♦ A suicide by firearm attempt survivor (preferably white male, ~45–65 years old), or firearm owner with mental health suicidality experience sharing their story.

For more specifics, contact **John** at [john.donoghue@hhs.sccgov.org](mailto:john.donoghue@hhs.sccgov.org)

## Research Study on Schizophrenia

A Clinical Research Study for Negative Symptoms of Schizophrenia (NSS) is underway. A person who is showing signs of NSS may have reduced facial expressions and speech; a lack of motivation and enthusiasm; and limited interaction with others.

If you or someone you care for is displaying these negative symptoms, learn about this research study evaluating an investigational drug for negative symptoms of schizophrenia.

To be eligible for this study, a potential participant must:

- ♦ Be 18–60 years of age
- ♦ Have had onset of schizophrenia symptoms for at least one yr
- ♦ Be experiencing negative symptoms for at least six months
- ♦ Have a reliable study partner who can answer questions about them. Other criteria will be reviewed by the study doctor.

All study-related visits, tests, and drugs will be provided at no cost. Compensation for completed study visits may be provided.

To learn more, call **855-412-1375** or visit [NSSResearchStudy.com](http://NSSResearchStudy.com)

### MEMBERSHIP/DONATION FORM

Join, renew, and/or donate to NAMI-SCC

I would like to join:

☐ Individual (\$40)

☐ Household (\$60)

☐ Open Door (\$5)

☐ New Membership

☐ Renewal Membership

☐ My company has a Matching Gift Program: \_\_\_\_\_

Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Address: \_\_\_\_\_

City/ State \_\_\_\_\_ Zip Code \_\_\_\_\_

Phone: (\_\_\_\_) \_\_\_\_\_ Email: \_\_\_\_\_

To pay online, go to [www.namiantaclara.org](http://www.namiantaclara.org) and click on "Join NAMI."

Learn how to include NAMI-SCC in your estate plan by going to "Get Involved/Planned Giving" on our website.

NAMI-SCC welcomes your membership. Memberships are valid for one year. Part of the membership dues enrolls you at NAMI State and NAMI National, which in turn automatically registers you as a member at all levels. Your additional donation helps ensure that we are able to maintain our office, as well as our educational programs. Your membership and donations are tax deductible. **Tax ID #94-2430956**

I would like to donate:

☐ \$50 ☐ \$75 ☐ \$100 ☐ \$250

Other \_\_\_\_\_

☐ In Honor of: ☐ In Memory of

\_\_\_\_\_

Amount Enclosed: \$ \_\_\_\_\_

### NAMI-Santa Clara County Community Resource &

#### Support Center

1150 S Bascom Av #24

San Jose, CA 95128

Phone: 408-453-0400

Fax: 408-453-2100

[www.namiantaclara.org](http://www.namiantaclara.org)  
[office@namiantaclara.org](mailto:office@namiantaclara.org)

**Office Hours: 10 A.M.–6 P.M. M-F**

To reach our Warmline, call

**408-453-0400 Option 1;**

after hours, press **Option 4.**

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