

(ANC:)

July is Minority Mental Health Awareness Month. NCC's Alexandria Bennett spoke with a local organization about trends of mental illness in minorities and what is being done to cure the stigma.

(NAT Sound:) Office noise - 20 seconds

(TRACK 1:)

NAMI Syracuse is the National Alliance of Mental Illness, an organization dedicated to improving the lives of those who suffer from mental illness through self-help, support and advocacy. Steven Comer, a board member for NAMI Syracuse, says minorities have access to the same mental health services as everyone else. They just have to want the help. A new database has been created by NAMI Syracuse that names health care providers who offer diagnosis and treatment for mental illness.

[TAKE SOT

AT:7'51"

TO:8'19"

ITEM TIME:28'00"]

<"We just recently created a database that has almost 200 providers in Onondaga County just for mental health. We designated them by the insurance they take. We did some of the big insurances like PA, Blue Cross Blue Shield, Fidelis. So anyone on the website is also accepted by the main big ones.">

(Track 2:)

Mental illness in minorities continues to go undiagnosed because of miseducation, shame and fear. Stigma contributes to silence of mental illness in many ways but Steven says there are a couple of ways to tackle the stigma.

[TAKE SOT

AT:12'25"

TO:12'49"

ITEM TIME:24'00"]

<"The biggest one when it comes to stigma is education. Ninety percent is educating them about how to get over the barriers and resources in the community. Then you connect them to the people that can help them get there. Ten percent is all you.">

(Track 3)

Rising trends of mental illness in minorities include post-partum depression, P-T-S-D and bipolar disorder. For these trends to be addressed and treated, it first starts with the person. NAMI Syracuse urges members of the community to seek help and take advantage of its resources.

Alexandria Bennett, N-C-C News.