

Consumer survey results from 2011 NAMI Annual Meeting

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The Consumer Relations Committee represented the College of Psychiatric and Neurologic Pharmacists (CPNP) at the 2011 National Alliance on Mental Illness (NAMI) Annual Convention, which was held in Chicago, Illinois July 6-9. CPNP members manned a booth during the convention and provided a workshop entitled "Suicidality and Risks of Medications Used to Treat Mental Illness."

Each year NAMI Annual Convention attendees are asked to complete a survey to help CPNP better understand the awareness attendees have about psychiatric pharmacists. At the same time, this survey is intended to educate them about the availability of psychiatric pharmacists. The survey asks a variety of questions, however only three questions and answers will be addressed in this article:

1. "Before this meeting, were you aware that there are pharmacists who specialize in mental health?"
2. "Would you like to learn more about psychiatric pharmacists?"
3. "Before this meeting were you aware that medication information fact sheets are available on the NAMI website?"

The NAMI Annual Convention moves to a different site annually and is attended by a diverse population as a result. The number of surveys collected has varied over the years and the fluctuations may be attributed to the CPNP members staffing the booth or to the number of attendees who agreed to fill out the survey. Since 2007, the number of surveys collected ranged from 34-171. Of those surveyed in previous years, 73-81% of respondents were not aware that pharmacists specialize in mental health. However, between 70-91% of respondents would like to know more about psychiatric pharmacists. This year's results were similar to results collected in previous years. A total of 122 surveys were completed. Approximately 82% of respondents were unaware of psychiatric pharmacists and 82% of respondents stated that they would like to learn more about psychiatric pharmacists.

In 2007, only 12% of the respondents were aware that the medication fact sheets were available on the NAMI website. In contrast, in 2011 over 42% of respondents were aware of the medication fact sheets located on the NAMI website.

These survey responses indicate that there continues to be a significant need to educate consumers, family members and providers who attend the NAMI Annual Convention about psychiatric pharmacists. At the state level, we encourage each of you to participate in your local NAMI chapters and offer to provide educational programs at your state NAMI conventions. You can help get the word out about psychiatric pharmacists!

We hope to present more of the survey results collected throughout the years during the Poster Session at the 2012 CPNP Annual Meeting in Tampa, Florida.

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