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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE:

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Important senior mental health issues to be addressed at upcoming conference

SAN DIEGO—On Thursday, May 19, 2011, the National Alliance on Mental Illness (NAMI San Diego) will be holding their Senior Mental Health Partnership spring conference.

May is Mental Health Month and this conference will feature a number of topics that impact the mental health of older adults, some of which include:

- Advances in the care of Alzheimer's Disease
- Grief and Loss in older adults
- Importance of comprehensive health assessment in older adults
- San Diego's vision of behavioral and primary care integration: concept, status and lessons learned
- Fallout of economic and political changes in mental health involving older adults
- Senior service reductions in California—impacting our safety net

When it comes to seniors, 20 percent of this population have a mental illness, but of that number, as many as 60 percent go undiagnosed. In this age group, there is a particular reluctance to acknowledge that there is a problem and get help. Seniors also have the highest suicide rate over any other age group. The Senior Mental Health Partnership exists to bring awareness and education to this issue.

The conference is a result of a partnership between NAMI San Diego and the UCSD Department of Geriatric Psychiatry Behavioral Health Services, Adult and Older Adult Systems of Care. It will be held on May 19 from 8 am to 3:30 pm at Aurora Behavioral Health Care, 11878 Avenue of Industry, San Diego, 92128. The seminar meets the qualifications for six hours of CE credit for RN/LVN/LPY and MFT/LCSW. The cost of the conference is \$55 with our without the CE credits.

NAMI is a non-profit organization that provides education, support services and advocacy to improve the lives of everyone affected by mental illnesses. They offer a variety of educational classes and support groups for those who have mental illness and for their family members and friends. NAMI San Diego also runs a Family and Peer Support Helpline that offers free, safe, confidential information, referrals and support for people with mental illness and their loved ones.

Mark your calendar for the conference and register online at www.namisandiego.org/seniormental.php. If you need more information, contact NAMI San Diego at (619) 584-5564.

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