

# foundations

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## Voice of Recovery: Emilia

Emilia found recovery after she was released from jail with the support of NAMI (National Alliance on Mental Illness), a counselor, and medicine.

Emilia grew up in a loving household with both parents supportive of her future. Around the age of 18, after graduating high school, Emilia's behaviors started to change. She quit college after her first semester. She got "new friends" and ran away to New York. She lost her focus. She was wild. Emilia went to jail for stealing credit cards and using them. She stole them from strangers, family, and loved ones.



"I didn't think anything of it or that I was hurting anyone," Emilia said. She went to jail for six months in August 2013 and said it was the worst time of her life. She was in jail for Thanksgiving, Christmas, and New Year's. She said there was no mental health support group in jail. There was substance abuse support, but she wasn't involved with drugs or alcohol.

Emilia said the conditions for her release from jail kind of pushed her into recovery. Among other things, they required her to get a diagnosis, seek counseling, and get a support group. Emilia's diagnosis is bipolar disorder with extreme anxiety. Emilia has a counselor whom she still sees today, and she is actively involved with NAMI. "Volunteering for NAMI gives me purpose, and I have made some really good friends along the way and they're always there for me," Emilia said.



Emilia's dream now is to become a Certified Forensic Peer Specialist and help those who are mentally ill and in prison. Emilia advocates to improve the prisons for people with mental illness by asking that their medicine not be taken away or changed when they enter prison. She is also trying to bring a "NAMI Connection" meeting into the prison.

Knowing how bad it could be keeps Emilia on her toes. She never wants to go to jail again unless she is a Certified Forensic Peer Specialist and is there helping someone.



Emilia's Personal Medicine (things that you do to be well) include spending time with her family; volunteering for NAMI, CSP (Community Support Program), and her church; and reading and listening to music.

"For me, recovery is being who I truly am."

## Medicines for Cold Symptoms

A lot of people catch colds in the winter, but you can get a cold any time of the year. A cold is caused by a virus. There is no cure for the common cold; it must run its course. Colds usually last about 7 to 10 days. Cold symptoms include:

- Runny or stuffy nose
- Sneezing
- Headache
- Sore throat
- Cough
- Body aches

People usually get better on their own without medicine. A cold cannot be treated with an antibiotic. Sometimes people take non-prescription (over-the-counter) medicine for colds. These medicines may help with cold symptoms, but they do not make the cold go away faster. There are many different types of medicines for cold symptoms. They all work differently.

**Nasal decongestants/sprays**—unclogs a stuffy nose; helps you breathe better

- Pseudoephedrine (Sudafed®)
- Oxymetazoline (Afrin®, Mucinex Sinus®)
- Phenylephrine (Sudafed PE®)

**Antihistamines**—decreases runny nose and sneezing

- Diphenhydramine (Benadryl®)
- Loratadine (Claritin®)
- Chlorpheniramine (Chor-TriMeton®)
- Fexofenadine (Allegra®)
- Cetirizine (Zyrtec®)

**Cough suppressants**—quiets a dry cough

- Dextromethorphan (Robitussin®)

**Expectorants**—loosens mucus so you can cough it up

- Guaifenesin (Mucinex®)

**Pain relievers**—used to help ease fever, headaches, and minor body aches and pains

- Acetaminophen (Tylenol®)
- Aspirin (Excedrin®)—\*do not give aspirin to children or teenagers.
- Ibuprofen (Motrin®, Advil®)
- Naproxen (Aleve®)

**Multi-symptom cold medicines**—have two or more different medicines to treat several different cold symptoms. Make sure you have the symptoms listed on the medicine box or bottle. Only take medicines to treat the symptoms you have.

Always read the medicine label carefully. Some medicines for cough and cold should not be given to children. Check with a doctor or pharmacist to make sure the medicine is right for your child's age and weight. All medicine should be stored out of sight and reach of children.

Even though you can buy cough and cold medicine without a prescription, it still can cause side effects. Fortunately, many people have no side effects or only have minor side effects that can go away. Some cough and cold products should not be taken with other medicines or certain medical conditions. If you have questions about side effects, or if you take other prescription medicines, talk with a doctor or pharmacist before taking over-the-counter medicine.

## The Flu

The flu is also caused by a virus, but it often causes symptoms that are much stronger than the common cold. The good news is that you can get a vaccine (“flu shot”) every year to help protect against the flu. It is a good idea to talk with your doctor every fall/winter about getting a flu vaccine. If you do catch the flu, there is no cure, but the symptoms usually go away in about two weeks. You can use many of the medicines listed above for the common cold to help with symptoms of the flu.

### Who should get the flu vaccine?

Everyone 6 months or older should get the flu vaccine. It is especially important for those at high risk for health problems from the flu:

- Pregnant women
- Older adults
- Young children
- Those with chronic health issues
- People living in nursing homes or health care facilities

### Those who should not get the flu vaccine:

- Babies under 6 months of age
- People who had a severe reaction to the flu vaccine or any ingredient in the vaccine in the past

### Check with the doctor before getting the flu vaccine if:

- You are allergic to eggs
- You have a fever or don’t feel well when it is time to get the vaccine
- In the past, had a disease called Guillain-Barré syndrome around the same time as getting the flu vaccine

## Is it a cold or flu?

Signs and Symptoms	Influenza	Cold
Symptom onset	Abrupt	Gradual
Fever	Usual	Rare
Aches	Usual	Slight
Chills	Fairly common	Uncommon
Fatigue, weakness	Usual	Sometimes
Sneezing	Sometimes	Common
Stuffy nose	Sometimes	Common
Sore throat	Sometimes	Common
Chest discomfort, cough	Common	Mild to moderate
Headache	Common	Rare

<https://www.cdc.gov/flu/images/about/cold-or-flu-large.png>

## Free Online Resources

Have you been looking for information and resources about mental health medicine, losing weight, sleeping better, or other tools that you can use to get well and stay well? Community Care members can get free online recovery and wellness tools, including Pat Deegan's Recovery Library. These services are free and safe using our secure ePortal. Check out [Health Topics](#) on Community Care's website to learn more.



## Share Your Feedback

There are many ways you can share feedback with Community Care about behavioral health services in your community. Members and family can go to meetings and events to help us make sure we are meeting your behavioral health treatment needs. We have different committees that you can participate in, and, in some cases, even lead. For example, you can join a workgroup that reviews proposals for new services. We also have focus groups for members and family to talk about ideas for how, when, and where members get services. Usually, you can get a payment (stipend) for participating. If you are interested in sharing your thoughts and experience with us through these activities, please contact Community Care Member Services.

## Annual Member Satisfaction Survey

The annual Member Satisfaction Survey will be mailed out in early 2020. Members and families are randomly selected to receive a survey about your or your child's services. Community Care contracts with a company called Symphony Performance Health (SPH Analytics) to conduct the survey. You will see this name on the information you receive in the mail. The surveys are anonymous, and all information is confidential.

If you get a survey, Community Care would be excited to hear from you. Please take a few moments to fill it out. There is a postage paid envelope that makes it easy for you to send it back. There will also be a link if you want to complete it from a computer online. If you would rather do it over the phone, there is a number you can call, and someone will help you complete it, if that is easier. Spanish speaking members can also request a copy of the survey in Spanish or complete it over the phone with a Spanish speaking representative at SPH. Your answers are completely confidential. We do not know who returns the surveys, and your answers do not affect your benefits in any way. The survey is an important way for us to know if members and families are satisfied with the services they receive. We use member feedback to make improvements in our services. We'd love to hear what you think! Community Care is offering chances to win a \$15 Visa gift card by completing the survey.

Please note: if you live in Susquehanna, Lycoming, Lackawanna, or Luzerne Counties in the Northeast, a different company called Advocacy Alliance conducts the satisfaction survey.

## Getting Treatment When You Need It

We believe that members should not wait long for behavioral health appointments. So, we work hard to make sure you get treatment without much wait time. In a life-threatening emergency, you should get an appointment right away. If it is not a life-threatening emergency, you should get an appointment within:

- **1 hour** for an emergency that is not life-threatening
- **24 hours** for urgent needs
- **7 calendar days** for routine behavioral health needs

If you have any problems getting an appointment soon enough with your current provider, or if you do not have a treatment provider but need one, please call the Community Care toll-free customer service number for your county listed on [page 6](#). Our Customer Service staff will help you get an appointment.

It helps to be prepared and know who to call before a crisis happens. If you need help finding crisis services in your area, please call the Community Care toll-free member services number for your county. A customer service representative can help you, or you can go to your nearest Emergency Department.

## Community Care Customer Service Numbers

County	Customer Service
Adams	1.866.738.9849
Allegheny	1.800.553.7499
Bedford	1.866.483.2908
Berks	1.866.292.7886
Blair	1.855.520.9715
Bradford	1.866.878.6046
Cameron	1.866.878.6046
Carbon	1.866.473.5862
Centre	1.866.878.6046
Chester	1.866.622.4228
Clarion	1.866.878.6046
Clearfield	1.866.878.6046
Clinton	1.855.520.9787
Columbia	1.866.878.6046
Elk	1.866.878.6046
Erie	1.855.224.1777
Forest	1.866.878.6046
Huntingdon	1.866.878.6046
Jefferson	1.866.878.6046
Juniata	1.866.878.6046
Lackawanna	1.866.668.4696
Luzerne	1.866.668.4696
Lycoming	1.855.520.9787

County	Customer Service
McKean	1.866.878.6046
Mifflin	1.866.878.6046
Monroe	1.866.473.5862
Montour	1.866.878.6046
Northumberland	1.866.878.6046
Pike	1.866.473.5862
Potter	1.866.878.6046
Schuylkill	1.866.878.6046
Snyder	1.866.878.6046
Somerset	1.866.483.2908
Sullivan	1.866.878.6046
Susquehanna	1.866.668.4696
Tioga	1.866.878.6046
Union	1.866.878.6046
Warren	1.866.878.6046
Wayne	1.866.878.6046
Wyoming	1.866.668.4696
York	1.866.542.0299
TTY (Dial 711) Request:	1.833.545.9191
En español	1.866.229.3187