

first priority of all clinical trials is the safety of the patient. One of our primary objectives is to limit the number of people exposed to placebo and limit the duration of their exposure without compromising scientific validity.

MOOD DISORDERS IN CHILDREN AND ADOLESCENTS

The issue of mood disorders in children and adolescents is of particular concern to National DMDA, and we support the aggressive research being done by NIMH in this area. Nearly 2.5 percent of children and 8.3 percent of adolescents suffer from clinical depression. There has, however, been virtually no research to date on bipolar disorders in children, despite evidence that families wait an average of 10 years before receiving the proper diagnosis after seeking help. We know that up to 90 percent of bipolar disorders start before age 20, meaning more high school dropouts, more illegal drug and alcohol use, higher teen pregnancy rates, more teen violence and more adolescent suicides. The costs of waiting for proper treatment do not just affect the individual sufferer, but society as a whole.

We fully support NIMH plans to further expand clinical trials of treatments for mental illnesses, including the exploration of depression in young children. We urge a significant increase in funding for research of mood disorders in children and adolescents with special emphasis on the efficacy and safety of current treatments, the epidemiology of these illnesses and improved diagnostic tools.

We are pleased that NIMH played a lead role in the Surgeon General's report on youth violence. With further research into the relationship between mental disorders and violence, we are hopeful that tragedies like the recent school shootings in California and across the country can be prevented in the future. Many of the perpetrators of these shootings exhibited symptoms of mental illness, and further research into the connection between behavior problems and anxiety disorders, depression, and suicidal ideation is critical. National DMDA is also pleased with the coordination between NIMH and other federal agencies, such as the Centers for Disease Control and the departments of education and justice, and continued information sharing about the relationship between mental illnesses and violence.

BIPOLAR (MANIC-DEPRESSION) DISORDER

The World Health Organization has identified bipolar disorder as the seventh-ranked cause of disability in the world today. Nearly one in 100 Americans suffers from manic-depression, yet research in this area has been continually underfunded.

That is slowly changing. NIMH's current Systemic Treatment Enhancement Program for Bipolar Disorder (STEP-BD) is a landmark study of 5,000 people with bipolar disorder, the largest psychiatric trial ever held. While this is a critically important study, it also underscores the unfortunate circumstance that mental illnesses remain woefully underfunded. The STEP-BD trial has a budget of just \$20 million. A brief check of, for example, the National Cancer Institute programs will reveal that this is an unjustly small allocation for researching this pervasive and fatal disease. In fact, in FY 1999, NIMH spent only \$46 million on bipolar research. Congress must continue to increase its investment in this important area of mental health research.

THE IMPACT OF DEPRESSION ON OTHER ILLNESSES

National DMDA is pleased to be participating next week in an important NIMH

EXTENSIONS OF REMARKS

forum on improving health outcomes for major diseases such as cancer, diabetes, heart disease, stroke, AIDS, and Parkinson's through the effective treatment of co-occurring depression. The forum will highlight scientific advances linking depression and other illnesses, and the role that treating depression plays in improving the course of the co-occurring disease. Participants will also focus on ideas for shaping the Institute's research agenda, and further educational and communication plans for improving health care. National DMDA applauds NIMH for its efforts to include the public in its agenda setting.

Important new research has shown that treatment of co-occurring depression often improves health outcomes for patients with a wide variety of diseases. Researchers are tracing various aspects of depression, that may affect illnesses as varied as neurological diseases such as Parkinson's disease, diseases of the cardiovascular system, and diseases involving suppression of the immune system, such as cancer and AIDS. It appears that depression is an important risk factor for heart disease. In a recent study, it was found that heart patients who had depression were four times as likely to die in the next six months as those who were not depressed. There are also studies linking depression and obesity and diabetes, as well as findings showing common genetic patterns in diabetes and depression.

OTHER RESEARCH NEEDS

More research is needed on the medications for mental illness. There has not been a drug developed specifically for bipolar disorder since the discovery of lithium more than 50 years ago. In addition, it is not fully understood how psychiatric drugs work in the brain. A person often must choose between lessening suicidal thoughts or getting life threatening rashes, seizures, or lithium poisoning. So many of us have to choose a life without libido or a life of fatigue, exacerbated by insomnia. Although these medications are effective for many people, no one should have to make choices like these. Every day technology and science bring us further in understanding the brain and these kinds of successes build upon each other.

National DMDA is therefore particularly pleased to see the NIMH's renewed commitment to research of more viable treatment options for depression and bipolar disorder and we hope that the Congress will continue to fund important studies in this area. Great strides are being made, but it is critical that even more research is done on how different medicines affect both the body and the mind.

CONCLUSION

We urge the National Institutes of Health and the National Institute of Mental Health to continue to expand and enhance behavioral science, neuroscience and genetics research of mental illnesses. We commend the Subcommittee's past support of NIH and NIMH, and look forward to continuing to work with you in the next year to ensure renewed commitment to full funding of mental health research. We are confident that together, our efforts will mean real treatment options, an end to the stigma associated with mental illness, lives saved and a far more productive America. Thank you again for the opportunity to testify on issues critical to the health and well being of all Americans.

April 24, 2001

CELEBRATING THE 25TH ANNIVERSARY OF ISTHMUS

HON. TAMMY BALDWIN

OF WISCONSIN

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, April 24, 2001

Ms. BALDWIN. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to celebrate the 25th anniversary of the founding of a unique institution in Madison, Wisconsin, our weekly newspaper, Isthmus. Conceived as an alternative source of news and information, nurtured by the hard work and big dreams of its founders, Vince O'Hern and Fred Milverstedt, Isthmus' growth and success over 25 years have mirrored Madison's.

Those of us who live in, and work in, and love Madison consider our weekly copy of Isthmus as much a part of our city's life and character as our renowned farmers' market or the statue atop our State Capitol's dome.

Isthmus has been described as a hybrid that, like the community it serves, defies easy labeling or simple description. It provides a weekly accounting of our lives with astute analyses, groundbreaking investigative reporting, and commentary of all stripes on who we are and who we want to be.

Isthmus' influence has spread beyond the pages of the paper. The Isthmus Annual Manual has become our guidebook to all that is good and helpful in our community; while the yearly Isthmus Jazz Festival has become a treasured weekend of good music and great moments.

On this 25th anniversary of Isthmus' founding, I applaud its talented and industrious staff, faithful advertisers, and devoted readers who have nurtured and supported this indispensable chronicle of our lives the past 25 years and we look forward to the next 25!

TRIBUTE TO ALACHUA ELEMENTARY SCHOOL'S 2001 QUIZ BOWL TEAM

HON. KAREN L. THURMAN

OF FLORIDA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, April 24, 2001

Mrs. THURMAN. Mr. Speaker, I wish to pay tribute to six remarkable elementary school students, Sam Hart, Ryan McCoy, Ashley Nelson, Paloma Paredes, Megan Raulerson, and Justin Sturm; their equally remarkable teacher, Shirley Tanner, and their school for triumphing in the 2001 National Thinking Cap Quiz Bowl.

Located in Alachua, a tiny city of approximately 5000 people, Alachua Elementary School serves less than 600 students. Principal Jim Brandenburg described the 106-year-old school as a "community school" and credited community involvement for the school's quality, explaining that: "Alachua is a very stable community. Many of our students' parents and grandparents also attended Alachua Elementary School. We don't have a lot of money but the parental involvement and community support help make up for that."

Alachua Elementary School is often referred to as "the little school that could." It has been honored as a Blue Ribbon School and recently