

DBSA West Hill and Valley Newsletter: October, 2011

What a difference a year makes! Last year at this time, we had 24 dues paying members. Today, we have more than doubled that number, and now have **51**. Last year at this time, we had a total of 222 newsletter recipients. We are now up to **415**, almost doubling that number. Our support group attendance is continually growing, as we help and support each other. **We are adding a second support group on Sundays, facilitated by Karen Wennersten, to accommodate our larger attendance numbers. Both Sunday meetings will run from 1:00 to 3:00, and both will be held in the Oak Rooms. Thank you, Karen, for taking on the role of facilitator.**

MONTHLY BOARD OF DIRECTORS REPORT

Bank Account Balances

Checking Account Balance	\$ 528
Emergency Medical Fund:	\$5,111

Dues Paying Members

Individual	32
Family	19
Total Dues Paying Members	51

Newsletter Distribution

Email Recipients	337
Hardcopy Recipients	78
Total Recipients	415
Last Email Date	10/6/11
Last USPS Mailing Date	10/7/11
Last Board of Directors Mtg	9/18/11

This Month's Article: Violent crime in bipolar disorder is almost entirely attributable to drug or alcohol abuse, not unsound mental health.

07 Sep 10, Oxford, United Kingdom. Bipolar disorder by itself does not increase the risk of committing violent crime, suggests a new study by Oxford University and the Karolinska Institute in Sweden. Instead, the over-representation of individuals with bipolar disorder in violent crime statistics is almost entirely attributable to concurrent drug or alcohol abuse.

This mirrors a recent study in schizophrenia by the same group which showed a minimal association with violent crime, unless there is also a drug or alcohol problem. *"In people without substance abuse problems, bipolar disorder is not a problem for violent crime,"* says Dr Seena Fazel of the Department of Psychiatry at Oxford University.

The public debate on violent crime usually assumes that violence in the mentally ill is a direct result of the perpetrator's illness. However, it has previously been unclear if the violence is due to the bipolar disorder per se, or caused by other aspects of the individual's personality or lifestyle.

Dr Fazel explains that reviewing all the available evidence suggests that the risk of violent crime among anyone in the general population who abuses drugs or alcohol is 6–8 times greater than those who don't. This shows we need to focus our attention on how we can detect those individuals with bipolar disorder and schizophrenia with substance abuse problems, and prevent and treat those who are abusing substances

The risk of violent crime among those with bipolar disorder who also have substance abuse problems is raised by the same amount: 6–7 times, suggesting that the mental illness has little or no role. However, levels of

diagnosed substance abuse among those with bipolar disorder and schizophrenia run at around 20–25%, and are greater than the 2% seen in the general population.

“This shows we need to focus our attention on how we can detect those individuals with bipolar disorder and schizophrenia with substance abuse problems, and prevent and treat those who are abusing substances,” says Dr Fazel.

In the new study published in the journal Archives of General Psychiatry, the researchers compared the rate of violent crime in over 3,700 patients with bipolar disorder cared for in Swedish hospitals between 1973 and 2004 with that of 37,000 control individuals from the general public. Violent crime included murder, manslaughter, any form of assault, sex crimes, robbery, arson and illegal threats or intimidation.

21% of patients with bipolar disorder and a diagnosis of severe substance abuse (alcohol or illegal drugs) were convicted of violent crimes, compared to 5% of those with bipolar disorder but without substance abuse, 5% among the unaffected siblings of bipolar patients, and 3% among general public control individuals.

‘Interestingly, this concurs with our group’s previous findings in schizophrenia – another serious psychiatric disorder,’ says professor Niklas Långström, Head of the Centre for Violence Prevention at Karolinska Institute, and one of the researchers behind the study. *“Unwarranted fear and stigmatization of mental illness increases the alienation of people with psychiatric disorder and makes them less inclined to seek the care they need.”*

The researchers say that the findings support the need for initiatives to prevent, identify and treat drug and alcohol abuse when fighting violent crime.

Please help DBSA West by becoming a dues-paying member.

DBSA is an all-volunteer organization dedicated to improving the lives of people living with mood disorders and their loved ones. Our primary focus is on providing support groups for persons dealing with depression and bipolar disorder and their friends and families.

We are constantly looking for ways to make people aware of our group, which means we spend money on postage, printing and distribution of our information. When you become a member of DBSA, your \$20 individual and \$30 family annual dues payments help us pay for the production and mailing costs of our newsletters and brochures. Please see the sign up form at the end of this newsletter.

Our Officers:

President: Bernadette Knudsen, bernadette@dbsawest.org

Vice President: Norma Wimunc, norma@dbsawest.org

Treasurer: Mary Paganoni, mary@dbsawest.org

Secretary: Bob Steinmetz, bob@dbsawest.org

Our Support Group Facilitators:

Sunday, 1pm-3pm: Bernadette Knudsen, bernadette@dbsawest.org

Sunday, 1pm-3pm: Karen Wennersten, karen@dbsawest.org

Wednesday, 7pm-9pm: Norma Wimunc, norma@dbsawest.org

Thursday (young adult), 7pm-8:30pm: Alex Steinmetz, alex@dbsawest.org

Thursday (friends and family), 7pm-8:30pm: Bob Steinmetz, bob@dbsawest.org

Support groups meet at **Good Samaritan Hospital**, 3815 Highland Ave in Downers Grove. Here is our schedule for the next few weeks. Since schedules are subject to change, always refer to www.dbsawest.org for the most current information regarding room assignments.

DBSA West Support Group Meetings Oct-Nov, 2011

Day	Date	Time (pm)	Location	Group
Sun	10/2	1:00-3:00	Red Oak	Patient
Wed	10/5	7:00-9:00	White Oak	Patient
Thu	10/6	7:00-8:30	White Oak	Caregiver
Thu	10/6	7:00-8:30	Blue Oak	16-25
Sun	10/9	1:00-3:00	Red Oak	Patient
Wed	10/12	7:00-9:00	White Oak	Patient
Thu	10/13	7:00-8:30	White Oak	Caregiver
Thu	10/13	7:00-8:30	Blue Oak	16-25
Sun	10/16	1:00-3:00	Red Oak	Patient
Wed	10/19	7:00-9:00	White Oak	Patient
Thu	10/20	7:00-8:30	White Oak	Caregiver
Thu	10/20	7:00-8:30	Black Oak	16-25
Sun	10/23	1:00-3:00	Red Oak	Patient
Wed	10/26	7:00-9:00	White Oak	Patient
Thu	10/27	7:00-8:30	White Oak	Caregiver
Thu	10/27	7:00-8:30	Black Oak	16-25
Sun	10/30	7:00-8:30	Red Oak	Caregiver

Day	Date	Time (pm)	Location	Group
Wed	11/2	7:00-9:00	White Oak	Patient
Thu	11/3	7:00-8:30	White Oak	Caregiver
Thu	11/3	7:00-8:30	Black Oak	16-25
Sun	11/6	1:00-3:00	Blue Oak	Patient
Wed	11/9	7:00-9:00	White Oak	Patient
Thu	11/10	7:00-8:30	White Oak	Caregiver
Thu	11/10	7:00-8:30	Black Oak	16-25
Sun	11/13	1:00-3:00	Blue Oak	Patient
Wed	11/16	7:00-9:00	White Oak	Patient
Thu	11/17	7:00-8:30	White Oak	Caregiver
Thu	11/17	7:00-8:30	Black Oak	16-25
Sun	11/20	1:00-3:00	Red Oak	Patient
Wed	11/23	7:00-9:00	White Oak	Patient
Thu	11/24	Thanksgiving - No Meetings		
Thu	11/24	Thanksgiving - No Meetings		
Sun	11/27	1:00-3:00	Red Oak	Patient
Wed	11/30	7:00-9:00	White Oak	Patient

DBSA West – Suburban Chicago

We've been there. We can help.

BECOME A DUES-PAYING MEMBER: Print this form and mail it with your check to the address below:

Your annual dues (\$20 for an individual and \$30 for a family) will help us in our mission to provide support, friendship, hope and information for individuals with depression or bipolar disorder and to their friends and families.

Type of membership: Family (\$30) Individual (\$20)

Type of newsletter: US Mail Email

Name: _____

Address: _____

City: _____ Zip: _____

Phone: _____

Email Address: _____

Make checks payable to: DBSA West

Mail checks to: DBSA West
 PO Box 4646
 Naperville, IL 60567

Thank you for your generous support!