



COMPASS 101



Housekeeping

- **Use the Conversation Box for Questions** we will monitor the questions and answer as many as we can during the webinar
- **After the webinar** we will update the slides with questions and answers. We will email you the updated slides, and the slides will also be available on our website

Webinar Agenda

- ★ **Welcome**
- ★ Our History & Our Present
- ★ What We Do
- ★ How We Work
- ★ Sample Calls
- ★ Beyond the Calls
- ★ How to Refer to Us
- ★ How We Can Help You

Our Presenters

- **Jill Gichuhi** (pronounced gi - shoe - hey)
COMPASS Helpline Director
oversees helpline operations

Jill started with COMPASS in 2016, after 10 years of providing resources, training, and support in a various settings. She has trained in Intentional Peer Support, WRAP facilitation, and special education advocacy.

- **Lyndsay Thompson**
COMPASS Justice System & Diversion Navigator
focuses on supporting people at risk of interacting with the criminal justice system or who already have
- Lyndsay is a PhD Candidate, working towards a doctorate in criminal justice with a focus on domestic violence and victimization. She joined COMPASS in January 2019.*



Our Presenters

- **Neil Farbstein**
COMPASS Peer & Family Supports Navigator

helps with general COMPASS inquiries

Neil has been a part of COMPASS since January 2019. Before that, Neil worked as a peer supporter. He has attended in the G.I.F.T. (Gathering Inspiring Future Talent) peer mentor training.

- **Mary Harris**
volunteer COMPASS Navigator

helps with general COMPASS inquiries

Mary first got involved with NAMI Mass in 2013, when she attended a Family-to-Family class. She trained as a Family-to-Family teacher in 2014, and has been teaching since then. She joined the COMPASS team in 2016.



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Our History

- Before COMPASS, resource calls were answered by all NAMI Mass staff
- COMPASS was started in March 2014 to help standardize and professionalize our responses
- NAMI Mass received one-time grants and donations to get COMPASS going
- We received assistance from Health Care For All, and an advisory committee of stakeholders and other partners
- COMPASS trained its first volunteers in January 2015



Our Present

- COMPASS is now primarily funded by the Massachusetts Department of Mental Health
- We have a dedicated team of Navigators working on COMPASS
- Our Navigators = 3 paid staff and a team of volunteers
- All have experience navigating the mental health system for themselves or a family member
- We are available Monday - Friday, 9 am - 5 pm
- We handle 180+ inquiries each month



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What We Do

- COMPASS is an information & referral helpline
- We offer information to help people navigate the complex mental health system (and related systems)
- Helping people with resources, ideas, and next steps is #1 priority - often from a first-hand user perspective
- Although we are NOT a warmline, we try to provide support, empathy, validation, and compassion to all users

What to Expect

- When someone contacts COMPASS, they'll get:
 - to talk with a real person who's been there
 - empathy, validation, compassion, and support
 - resources and next steps to fit their needs
 - continued connection to a network of support, through NAMI education and support programs
 - confidence that the details of their situation will be kept private

What We Cannot Provide

- **a guarantee that we will always be available** - COMPASS simply is not a crisis line, but we do our best to respond as soon as possible
- **direct mental health care** - we are not mental health clinicians, but we can help people find mental health care
- **provider recommendations** - we do not maintain lists of therapists or psychiatrists, but we can provide tools and support to help someone find a provider
- **legal advice** - we are not attorneys, but we can refer to legal assistance in many areas

What We Cannot Provide

- **direct housing, employment, transportation, or financial assistance** - we can help people find programs for these and other needs
- **individual casework or advocacy** - we cannot meet with people in person or call someone or write letters on their behalf, but we can offer strategies for self advocacy and help people identify opportunities for care management
- **resources that are not available or do not exist** - resources are limited and many people are left with unmet needs, but we do our best to help find alternatives

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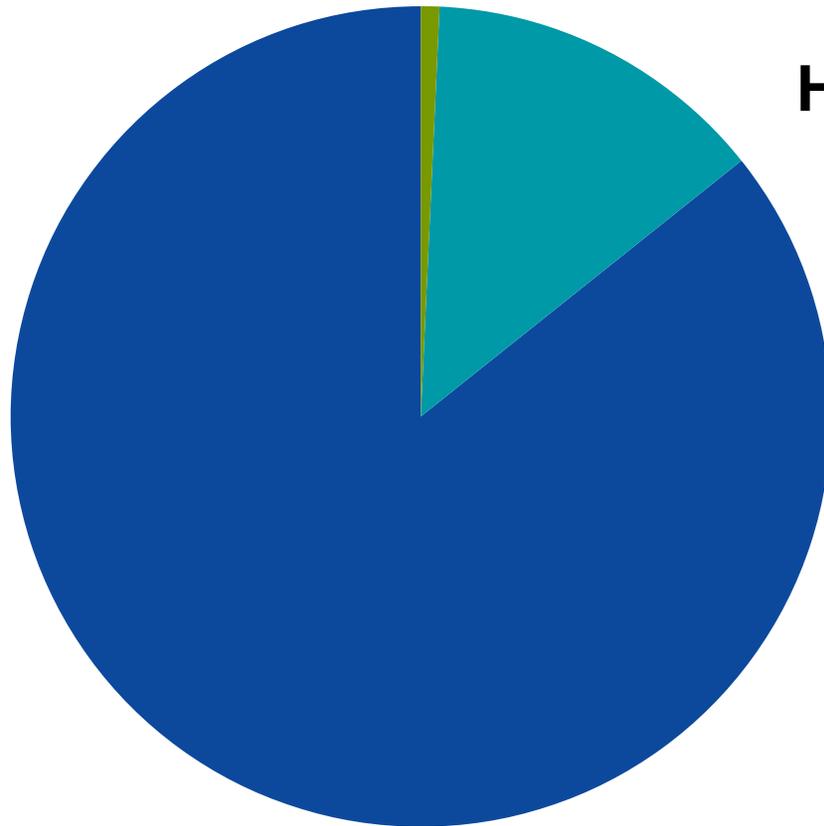
The Basics

- **Our Technology:**
 - **SalesForce** to log inquiries and manage resource information
 - **Outlook** for email
 - **OneDrive** to organize files
 - phones and computers, paper and pen
- **How people contact us:**
 - live calls and voicemails
 - emails sent directly to us, other staff, and affiliates
 - occasionally letters

The Basics

How People Contacted COMPASS

January - March 2019

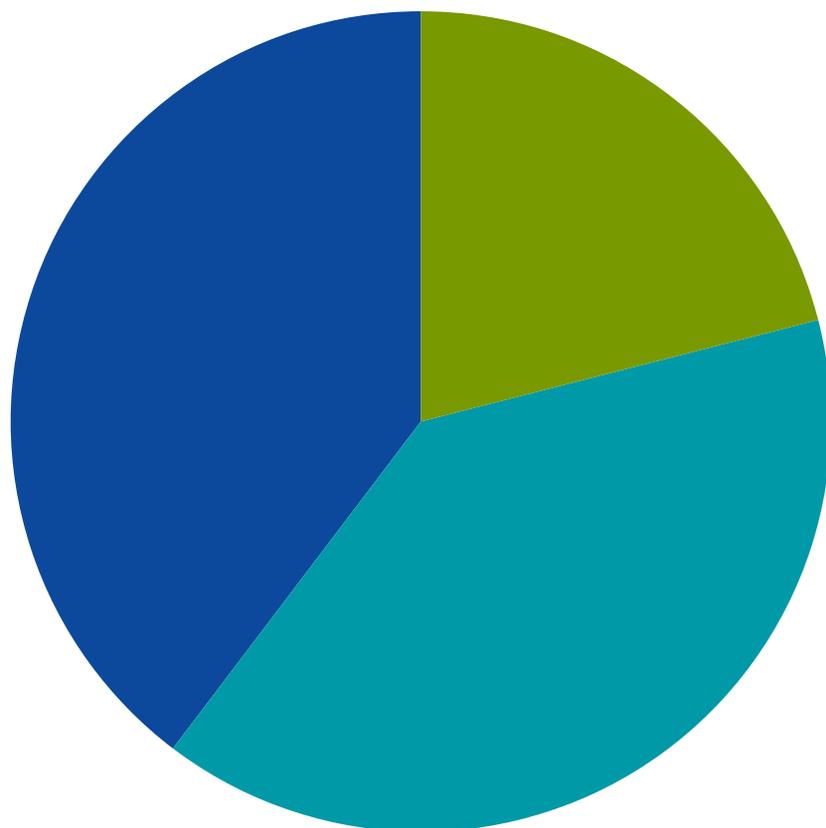


- calls
- emails
- letters

Who Contacts COMPASS

- people diagnosed with mental health conditions
- family members, friends, and other supporters
- clinicians, case managers, and health care providers
- NAMI affiliate and program leaders
- other information & referral services
- educators, law enforcement, legislators & aides, etc.
- Some people contact us just once, others reach out again when the situation has changed or new issues arise

Who Contacts COMPASS



Who Contacted COMPASS

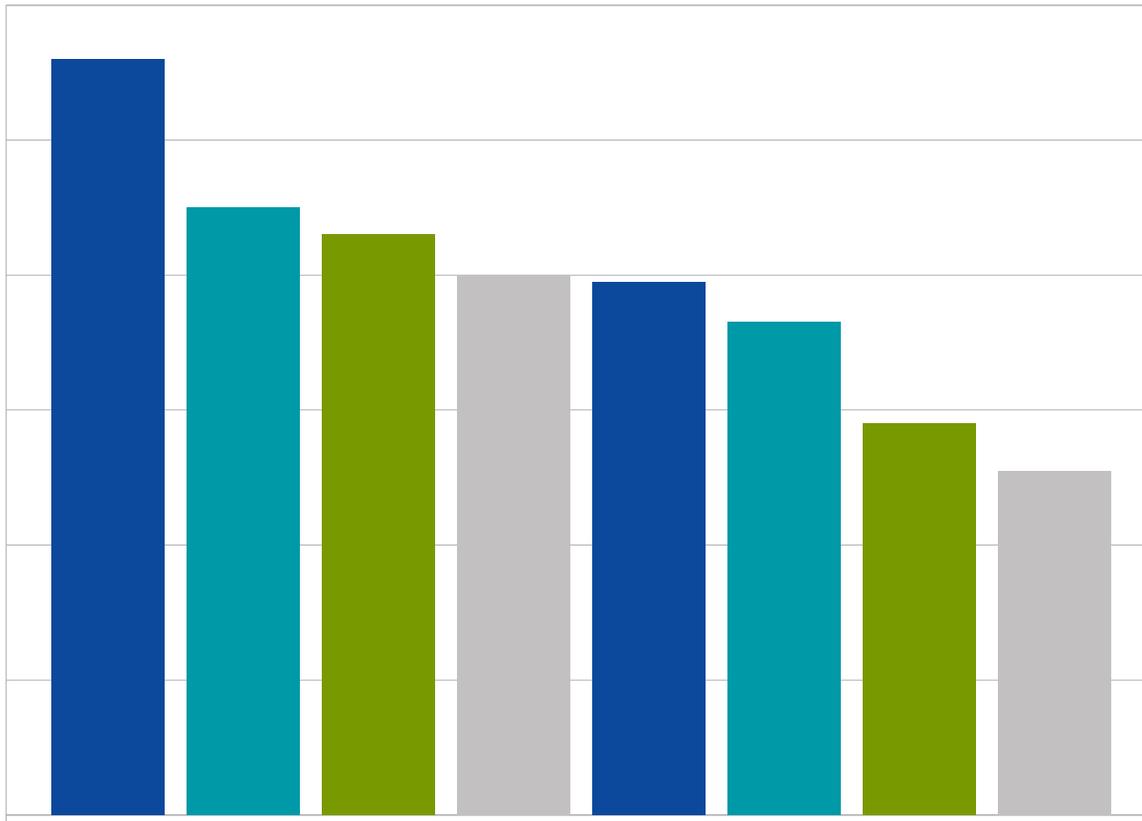
January - March 2019

- person with mental health diagnosis
- family member
- other

Why People Contact Us

- want information about NAMI programs
- looking for peer or family support
- want help finding treatment or providers
- have questions about insurance
- have questions about rights
- need help with the legal system, housing, benefits, employment, transportation, education, and more
- seeking a kindred spirit to make sense of chaos

Why People Contact Us



What People Contacted COMPASS About

January - March 2019

- family support
- NAMI Mass program
- finding a provider
- health insurance
- housing
- peer support
- DMH services
- inpatient treatment

Our Workflow

1. a person calls or emails COMPASS
2. we get basic context on the situation with intake questions
3. we help the caller identify concrete needs
4. we ask what they've already tried
5. we brainstorm with the COMPASS team, if needed
6. we offer immediate ideas, information, and resources
7. we offer to follow up by phone, email, or postal mail
8. we research and follow up as needed

Good to Know

- there is generally no time limit for calls - some are 3 minutes, some 60+ minutes
- we have basic intake questions we ask of all users - what city/town they live in, their health insurance, if they get support from the Department of Mental Health, etc.
- all questions are voluntary
- we report demographics to our funders, but never individual user information
- we keep individual user information private, unless we get permission from the user

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Finding Peer Support

Mike is having a hard time coping. His therapist is helpful, but sometimes she just doesn't get what he's going through. He wonders if there's anything like AA for people with mental health diagnoses.

Resources we are likely to suggest: Connection Peer Support Group, Recovery Learning Community

Special circumstances:

- has a specific diagnosis (depression, bipolar disorder, schizophrenia)
- is dealing with a specific experience (thoughts about suicide, unusual sensory experiences, co-occurring substance use)
- is 24 or under
- is getting support from DMH
- is coming out of long-term facility (hospital or incarceration)
- can't find an option close to home or looking for more support

Finding a Therapist

Maggie called about her 20 year old daughter Emma. Emma recently went through a difficult situation and is having trouble dealing with it. Emma would like someone to talk to. Maggie has been trying to help Emma find a therapist, with no luck.

Resources we are likely to suggest: Therapy Matcher, INTERFACE Referral Service, Psychology Today

Special circumstances:

- it's urgent or an emergency
- under 18 and trauma is involved
- under 21 and more support is needed
- looking for therapists with special training (CBT, DBT, etc.)
- tried all our ideas and still not finding someone

Finding Housing

Justin called about housing. He's 38 and has been diagnosed with bipolar disorder. He is living with his mom and it's just not working out. He gets SSDI benefits, so his income is limited.

Resources we are likely to suggest: local Independent Living Center (ILC), Housing Consumer Education Center (HCEC), or Community Action Program (CAP), 211, and searching on own

Special circumstances:

- getting support from DMH or likely to qualify
- is coming out of long-term care (hospital or nursing home)
- has children under 18
- is considered “chronically homeless”

For Every Call, We Try To...

- Validate difficult circumstances (that sucks)
- Normalize experiences (it makes sense you'd feel that way)
- Acknowledge steps already taken
- Give concrete next steps - resources, information, language to use, etc.
- Invite further contact

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Beyond the Calls...

- How we stay current on resources:
 - We use services ourselves
 - We talk to other people who use services
 - We talk to providers/organizations
 - We attend stakeholder meetings around the state
 - We research (ie google) when gaps exist
- We update our resource database with what we learn
- We make flowcharts and cheat sheets to help us help users

Beyond the Calls...

- We have updated the NAMI Mass website to make finding support easier – www.namimass.org
- We are creating brochures and handouts help people self-navigate common circumstances (like finding a provider or support group) - we hope to also offer webinars on these topics
- We use congregate data from calls to help inform the NAMI Mass advocacy platform, to provide system feedback, and for other advocacy efforts - we will continue to do this
- We are planning to complete formal needs assessments and surveys on common COMPASS call topics over the next year



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How to Contact Us

- COMPASS is open Monday - Friday, 9 am - 5 pm, excluding major holidays
- For helpline inquiries, use/share the COMPASS contact information:
 - **call** 617-704-6264 or 1-800-370-9085
 - **email** compass@namimass.org
- For questions about how we work, how you can work with us, quality issues/problems, etc., contact Jill:
 - **call** 617-580-8541
 - **email** jgichuhi@namimass.org



Referring People to COMPASS

- We love when program leaders and affiliates connect people with COMPASS! Keep it up!
- People are often dealing with difficult situations
- Whenever possible, please try to respect privacy and give people choice over when/how their story is shared
- In practical terms, please try to ask people before forwarding an email or voicemail or otherwise sharing personal details



Referring People to COMPASS

- You can say:
 - *...Those are the ideas that I have. I also want to suggest reaching out to the COMPASS helpline at NAMI Mass, as they may have some more ideas. Would you like their contact information?*
 - *I'm not sure I have a good answer to your question, and want to suggest reaching out to the COMPASS helpline at NAMI Mass. With your permission, I can... (give them your contact information, forward your email to them, etc.).*



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How We Can Help You

- Please continue to connect people with us - we will continue to connect people with you!
- If you have questions that come up frequently in your program on on your helpline - we can help you come up with a “standard” response
- We can share internal materials with you - cheat sheets and flowcharts - to help you improve your response
- We can share external materials with you - handouts and brochures - for you to share with participants
- How else can we help you?

Any More Questions?



Massachusetts

Questions...

Question: what is 2-1-1?

Answer: Mass 211 is an information and referral service that specializes in helping people meet basic needs. They can help people find emergency shelter, food resources, financial assistance, and more.

Mass 211

dial 2-1-1 or 1-877-211-6277

www.mass211.org



Questions...

Question: How does someone get a health care advocate?

Answer: We get asked this question frequently. We try to clarify what type of support people are looking for or what type of issue they are trying to resolve. Some resources we may suggest, based on their answers, include:

- care management through health insurance (especially MassHealth connected plans)
- behavioral health community partners (for people with MassHealth or DMH services)
- their local Independent Living Center

Questions...

Question: Are most of the resources that COMPASS shares on the NAMI Mass website?

Answer: No! We have 1300+ individual resource records in our database, and we are constantly updating the database with more. There's a lot more information and resources that we regularly share with people but have not yet added to the database

Our website is a good place to find some of the most common resources we share with people: www.namimass.org.

Questions...

Question: How long does it take to get back to people.

Answer: We answer most calls as they come in, but sometimes people still leave voicemails if they call after hours or when we're busy. Most voicemails are returned the same day or next business day, and we always try back at least twice. Our internal goal for returning voicemails is 48 hours. We have the same standard for returning emails.

Sometimes we cannot make out people's phone number on the voicemail or their email gets marked as spam by our system. If someone has not hear back from us within 48 hours, we encourage them to try again - and especially try calling.

Questions...

Question: Do we follow up with people after calls?

Answer: We often send people follow up emails or call people back after we talk on the phone with some additional information. We often will check in with people who are dealing with a difficult situation after a few days, by their request or with their permission. We do not do this for every call.

Questions...

Question: How can I get COMPASS materials?

Answer: Just ask! We are always happy to share COMPASS materials. We have pre-printed rack cards and business cards that provide a good overview of what we do.

If you want materials for an event, we suggest requesting at least two weeks ahead.

You can email Jill at JGichuhi@namimass.org with your name and address.



Thank You
For Attending!

