



September 24, 2008

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE:

Contact:
Shannon Jaccard, M.B.A.
Communications Director
(619) 584-5564
shannonjaccard@namisd.org

**Be the first to see the documentary “More Than Just the Blues”
at NAMI meeting on Oct. 2**

SAN DIEGO— Depression is often thought as a “normal” part of aging, but it is not. A new documentary video from the National Alliance on Mental Illness (NAMI) in San Diego sheds light on what depression in seniors looks like and what can be done to help.

This video, entitled “More Than Just the Blues,” will be shown on Thursday, Oct. 2 at the NAMI San Diego Education and Advocacy meeting. This video was created in partnership with UCSD Geriatric Psychiatry and Aging and Independence Services.

The featured speaker of the evening will be Dr. Dan Sewell and he will expand on the theme of the video—depression is **not** a normal part of aging and, untreated, can lead to poor quality of life and even suicide. Dr. Sewell is Clinical Professor of Psychiatry, Director of the Senior Behavioral Health Program, and Director of the Geriatric Psychiatry Clinical Fellowship Program – all at UCSD and is a member of NAMI San Diego’s Medical Advisory Board. He will follow his presentation with a 30-minute open question period about all older adult mental health issues, including dementia.

Depression is an important issue to address, yet it often goes undetected and untreated especially among older adults because they may be less willing to talk about their feelings of grief and sadness with others, and doctors may be less likely to suspect it.

Communications Director and member of the Senior Mental Health Partnership at NAMI San Diego, Shannon Jaccard, said that oftentimes, seniors feel embarrassed or ashamed for having these thoughts and emotions, so they will keep symptoms to themselves.

“This is exactly why this video is so important for people to see. It’s needs to be okay to talk about these things. And we need to dispel the myth that depression is a normal part of aging. It is not a part of growing older to simply withdraw from life or society. It’s a sign that they need to speak with someone and be screened for depression,” said Jaccard.

NAMI is a non-profit organization that provides education, support services and advocacy to improve the lives of everyone affected by mental illnesses. They hold Education and Advocacy meetings the first Thursday of every month. These feature expert speakers on timely topics. The meetings start at 6:30 pm and are held at the University Christian Church Friendship Hall at 3900 Cleveland Ave in San Diego (across from the Post Office).

Please don’t miss this important presentation. Mark your calendar for October 2 and if you need more information, contact NAMI San Diego at (800) 523-5933. Or visit www.namisandiego.org

###