



Families & Friends Connect



Introductory Issue

You're invited!

All adult family members, friends or supporters of EASA participants are invited to join our group.

There are two ways to connect:

Sign up for the Family & Friends email Listserv for information updates by emailing orozcoi@ohsu.edu

Contact either Karma at clarkejung@ohsu.edu or Megan at sageme@ohsu.edu to be invited to the next meeting.

Our group meets virtually from 6:30 PM to 8:00 PM on the 4th Thursday of most months.

Questions?



Call 970-610-1529 to talk to Karma and find out more.

What We Do:

Powered with what we've learned through our own experiences in EASA, we meet regularly with two main missions:

#1 To provide opportunities for family members and friends of EASA participants to hear each others' stories and learn how others are navigating their journey.



#2 To support ongoing improvements to EASA

We work on projects such as:

- Promoting awareness in the community about EASA so families needing treatment and support for psychosis get help quickly
- Enhancing support for families and friends during their involvement in EASA
- Improving the process of transitioning out of EASA
- Encouraging support in the community for individuals and their families
- Advocating for EASA in the legislature



Our Mission is to help families experience the excellence of EASA

"We want every family served by EASA to leave the program with positive feelings, acquired life skills, and better outcomes for their child or loved one." – F&FLC Chair and Parent of EASA Participant

-Family and Friends Leadership Parent Participant in EASA

You're in Easa. Now What?

Welcome to EASA!

Just a short while ago, you had no idea EASA existed. But you've been assured that EASA can provide the help your family needs. No doubt, over the last few weeks or months, you've learned about things you've never thought about before and still don't fully understand – mental illness, HIPAA, psychosis, anti-psychotics, antidepressants, safety plans – the list goes on.

At the moment, everything may feel overwhelming. That's normal. So, take a deep breath, relax a little if you can, and think about what you want to know right now. Perhaps you have questions about scheduling appointments. Maybe you're curious what team-based care means. You may be wondering what EASA offers you, as a family member or friend. You might just want to know who to call when the next crisis hits.



Next week, next month, you'll have different questions and more of them. Don't worry about that. Just think about what you'd like to know today.

EASA is not like other mental health or medical services you might have encountered. In the US healthcare system, we often experience the doctor telling us what's wrong and how to fix it. EASA uses a shared decision-making process, and even though that's disorienting at first, it's exactly what will help you and your loved one. Your EASA Team members want to respond to the questions and needs you have, not the ones they think you should have. Psychosis leaves everyone feeling out of control. Being allowed to ask the questions that are most important to YOU, and then getting help answering them, is an important step toward recovering stability. As EASA Family and Friends alumni, we want you to know that you have

permission to ask anything! And there are answers to your questions.

The Family & Friends Connect newsletter is here to empower you and your loved one as you discover your own path toward stability and wellness. That path won't look like anyone else's because the shape of your family and the challenges you face aren't like anyone else's. For all the families, no matter the shape or form, there is a path forward, and it doesn't begin with experts telling you what to do. It begins with the questions you have today.



We're here for YOU! Tell us what topics you want covered in the next newsletter.
clarkejung@ohsu.edu

Getting Information within EASA

Get to know your EASA team

The team is there to help your loved one AND you. Let them know how best to communicate with you (phone, text, email), and ask them whatever questions you have. If they don't know the answer, they'll connect you with someone who does. If they can't answer, they'll tell you that too.

Talk to the doctor or nurse

Be specific, concise, and as organized as possible. If for any reason you cannot connect directly, one of the team members can pass

your question along and get information back to you.

Participate in Multi-Family Group

MFG focuses on problem-solving and communication, which are compromised skills in psychosis-related health conditions. MFG is an opportunity to interact with team members and other families in EASA. There's also a wealth of information in the families that started in the program before you.

Check out the EASA website

www.easacommunity.org.

Click on the **'For Families'** tab for great resources geared specifically towards family members of EASA participants. You'll find more information about this group (FFLC) there also! There may be a county specific EASA website where you live, too. Ask your EASA team about this, so you're in the know about local EASA activities.

