



## ***Connect 4 Mental Health™ Announces 2015 Community Innovation Award Recipients***

*For the second year, the Community Innovation Awards program honors four local organizations for innovative approaches to improving mental health*

**(Washington, D.C., Oct. 21, 2015)** – The National Alliance on Mental Illness (NAMI) and the National Council for Behavioral Health (National Council), along with Otsuka Pharmaceutical Development & Commercialization, Inc. and Lundbeck, announced the winners of the 2015 *Connect 4 Mental Health™ (C4MH) Community Innovation Awards*. Amidst a national landscape increasingly focused on lack of access to mental health care, *C4MH* advocates that change begins at home. *C4MH* celebrates organizations delivering community-driven, solutions-based approaches that help people with serious mental illnesses.

Now in its second year, the Awards program was designed to honor local mental health organizations that have successfully introduced novel approaches to address mental health in one of four program categories: early intervention, creative use of technology, continuity of care and service integration.

“Too often jails, emergency departments and homeless shelters become the refuge of last resort for individuals living with serious mental illness,” said Linda Rosenberg, president and CEO of the National Council. “That’s why *Connect 4 Mental Health* is pleased to recognize four local organizations through the *Community Innovation Awards*, for their positive impact on the lives of people with serious mental illness living in their communities. They are true community problem solvers.”

The 2015 winning organizations in each category are:

- **Early Intervention:** [MHA of Northern Kentucky and Southwest Ohio](#)  
Mental Health America (MHA) of Northern Kentucky and Southwest Ohio (Covington, KY) is dedicated to promoting mental health and working to prevent mental and substance use disorders through education, advocacy, and service. The organization established and supports MHA’s Tri-State Mental Health First Aid (MHFA) Hub (Tri-State Hub), which oversees a multi-state MHFA initiative to improve mental health literacy, reduce stigma and provide early identification and intervention. In cooperation with partner agencies, the Tri-State Hub has held 36 MHFA courses, certifying 790 people in mental health first aid literacy since its inception.
- **Creative Use of Technology:** [NAMI San Diego](#)  
NAMI San Diego (San Diego, CA), in collaboration with the County of San Diego and other mental health organizations, created the “Tech CAFÉ” to address the technology divide by ensuring that technology tools such as hardware, software and training are easily accessible for individuals with mental illness and their families. The resources and education provided by Tech CAFÉ are meant to empower individuals to find independence and resilience through technology by learning to access online health and



wellness resources, gain employment and access online education.

- **Continuity of Care: [NAMI Greater Cleveland](#)**

NAMI Greater Cleveland (Cleveland, OH) is dedicated to empowering persons affected by mental illness and their family members to achieve a better quality of life by providing them with support, education, referral and advocacy. The organization’s Emotional Wellness Programming supports high-poverty public housing residents who have experienced long lapses in treatment or have never received services for suspected mental illness. The program has been implemented at two inner-city public housing complexes in Cleveland. As a result, residents at each facility have improved their physical and mental well-being, nurtured a supportive community of peers, and successfully avoided eviction. NAMI Greater Cleveland was awarded NAMI’s 2014 National Affiliate of the Year.

- **Service Integration: [Jefferson Center for Mental Health](#)**

Jefferson Center for Mental Health (Wheat Ridge, CO) serves people throughout Jefferson, Gilpin and Clear Creek counties at over 23 locations, as well as schools, nursing homes, and other community settings. Jefferson Center partnered with community organizations to develop Union Square Health Home, a fully integrated health care home for adults with serious mental illness that offers psychiatric and mental health treatment, substance use disorder treatment, primary care, wellness services, and peer health coaching under one roof. Union Square was developed to ensure that people who suffer from mental illness receive the best possible care and are diverted from inappropriate and costly care settings. Since its inception in 2013, 653 patients have enrolled in Union Square.

“We are thrilled to recognize these four organizations that are helping individuals and families affected by mental illness—like NAMI’s own members—move toward wellness. The mental health organizations that *C4MH* honors each year are among the most innovative in the country,” said Mary Giliberti, Executive Director of NAMI. “*C4MH*’s mission is to support the estimated 10 million adults in the U.S. with a serious mental illness.<sup>1</sup> Each of the 2015 winners provides inspiration and hope in that cause. There are many people who are immensely grateful for their work.”

Winning organizations receive a \$10,000 award to further their work, and the opportunity to join with organizations previously recognized by *C4MH* to encourage and facilitate best practice sharing.

Since its inception in 2013, *C4MH* has honored twelve local organizations.

While there is no one approach to effectively address mental illnesses, the organizations honored with the *Community Innovation Awards* offer best practices for all communities to consider. To learn more about *C4MH*, the *Community Innovation Awards* and the need for community-oriented solutions to address serious mental illness, visit [www.connect4mentalhealth.com](http://www.connect4mentalhealth.com).

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### **About Connect 4 Mental Health<sup>TM</sup>**

*Connect 4 Mental Health (C4MH)* is a nationwide initiative calling for communities to prioritize serious mental illness and advocate for new approaches that aim to help make a difference for individuals living with these conditions, their families and their communities. The campaign encourages collaboration among the mental health community and other community-based organizations – such as emergency services, law enforcement and public housing – to develop localized interventions that provide additional support for those with serious mental illness and also may help address larger community problems. *C4MH* is an alliance between the National Alliance on Mental Illness (NAMI), the National Council for Behavioral Health (National Council), Otsuka Pharmaceutical Development & Commercialization, Inc. and Lundbeck. To learn more, visit [www.connect4mentalhealth.com](http://www.connect4mentalhealth.com)

### **The National Alliance on Mental Illness**

The National Alliance on Mental Illness (NAMI) is the largest grassroots mental health organization in the U.S. dedicated to building better lives for the millions of Americans affected by mental illness. NAMI advocates for patient access to services, treatment, supports and research and is steadfast in its commitment to raise awareness and build a community of hope for all of those in need. NAMI is the foundation for hundreds of NAMI state organizations, NAMI affiliates and volunteer leaders who work in local communities across the country to raise awareness and provide essential and free education, advocacy and support group programs. To learn more about NAMI, visit [www.nami.org](http://www.nami.org).

### **National Council for Behavioral Health (National Council)**

National Council for Behavioral Health is the unifying voice of America's community mental health and addictions treatment organizations. Together with 2,300 member organizations, it serves more than eight million adults and children living with mental illnesses and addiction disorders. The organization is committed to ensuring all Americans have access to comprehensive, high-quality care that affords every opportunity for recovery and full participation in community life. The National Council, the Maryland Department of Health and Mental Hygiene, and the Missouri Department of Mental Health pioneered Mental Health First Aid in the U.S. and has trained nearly 450,000 individuals to connect youth and adults in need to mental health and addictions care in their communities. To learn more about the National Council, visit [www.TheNationalCouncil.org](http://www.TheNationalCouncil.org).

### **Otsuka Pharmaceutical Development & Commercialization, Inc.**

Otsuka Pharmaceutical Development & Commercialization, Inc. (OPDC) is an innovative, fast-growing healthcare company that discovers and develops new compounds that address unanswered medical needs and advance human health. With a strong focus on neuroscience, oncology, and cardio-renal treatments, OPDC is dedicated to improving the health and quality of human life. For more information, visit [www.otsuka-us.com](http://www.otsuka-us.com).

OPDC is a subsidiary of Otsuka America, Inc. (OAI), a holding company established in the U.S. in 1989. OAI is wholly owned by Otsuka Pharmaceutical Co., Ltd. The Otsuka Group employs



approximately 42,000 people globally and its products are available in more than 80 countries worldwide. Otsuka welcomes you to visit its global website at <https://www.otsuka.co.jp/en/>.

### **Lundbeck**

Based in Deerfield, Ill., Lundbeck US is an affiliate of H. Lundbeck A/S in Denmark, and focused solely on accelerating therapies for brain disorders. The company is engaged in the research, development, production, marketing and sale of innovative therapies that fulfill unmet medical needs among people living with challenging and sometimes rare neurologic and psychiatric disorders. In its late-stage research pipeline, the company has neurology compounds under investigation for Alzheimer's disease and epilepsy, in addition to therapies in development for mental health disorders. With a special commitment to the lives of patients, families and caregivers, Lundbeck actively engages in hundreds of initiatives each year that support our patient communities. To learn more, visit us at [www.LundbeckUS.com](http://www.LundbeckUS.com) and connect with us on Twitter at @LundbeckUS.

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### **References:**

1. (2013). Results from the 2013 National Survey on Drug Use and Health: Mental Health Findings. *U.S. Department of Health and Human Services*. Retrieved September 23, 2015, from <http://www.samhsa.gov/data/sites/default/files/NSDUHmhfr2013/NSDUHmhfr2013.pdf>.