DBSA Medications & Perceptions Survey: Winter 2010
Question 4: Comments on Prescription Assistance
Formatted 3.14.11

04) Please write any additional comments here:
ALL PILLS MAKE ME FAT...
All these prescriptions make it hard to live on a limited budget
Ambilify gave me a card to help with monthly prescriptions.
As a family, we spend at least 20% of our income on medical costs, the biggest portions of that being insurance and prescription drug costs. Obviously, without insurance,we would spend more, as a number of our prescriptions cost more than 10 times our co-payments. We literally would be homeless if we had to pay for our prescriptions at cost.
As I live in Canada, I do not pay the entire cost for my medications. Our government provides a financial level, when reached, I no longer pay for my medication. While on a leave of absence, the cost for my medications caused me great concern. I have private insurance that pays 80% of my medication expenses, but that has a cost for me.
Astra Zenca has been awsome in suppling me with free sereqoul for the last 18 months. A model of benovelent corperate behavior.
Astra/Zenaca says on the television that they "may be able to help" you if you can't afford medication. You would have to be near starving for them to help. If you have any income--even if not substantial, you don't qualify. I kno they probably help some people, and I pray for these people to make a living out of whatever they do have. I realize that I am blessed in this area.
At the beginning of my treatment 9 years ago I was fortunate enough to be able to receive my meds free of charge at a state run psychiatric hospital.
At the time, about eight years ago, my doctor had to fill out a barrage of forms every month for me to be eligible to receive any benefit... it was a huge hassle. My doctor ended up just giving me samples. When the samples changed or were no longer available I stopped the medication. There's nothing like the humility that goes with having to beg for needed but cost inhibitive medications month after month. Some of the most effective drugs were not within my reach because of cost.
Before being added to the Medicaid system, my parents went essentially broke from paying for expensive atypical antipsychotics.
Before I received Medicare Part D, I had to rely on county mental health services and prescription assistance together for treatment of my biploar disorder. Now that I have Part D, I can usually afford the co-pays. Sometimes I get assistance with that from a community food bank as needed.
Before I was accepted into the Medicare Drug Plan I had a huge problem paying for my meds. I contacted each drug company and was amazed at all the help they had available to me. It made paying for my meds a ton easier & I was able to take them the way my doctor wanted me to.
benefits pick up tab
But I have gotten assistance for people in my social support group.
combination of rx wellbutrin cymbalta abilify lamitcal klonopin addarall trazadone
Consider: Enough assets to live on and be disqualified for assistance, but not enough for health insurance; expensive meds purchased at the expense of other needs. Thank God for generics.
Cost has forced me to change to an older, less effective med at times. Plus, newer is NOT necessarily better. For people with mild to moderate depression, talk therapy can be the most effective approach! Different tools work for different people. Throw the words 'good' and 'bad' out the window - I just want what works for me.
Cost of drugs being a barrier of treatment to me is the fear of falling into the doughnut hole in Part D of Medicare (which has happened to me in the past); therefore, I practically only use generics.
Could not get a responce
Currently I have medicare and medicaid and my bipolar and my diabetic meds only run me about $15 to $20 a month. Prior to receiving my SSDI check, I worked through 2 or 3 different medical companies. I paid nothing for my medicine, it was a true lifesaver since I had absolutely no income.
DBSA support group has been my greatest source of information regarding my illness and all aspects relating to the path to wellness.
disAbility Resource Center taught me how to wrtie an appeal to Medicare, as well as explained the steps of the process.
Doctors always should suggest the first and second options for medications based in costs
Doctors should be educated in, and provide patients with, other options that compliment, supplement, or can be tried in place of medications -- including counseling and peer support -- especially when they are prescribing medications that have potential side effects that are worse than the symptoms they are being prescribed to treat. DOCTORS SHOULD ALWAYS TELL PATIENTS WHEN SUICIDAL THINKING IS A POTENTIAL SIDE EFFECT OF ANY MEDICATION THAT IS PRESCRIBED. I BELIEVE IT IS MALPRACTICE NOT TO DO SO.
drs who prescribe these medications should be ordered to go over the horrific side effects that long term use of anti phsychotic meds can cause such as Tardive Dyskensia. NOt all the little ones that are basic for most medications. They even prescribed me a med {benzptropine}, for the side effect of involuntary muscle movement and twitches, which has a side effect of guess go ahead guess they did the same to my daughter who is a minor. The side effect; involuntary muscle movement. Amazing huh?
Due to the expense of some medications, I have had to go without or at a decresed dose.
E.g., Lithium is a natural substance and cannot be patented. So, it took money from the APA to do the studies necessary to obtain FDA approval. Drug companies were'nt intersted because of no return on investment. But, it should remain the mood stabilizer of choice: most effect; anti-suicidal effects; cheap. But other drugs have been introduced (e.g., Tegretol -- which on patent was/is not as effecatios as lithium. I could mention other prevelant conditions where as soon as a patent goes of, there is a rush to introduce new drugs -- no better -- with great marketing strategies.
Effexor(I think the manufacturing company) has financial help for people taking their medication. They pay for a lot of it.
Even with insurance the copay for my husband's Seroquel is $250 - I am the caregiver for 56 yr old husband with extreme bipolar I, I have to hide the finances from him or he would see that and quit taking it. We have Medicare and Blue Cross Blue SHield
For several years I relied on samples received at my treatment facility because of prohibited cost. This situation has been remedied by my insurance company.
Fortunately the clinic I use has a person who is designated to help patients receive assistance from the pharmaceutical companies. If this were not possible, I would not be able to purchase the medication I need.
Get my Seraquel for free.
Have looked up pharmaceutical companies offers and find the qualifications almost impossible to meet and one of the medications requires me to be on medical while another will not give me medication if I am on medical.
I also have a gene that has caused several kinds of cancer. Recently, I was advised by a cancer specialist that Lithium may contribute to my cancer history. It has kept me stable, more or less, since 1974 and I am afraid to switch medications. Do you know of any research in this area?
I am a service connected disabled Veteran, and as such, i get my meds through the VA, with out cost to me. I know that I am very lucky!!
I am blessed to still have company-provided insurance, at no cost to me, even though I am on disability. How long that will last, who knows.

04) Please write any additional comments here:
I am covered under my ex-husband's insurance plan, and I lose my benefits if I choose to re-marry (my fiance does not have health coverage). I wish I could function without medication so this would not be an issue.
I am currently able to use generic medications. That's why cost is not a big issue. Some of the newer medications that some would find beneficial are very expensive, and I'm sure cost is a factor for many individuals.
I am currently getting my treatment on a sliding scale fee and I believe the meds I get are just the ones the companies can help with but I wish to God I could get better care,
I am currently using the Bridges To Access program through GlaxoSmithKline for my lamictal.
I am disabled and on Medicaid so the government pays for my medications.
I am eligilbe for Medicare and the Part D medication is so expensive that it is cheaper to stay on my husband's insurance.
I am fortunate enough to have a Medicare Advantage HMO, which covers all my medications, including psych medications. I have referred many people without insurance or means to needymeds.com, or to a clinic in my area tha offers sliding-scale meds.
I am fortunate to be married to a husband with excellent health care coverage. I hear stories of people who have to make decisions about which medications to cut out (even though it effects their functioning ability) in order to pay there survival expenses. This is the case of one of my good friends. If something happens to my husband I don't know how to protect assets or if I even can under current laws. I could lose almost everything and be kept at a poverty level.
I am fortunate to have very good medication insurance coverage.
I am just to the point that the stuff is just costing more than what I can afford starting in January 2011.
I am lucky and also work hard to keep my full time job and benefits. I really would be sunk without them and don't know what I would do if I lost my job.
I am lucky to have health insurance that covers my prescriptions, but even with insurance, the cost is sky-high. If I didn't have insurance, I don't think I'd be able to get my medication, even the generics. The only way I'd be able to get them would be through samples at the doctor's office.
I am not on disability so when I wasn't working it was hard to pay for my medications. I had to borrow money from family/friends.
I am not well without my rxs! Was suicidal and very emotional! Went without 4 a little while~ran out. I was a mess!!! Thank goodness I can have my stability. Thank goodness.
I am now on Medicare with help from the state on my medication co-pays.
I am on disability with a fixed income and find that my medications cost me after my insurance approximately $350.00/month. At times I am unable to pay this so I wait until I get my next cheque to fill my prescription. This is really bad for my disease (bipolar).
I am on medicade which allows me to get all meds for a small co-pay. I acouldn't possibly afford them without medicade.
I am one of the luck ones with a great health plan with prescription coverage.
I am quite fearful when deciding to take psychiatric medications. I have seen family members and friends really succumb to what I call the "medication shuffle." I think it is a shame that some people have to endure rigorous trial and error to find the right medications but that is their personal chioce. I feel the psychiatrist one is working with and perscribing meds for the individual should be vigilant and truely listen to their patient to avoid overmedicating people to the point where it stiffels thier ability to act as who they are. For me ideally I like to carefully incorporate, discuss and get feedback from others peers when deciding to try new medications. Also, my psychiatrist knows I am in charge and acts as a partner in my recovery. There is no question that psyh meds are dangerous and risky but some people attribute much of their success in deciding to take them. It is a personl chioce we just need to be informed consumers and working with caring individuals who have our best intrests in mind.
I am unable to take the meds I need because I cannot afford them. I am currently having issues due to being out of 1 of my meds and not able to pay for more. I also have tried to make some meds last longer by only taking 1 pill a day rather than the 3 pills a day that is prescribed.
I am very fortunate to have a job with a good prescription plan. That said, i spend upwards of $500/year for my meds, and that doesn't include supplements like fish oil.
I am very fortunate to have excellent health insurance through spouse's employment that covers my meds....And grieve that so many people in our society do not have this same basic right.
I attempted to obtain assistance and had great difficulty completing the application process. It was not user-freindly and I became frustrated and gave up.
I believe that psychiatric medications lessen the severity of the disorder. I have Bipolar I and while off meds I ruined my life as it was. While on meds I became more functional and was able to get things done.
I benefited a "great deal" after kicking forth with a $600.00 co-pay to the Glaxo Smith-Kline patient assistance program. This is about 1/2 of my monthly SSDI payment. I asked them why their co-pay amount was so high and their represantative aswered "Well we have to charge you something!"
I benefitted greatly with the assistance while waiting for my SSI/Disability with Medicaid to kick in. I was thankful for this as well as a few churches in my community to help with this problem.
I buy generic and purchase the ones I can from Canada. No Insurance
I can only take my medications if I have financial assistance, they are outrageously expensive, all of them.
i changed insurance, and one of my medications was not approved. dr did not have samples (he's given me samples for years, so i knew he was telling the truth). i appealed for assistance to the drug's maker which said that if a person had any other insurance coverage of any kind, he/she would be denied. i was forced to go from the maximum dose of the medication (which really was helping!) to 0grams per day, which was a terrible health nightmare.
I currently do not have health care. I take 5 medications a day for Bipolar II. I am currently using the www.pparc.org and www.rxoutreach.com and AstraZeneca Prescription Assistance Programs. I would not be able to continue purchasing/taking my meds without the assistance.
I don't qualify for help from Pharmaceutical companys on drug costs because I am over the limit income wise..but my drug costs are outrageous.
I feel I must comment about question 18. I have been helped by psych meds and permanently harmed. I took lithium for bipolar and it helped to stabilize me and it gave me chronic kidney disease. SSRI's have pushed me into mania, mixed states, severe anxiety and psychosis. Some anti-psychotics have actually caused psychosis. Some mood stabilizers routinely caused mood instability. I am presently stable and take no medication, for the first time i 20 years. I am disabled through SSDI and live very simply. I spend all of my time managing my self care so that I can live without meds. It is a strange life. I don't trust meds anymore so must live the best I can without them, yet I can't manage the stress of regular life so must live quietly and separately in retirement.
I feel the fewer meds you and take in compliance is the key to wellness.
I get all my medication from the Veterans Affairs Hospital. I have a nine dollar copay, unless I can't afford it, in which case it is waived. I may skew your results.
I get assistance from the state I live in, if I ever lose that I will be in trouble with getting my medications and they are expensive.
I get my medication through medicare through Humana. It cost me nothing if I use geniric. I do.
I go through a local sliding scale clinic.
i go to a community hospital as i have no medical aid and medication is a fortune. it works for me, but need to endure LONG ques and frustration from government rubbish/procedures.
I go to cicles of care here in Melbourne, Fl. because of my emlpoymnet status and past talking about wanting to die to friends. .one friend took me to hos. they sent me to crcles of care
i had a little trouble because a staff member of the mental health center once did not file paperwork in a timely mannner so I could get my free pills and so I had to either buy some myself or do without.

04) Please write any additional comments here:
I hate taking my meds due to side effects but I have no choice. I wish shrinks could take them and then see what it's really like.
I have a card for Effexor. But, I haven't tried to use it yet. It's not time to refill my prescription.
I have a Grady Card for a local charity hospital that enables me to obtain my medications. If it were not for this card I would be unable to afford them.
I have a small co-pay.
I have applied to many different programs with varying results: 1.The program vouchers were not accepted in many places. 2.The medication was still too expensive because my dosage was above what they would cover. 3.The voucher was limited in access only from my doctor monthly so I had to pay the deductable and office charge just to get the meds refilled.
I have assistance from my states Medicaid plan.
I have at times been able to get significant quantities of meds thru assistance programns witht help of my doctor.
I have been able to get coupons for discounts.
I have been able to survive some difficulties in the past five years or so, due to family illness and the onset of diabetes for me, and personal problems, deaths, due to to the miraculous treatment with lithium for bipolar disorder. Bu I am very tired and many of the problems are others', which I cannot resolve.
I have been blessed with the help of the Government through Medicare and MassHealth and SSDI--disability income, so I have been lucky to have these services available to me. BUT I definately would seek help from the pharmaceutical co.'s if it was nessecary.
i have been in a position over the years to assist others in obtaining many types of support for their MH concerns. assistance from pharmaceutical companies was just one of them. in many cases it helped in various degrees from life saving to minor help. i have never had to use it personally but have helped my daughter and many others to take advantage of this critical resource.
I have been lucky enough to obtain many samples from my doctors to keep me going during tough times. Especially when ai was out on unpaid medical leave from work
I have been more harmed then helped by medications. After 36 years of bipolar disorder, I am finally on a cocktail of drugs that are not harming me. I have to take 5 different classes of drugs a day. But it is worth it since they work.
I have been on medication for bipolar disorder and/or depression for about 14 years-starting when I was about 14. Recently, I went off my medication. At first it was by accident- I had a busy summer and didn't get my mail order prescription sent in when I needed to. Then, after being without my two mood stabilizers, for about a week and a half I decided it might be a good time to try going off my meds. After 2 months of no incidents I told my parents and doctor. I know I didn't go about it the right way, but right now I am happy with my decision. I'm now more focused on practicing yoga, incorporating what I learned in DBT/CBT as well as diet and sleep. I feel like I am finally getting to know myself. My problems started during adolescence when identity crises seem to peek- being on meds was like having a 14 year identity crisis. I'm open to going back on them if necessary, but I'm hoping my awareness keeps that from happening.
I have been on several medications since being diagnosed with bi-polar, some have made me gain weight and others have made me feel as if I'm living in a fog, just going through the motions. I realize I need them, I just wish they didnt have the traumtic side effects and they could get the right medication and dose for me.
I have been one of the fortunate ones who has insurance from work that pays enought that I can barely pay the $2,000+ a year that my medications cost. If I had to pay more of the total $35,000 O just wouldn't be able to afford it. Recently I had to stop working and go on permanent disability due to the Bipolar II and Anxiety I've suffered since childhood. How finances work out on disability now remains to to be seen, but it is obviously going going to be much more difficult. I've had my psychiatrist change me to as much generic as possible. I don't know what I'll do if I can't get my medications - I guess I'll relapse and have a poor quality of life. I think it is wonderful that drug companies are offering the meds free or at a reduced rate. I may have to make that request of them when I can longer scrape by.
I have been treated for BP 1 for over 30 years. (I'm now 70 yrs old). I have been very fortuate that with the help of my psychiatrist, my medications, and about five hospitalizations, I have been able to live a relativly normal life. Although I was able to work until retirement at age 60, my disase did adversely impact my earnings.
i have good insurance
I have had extreme difficulties in obtaining my psychiatric medications prior to getting to work with a scholarship medication coordinator at the clinic I receive care. There have been many times that I have gone without my psych meds because I didn't have insurance or the financial means to pay for them and I did not have access to either scholarship medication or samples. Right now, I get all my psych meds on scholarship or free from the clinic I go to. Without these services, I would not be able to be on meds.
I have health insurance which covers my medication.
I have insurance but the copay is high for the meds I need.
I have insurance, so I'm ineligible for many assistance programs, but even the copays can be too expensive for a limited income.
I have just recently lost my medical insurance. Before that, I had no trouble affording my prescriptions. Now, (being unemployed) I am having to either go off some of my medications because I don't have a doctor to refill them, or finding low-cost alternatives for the ones that have refills left. I will also have to find a free mental health clinic for a doctor & a therapist, because my bipolar disorder is flaring up again, probably due to stress & lack of medical care. I have been unable to find employment in the last 2 years, partially due to my illness, partially due to the economy.
I have looked into assistance from pharmaceutical companies, but I do not qualify. It's upsetting to be told that my household makes "too much money" to receive help. My insurance won't cover one of my medications (Nuvigil), which costs $350.00 for 30 pills.
I have looked into these assistance programs, but do not qualify because I have prescription coverage. I am grateful for this coverage, but sometimes cannot afford the copay.
I have needed to ask for monetary assistance rom pharmaceutical companies but have been so sick that I couldn't wait for their answer so I had to borrow the money from friends in order to get my medicine right away. I never was able to pay them back.
I have never sought help directly from the pharmaceutical companies but I have at times been totally sustained by free samples given to me by the doctor but donated to him by the pharmaceutical company.
I have on occasion given a list of 800 #'s to people whom had started working and needed to use the pharmaceutical company's for help!
I have taken SSRIs for a few years, but had a suicide attempt this year as I was not correctly diagnosed. The SSRIs threw me into a mixed episode as I am bipolar and didn't know it. I would quit taking the SSRIs as they were too expensive, especially considering the doctors fees were $75 a visit. The doctor visits would make me quit, not the drugs.
I have the $50 copay card directly from the company that produces Depakote.
I have to a goverment program to see a psychiatric for meds. They are way over booked with mostly adiction and is hard to get appt. they think we all have addiction problem. my ins.through my county dose not cover any of the newer drugs. the drugs they do I haven't found one that dosen't make me sick. now they are repeating the ones that didn't work the frist time. I'm trying to learn how to live with bipolar on my own. It's seems hopeless I just get worse. I'm 50 years old and has had it sence grade school just didn't know what was wrong with me. I didn't tell anyone I just wanted to be like the other kids. I went through so many doc. My life has gotten so bad I can't support my self I owe so much money now it's hopless. I'm afriad of what is going to happen to me. everyone has their owen problems let alone help me.
I know many friends who face great difficulty in paying for their psychiatric medications.
I live in Germanyand my health insurance pays for my medications except for a small fee.
I qualify for food stamps.

04) Please write any additional comments here:
I received help from a PAP until I got Medicare. Even though my income did not increase, and cost of Medicare drug plans is very high, I was no longer eligible for help from the pharmaceutical company.
I received help with 3 of my psych meds
I received helpful information when I was encountering some problems. In one instance, they identified for me the pharmaceutical company who made a generic medication a pharmacy tried to convince me to take; I was already having difficulties switching from one generic to another generic medication just made by another company.
i recievd some samp;es from a county mental health clinic also discounted med fron script express. however my income at that time was very low and i was not covered through work insurance due to the monthy premium of $1200.00 per month
I rely on samples of Zyprexa from my pdoc. But for the samples I would not take the drug, could not afford it. May it go generic!
I saved $720 in co-pays from a medication card for an ADD drug, Focalin. That was a big help, as my co-pays are about $180 for all my meds. Only two are brand names, and the rest are generic.
I sought assistance back in 2001 for two meds I was taking at the time. One company sent me only one months supply and would not respond to anymore inquiries for me, and the other wouldn't even respond. That was a long time ago and I hear that things are much different now.
I spend more than $200 per month on my medicines and about $200 per month on my husband's medicines. This is with Blue Cross Blue Shield PPO.
I spend over $200 in medicine for my bipolar disorder and that is with my insurance. I am spending $150 for medical, dental and eye insurance. This is actually COBRA and only half of what it should be. One point in time in my career I quit a job and did not have the choice for COBRA, I had to pay over $700 and more for a 1 month prescription. Sometimes I did not take my meds because I did not have any money so I would get very sick. I have had to support on my parents for hundreds of dollars when they need to be paying for their mortgage and such. Even some of the generics are expensive and my deduticbles are high.
I struggle to find a balance when using a medication in relation to the effects it has and the side effects I encounter.
I take Abilify and the cost is over the top. I have COBRA insurance, so my medicine is covered. However, many people with a mood disorder are unable to work, so many go without these drugs, which is unfortunate.
I take Depakote & Strattera with assistence from the pharmacutical companies. It helps me.
I take gabitril and it is expensive and so I am on a lower dose than my doctor would like due to cost.
I take Geodon and Abilify which are the the glue that keeps my psychological wellness possible. I am a disability recipient and live on a fixed income. It took years of trial and error to find the combination of meds that would give me back my sanity. I receive Medicare and I am in the dreaded "donut hole" once again. This time is different because my doctor does not get as many samples as he did in the past and likely will not be able to help me. so I am asking my insurance company to make an exception because the alternative is pschosis, total inability to function and ultimately hospitalization. I do not know what is going to happen. I can only hope.
I take Lithium Eskalith 450 mg i now need a higher dose due to symptoms worsening; was previously on 900 and 1200 mg of regular lithium, the dose amount caused major side effects and so preferred lowering the dose even at the risk of manic depressive symptoms returning. I also take a 1/4 dose or 5mg of celexa no noticeable change: possibly need a higher dose. Major issues pertaining are depression, anger, suicide tendencies, and schizophrenia.
I take Lithium, which is generic. It helps keep me from getting manic or depressed, even though I am dealing with real life problems. I have a W card from Wallgreens so the cost is less than $1 per day. The cost of the new drugs would be a burden to me.
I think any 'special offers' that I haven't asked for; (i.e., I sent in a request, etc.) should NOT come to me in the mail but instead should be from my pharmacist or physician.
I think one of the biggest issues i faced was being over medicated after first being diagnosed and than the trial and error of "if" the medication will prevent a relapse or if it is working at all.
I think that medication assistance is advertised by Pharma, and it probably is part of positive public relations, but when you have to jump through so many hoops, medication assistance is basically unavailable.
I think the newer doctors tend to "push" the newer medications, especially general practioners, they get samples of drugs and so they tend to prescribe them more. My pyciatrist is from the Menninger Clinic and he tends to agree I have tried several medications for my bipolar and anxiety disorder, The most effective have been lithium (in small doses every other night-600mg) and trazadone, 50 mg at night and up to 4 times a day as needed.
I tried to get help to buy medication once I hit my Medicare Part D gap. That is when I have the hardest time purchasing meds. The drug said I had insurance even though it wasn't paying and they could not help me.
I tried to get my psychiatrist to sign paperwork to get one of my meds free, but she was difficult to work with. She charged me a fee per page of paperwork, which was not nice. And, the manufacturer wanted her to attach a prescription for 6 months of medication - which she was reluctant to do, in case I overdosed and then sued her for malpractice. (I have zero history of drug abuse.) I just gave up on trying to get the subsidized help.
I truly hate the weight gain side effect of them. I don't feel pretty while I am compliant on medication and do wish that medication without this side effect could be formulated. I can handle any other side effect but the weight gain which is detrimental to my self esteem.
I was able to get all of my medicines for free from the drug companys. I have never been more greatful in my entire life. Now I am seen at the Mental Health Center in Baton Rouge and they get the meds from the companies and a doctor and social worker give them to me there.
I was given an initial approval and one month's supply and then told I didn't qualify after all. I then had to change the medication I was on to something I could better afford.
I was on abilify at the time costing about $300 per month. The PAP turned me down. I had to purchase from a subsidize pharmacy. I could only purchase 4 pills per week which I took only on the days I had to work.
I was on Seroquel XR. I was paying upwards of $400/month for my meds. That was half of my husband's paycheck. If it hadn't been for the assitance program I would have had to go off my meds.
I was told that I need to have an income that is no more that 133% of poverty level.
I was turned down due to the fact that the medication was not recognized as a medication "normally" used in treatment of depression.
I wish more than anything, that I DIDN'T have this illness.
I work full time and have good insurance and try to buy Generics where possible.
If I did not have insurance, cost would be a huge barrier for me to take my meds. And while, it is not a barrier, it is still a substantial cost. The cost of my psychotherapy (which is ESSENTIAL with my meds to keep me productive and functioning), monthly visits to my psychiatrist combined with the co-pays of my meds costs easily exceed 10,000 and that is with insurance. (I have a diagnosis of bipolar II with anxiety)
If I didn't have pharmaceutical assistance I would not have the medications I need to maintain the mental health stability that I have achieved over the past year and a half. Even with the medication assistance I receive, I struggle because I have to pay for my medical and psychiatric appointments at full cost on a limited income and the only way I am able to do this is through my savings and will not be able to continue to do this in a few months. There is not enough space on the remainder of the questions regarding the pharmaceutical co's!
If I didn't have the insurance I do, I would not be able to afford my medications. As it is, the co~pays are a bit much.

04) Please write any additional comments here:
If I didn't have their assistance, I would have not been able to take my medicine. Last year I was working for a day labor place, Labor Ready, and when I got paid each day I went to the pharmacy to pay for one pill, sometimes 2. Each pill cost me $23 dollars and $16 a piece if I bought 2. That was the only way to get my medication. I really don't understand why the pills cost so much. One of the pills I am on is Effexor XR and I HAVE to have my medication or I end up in hospital with motor skill problems, crying, and just general withdraw symptoms for missing a pill. I am on Medicaid and Medicare now with Part D. Thank God I do not have to worry about the medication. just see the amount they pay each month on my medications, and I do not understand why they cost so much, yet I have to have them no matter what.
If I ever lose my health insurance I will not be able to afford the psychiatric medications I take - two mood stabilizers, one antidepressant, and one anti-anxiety. I don't know what my options would be in that case.
If I were not taking my medication, I would be extremely manic and it would destroy my life. So no matter how much I dislike the side effects and hate med changes, it beats the alternative. I've also watched many friends decide to get off all medications and become very sick. Just because we don't want to have to take meds, doesn't make it so.
If medications were too expensive I would just ask my dr to change meds
If my Bipolar weren't completely disabling, I would not be able to afford my medications. Medicare and Medicaid cover my prescriptions.
If not for PA programs I would be unable to take the drug that is most effective in stablizing my moods on a long term basis. Especially the never versions such as extended release types. I was able to make the switch to a XR and it has made a tremendous improvement for me. I could not have done this without the PAP.
If private insurance or any insurance doesn't cover rx4 type drugs...life would be worse.
I'm afraid that this assistance will not be available next year because of the new health car system.
I'm Bipolar, and my psychiatrist has had to change antidepressants many times, because after awhile the one I'm on ceases to be effective. Fortunately for me, after being with a "witch doctor" I was referred to my present doctor who is very flexible--if one medication doesn't seem to help, she immediately changes me to something else until we find something that works.
In 2001, got meds from counseling clinic free samples of Paxil; later add on Depokate. Told my case couldnot be treated and discharged. Never told me I had Bipolar Disorder. Unable to get better medicines in 2003-2005. Paid for Lithium and Tegretol. Too manic, impatient and irritated to follow up with US Pharma. MD's never assisted with obtain unaffordable meds. My psch. clinic gave me free samples of best meds in 2005. Discharged from 15 days in hospital with ability to get meds and/or apply for Pharma assistance. I would like to see patients get appplications in hospital. Went to subsized NYC Hospital Corp. for meds....before Obama Stimulus $30. (since unemployed sometimes didn't have money) After Obama paid $6 for Lamictal, Lithium ER, Seroquel. Now received Penn. Medicaid for free meds, great preventive health care and dental. I see psychiatrist once monthly and weekly social work therapy. I have estranged wife's Blue Cross/Shield which I used to get $25 lamictal. Unable to get treatment due to Dr. co-payment. This insurance is for castrastropy coverage out of PA. c
In general, I have found most medications to be relatively ineffective for treating my symptoms. Some medications such as many anti-depressants made my symptoms significantly worse. I haven't been on any medications for 5 years now and my symptoms have been much less severe than they ever have been. I attribute my improved health to a low carb diet, fish oil supplements, and lower stress levels.
In my current job I have insurance that helps with medication costs. The need for this insurance has been a factor when considering whether I could ever leave this job/ become self-employed. I could most likely make enough money to cover basic expenses, but paying full-price for meds would be very difficult.
In the past I had considerable financial struggles to buy medication for my daughter and myself. Not a problem right now.
In times I lack Medicaid or Medicare, I try for help from agencies or pharmicudicals. Otherwise, I do without.
It is always worth filling out an application to see if you qualify for assistance, you never know what the result will be.The worst thing that can happen is the company will not approve your request.
It is difficult to obtain assistance if you have a drug plan. However, even if you have a drug plan co-pays can be extremely expensive especially with alot of mood stabilization medications.
It is only not a barrier because I have Medicaid and Medicare, due to my psychiatric disabilities. If I had to pay out of pocket, there is NO way I could afford my meds.
It still cost me some money, that I did not have, but I was thankful to get what I could.
It wasn't an issue when I was working, but now that I'm on disability I can no longer afford my meds. Since I'm married, they will count my husband's retirement income against me, so I don't qualify for help, but I make too little on SSDI to afford them. A real Catch-22.
It would be a great asset to allow these companies to help out people. Our government should stay out of the way of commerce helping citizens.
It would be a great barrier for anyone who does not have any health insurance. The medications are so expensive.
it would depend on which medications. The doctors would be limited in choices because not all would give assistance
its a program, they offer one free box for every 3 boxes i buy
Just ask if you need help or favors. There are plenty of lonely bipolars just waiting to help anyone do anything. Been a Psych RN for eighteen years and the best advice I can give you is never take an antipsychotic for mood stabilization - Seroquel will give you Freddie Kruger Dreams, Abilify and Risperdal will make you have urinary incontinence within the first month. Most of all - stay away I mean AWAY from any psychiatrist who tries to prescribe Zyprexa. Not only did I gain a lot of weight, it does that and I got to a trim 330 pounds before I had a little talk with him and said you better be on my side from now on and don't EVER prescribe a dangerous, embarassing or weight gaining med to me again. Needless to say I was fired from his practice and I had been a patient since 1996.
Luckily we have flex spending acct from my husband work. the problem is we run out in Aug or Dept and then we have to pay for them. Most of my meds come in generics thankfully.
Many of the drug companies were able to provide my perscriptions for free or very cheap. However, the longevity of these programs is not yet decided. I had to fill out a lot of paper work, and so far I only pay out of pocket for the medication that is already generic. I don't have insurance and don't qualify for medicare, so without these programs I don't know if I would be were I am right now.
Medical card does not cover a lot of the medications.
Medicare helps me with my meds. They would be over $200/month without Medicare. They are $10/month with it. I tried every type of therapy before getting on good medications. I tried cognitive, basic talk therapy, primal scream desensitization, and other therapies for seizures, OCD and manic-depression. Only medications helped me. And since it is not an option in this survey, I want to say that I got most of my info' about medications from journals of psychiatry & books about my condition at the library, then discussed these with my MD and therapist.
Medication provided free on the NHS in the UK
Medications saved my life.
Most recently I was unable to get assistance. I did get assistance once years ago. This question could have been worded better. The next question is ambiguous. Does it mean that I simply didn't take the meds, or that I took them in a way that was other than how I was directed to?
My doctor gave me samples and coupons whenever possible.
My doctor gave me vouchers for zyprexa which as you know is extremely expensive.
my doctor has also helped me and my family with free sample meds for extended periods of time;
My employer will be switching to a new insurance carrier, and I'm very concerned about the cost of my medications in the future. I'm afraid that I won't be able to afford them, and that scares me for my mental health.
My employment benefits adequately cover my needs.

04) Please write any additional comments here:
My entire family has benefited from the invaluable life-saving support of psychiatric medications, treating bipolar/depression. Talk therapy and other treatments have been very helpful, but without mood stabilization through medication, nothing would have worked. I don't understand why there is so much more controversy over these medications than there is for insulin, cancer medications, etc. The answer, of course, is stigma.
My husband has excellent insurance with good drug benefits. Even so, the co-pays are significant. If he lost his job, there is no way we could pay for them out-of-pocket at retail price.
My husband makes too much, I am on disability, and we have 3 kids in college, i am dead weight
My husband works overseas and we have not kept our taxes up to date. I cannot prove income so cannot apply for a lot of services.
MY INCOME WAS EASILY WITHIN RANGE, BUT EVEN THOUGH MY INSURANCE DIDN'T COVER THE MEDICATION THAT I NEEDED, I COULDN'T GET ASSISTANCE BECAUSE I DID HAVE INSURANCE.
My medication is free through the VA and minimal cost with my insurance.
My medications have been very expensive. My mom always found a way to get them. Sometimes she got samples and otherwise put them on her credit card. I am now on medicaid so that has helped with my meds.
my meds have been a great source of wellness for me ablify lamitcal cymbalta tradzone has been a great balance
My meds, primarily depakote were very difficult to afford until they became available in quality generic form. They became even more affordable after the Health Reform. Thank God!
My plan of treatment was revised when the program that had been providing my meds for me free of cost was canceled. The new meds treatment has been revised repeatedly due to allergies and various serious side effects of the new treatments. My husband's income places us just above the limit to receive assistance through the pharmaceutical companies. I am not qualified for health insurance through the state. The cost of health insurance for me through my husband's employer is prohibitive, particularly when including the cost of co-payments for the meds and office visits. I remain in the process of applying & appealing for SS Disability, so I remain ineligible for health care assistance through any current federal program.
My Seroquel is covered 100% by Astra-zeneca. Prior to getting on their rxplan I wastrying to function without medication and this resulted in me ghaving a complete breakdown where I almost lost my family and i did lose my job since I couldn't function.
Once again, I was 100-200 over because I work in addition to receiving benefits.
Pfizer provided me Geodon free of cost when I had no insurance.
pretty much on s.s. and the government and state insurance has control of what someone can or can not take. they even interfere with the mental health treatment, restrict sessions, or even transportation to the doctors. as far as prescriptions i am 29 and all my life been in therapy and still have yet to find a pill that works for me. i accidentally found out about cognitive behavioral therapy and it takes practice along with trying to find meds that work and help me without major side effects. i dont drive so when i went to get meds the state has to wait till doctor calls pharmacy and pharm gets doctors approval.
RE: Question 7 - "Side Effects" is valid; but "not helping" was the reason. Yes, I gave the meds time and tried and hoped they would be effective. RE: Question 8 - I need something different, NOW. "Now" has been going on for quite a while. My NP's hands seem tied - but I've only been seeing her a short time. Maybe she does not trust me or think my opinion is valid. RE: Question 28 - I am diagnosed bipolar and depressed.
Right now I have Insurance through my husband's plan. It pays for medications except for a copay which varies on the price of the medication.
Seems like every time I go to doc. he puts me on another scrip. I started with 2 now on 4. I gotta wonder what they are doing to my body. They may make my mind feel at ease but at what cost. I'd rather be crazy and live a long crazy life than calmed and die early. My mom did and died at 55 way to early.
seems like the most better drugs cost more!
Seems to be that even if the coverage gap from a medicare based insurance kicks in, meaning paying hundreds of dollars a month, qualification is denied. Talk about going cold turkey in April, back on the meds in Jan... and off again in April. Not conducive to stability.
Several of my medications were still not affordable.
Side effect burden tooo great----weight gain is substancial enough to make me go from normal to obese, sexual problems
since I worked before I have some assistance but now am disabled
sometimes I have received 'free samples' from my psychiatrist, especially when starting on a new med to see if I tolerate it before buying
Still having trouble getting approved despite the County Mental Health Department filling out the paperwork and submitting it to Lilly. Am sitting on a bill for $300.00 that I can't afford to pay. Can't work, don't qualify for disability and hubby lost his job. Makes no sense that they make it so difficult.
Thank you. Keeping the forms simple is great. Picking them up at pharmacy like all other meds is a true help. Thank you again without your programs I might be on the streets or even dead as a result of the BP1 illness I have. God bless you.
Thankfully my parents are willing to pay for my medication. If not i couldn't afford it
Thankfully, I have insurance. Otherwise I might have to rely on less expensive, but less effective treatments.
Thanks to Medicare, my financial need is only $50 a month now.
the cost can be prohibitive if you do not have a good health plan and patients will not use what they cannot possibly afford. Seroquel as an example is $550.00 per month.
The FDA needs to relax their standards of "controlled substances" to us who manics and bipolar. Pharmacists and doctors know more about the disorders than a government bureaucracy.
The free meds programs really helped me.
The lone btwn acceptable financial need and reality is too low. Even with lower copays offered by pharma companies, it can still be too much of a financial hardship.
The medicines that work best for me are far too expensive given that I barely make over minimum wage. However, I applied for Medicaid and was denied. My worker told me that it broke his heart every time he had to tell someone with a mental illness that they couldn't have assistance. He also told me that since I have Bipolar, I was likely to be denied no matter what my income status is. THAT broke my heart. Thank goodness for patient assistance programs that give me my medication free, so I can have some balance back.
The most effective medications for me were also the most recent, and hence most expensive. My insurance prescription coverage limit was hit only halfway through the year- and so I was forced to change not only from that new medication, but from older medications that were still moderately expensive, in order to afford the rest of the year. All the drug companies whose programs I sought for help eliminated me from consideration because I had insurance with prescription coverage- they did not take into account that this prescription coverage could run out due to the expense of their medications.
The only reason I am able to afford my medications now is because of Medicare and Medicaid.
The only way I can afford my medications is because I am on Social Security Disability and medicare and the state pay for the bulk of the cost. I can't even think about being off of s.s.d. because if I went back to work- I would never beable to afford my meds. The monthly bill for the 5 medications I am on is retail- over $3000.00- and any insurance I would try to get says it is a preexisting condition.
The patents are absurd; they seem to be unlimited as they can be renewed once they expire.
The pharmaceutical programs have great benefits but they're hard to navigate and they make you jump through hoops if you DO have insurance but your insurance doesn't cover the drugs you need. It's so frustrating. Getting samples from your doctor is great but when the drug company gets a new drug and they stop giving samples of yours (like when they stopped sampling Effexor XR in favor of pushing Pristiq) we're screwed.

04) Please write any additional comments here:
The timeframe for the help was limited to six months or a year. Unless I qualified for state or federal assistance, I could not get my medications on a consistent basis.
the waterfall clinic helped me get my meds free during the time i was unable to pay for them, was a blessing without them i would have been hospitalized
There was a time when I was out of work and I was dependent on free samples from my psychiatrist. Also, I have not taken my meds as prescribed on four occasions: twice I just forgot to take my nihgt time meds. When I got up in the morining and realzed this, I took my Bipolar meds, but not my sleep meds. Then I called in sick and went back to bed. I woke up 4-5 hours later. Two times I accidently took twice the prescribed dose of an MAOI. I drove myself to an emergency room because it caused a very painfull headache and large spike in my pulse/heart rate.
they need to become more weight gain awareness in the whole health care system. I'm not sure which is worse hypomania and swings to depression or dealing with 40 extra pains and the complications of joint pain, ankle and back pain. not to mention more drugs for side effects like constipation for days at a time.
They paid for ALL my meds, but AstraZeneca lost my RX every month!
Though medications help, they are not enough for me. I find that cognative behavioral therapy is a good tool to find stability and to maintain it, too.
Until I received Medicare Part D drug benefits, all of my meds were from patient assistant programs.
We are right on the line of "barely making ends meet" so though I don't work, my husband makes just enough to overqualify (?) us.
WE need all the help we can get, these meds are just as important as insulin to a diabetic or chemo to a cancer patient, So why are they making it hard for us errrrr
when my insurance doesn't cover something, even if it's a temporary glitch, i am overwhelmed by the steps (paperwork and finding all the right people to talk to) needed to get my meds... to afford them.
While I currently have prescription coverage through my job, there have been several times over the years when the cost of medications prevented me from using them. An issue that is currently a medication barrier for me is that insurance companies will not cover the cost of medications if they are used to treat any conditions other than what is specified.
While i was waiting to get disability, i got abilify assistance.
with the questions number 1, the only reason that i can be on my medications is because i am on state health insurance. as soon as i lose the insurance i will NOT be able to afford the medications in any way
Without affordable Health Insurance or prescription coverage for much of my life, I had to primarily rely on Medication Samples from Community mental Health counseling Clinics wherever I was attending therapy. If not for both, I wouldnt have made it farther ahead.Now, finally having decent Insurance, a great counselor and a Psych who gave me the right diagnosis, I need to take 3 meds for Bipolar. The combination of all these factors, and my own perserverance, are VERY important. The medications have made a huge difference in how I can live my life, not just barely function in it as I had for many years. I am truly grateful.
Without my assistance from the drug company I would not be able to have/receive medication. I do not have insurance and due to my mental illness, I have not worked in 3 years.
Without psych meds I would be dead of suicide. I attempted to kill myself 5 times till I was finally diagnosed with bipolar 2 and put on a mood stabilizer. I had participated in talk therapy for 11 years before this. I was not thinking rationally when I tried to commit suicide.
Without the ability to receive my meds at no cost through a patient assistance program, I wouldn't be able to afford them.
without the assistance I would not been able to have any medication.
Years ago, when I was first diagnosed, there was no insurance for my mental health needs, and it took years for me to get help, even though I wanted it, because I could not private pay. During those years, I got worse and worse - it took 15 years to get 50% payment, so I only got part of what I needed. Now I have full pay for all services, because 30 years later, I spent all I have on medical care and am now fully disabled. It is too late for me to have had a "real" life. I hope others will get the help I could not.
You should have N/A on #1 and #2 as well. I have Bipolar Spectrum disorder and the meds almost killed me. I have a mother and aunt (mother's sister) who died going through withdrawal so this is genetic. I have not used a pharmaceutical since 1997. I don't think surveys should be done by groups that are financially supported by drug companies either!
#1- The cost was a barrier not so much to treatment as it was to progress in treatment and achieving independence. I was locked in a vicious cycle: I needed a place of my own to escape an abusive home -> My meds cost $1k/month -> I could have no more than $2k to my name to keep the Medi-Cal insurance which paid for the drugs -> I could never save the money I needed to get my own place -> I needed a place of my own to be safe and progress in therapy -> and around it went. [I decided to titrate off all drugs (under a Dr's supervision). Since then, I took no drugs for 7 years, got my own place, established healthy boundaries with family, went back to school and earned a degree.] #3- I am again on meds (but as yet have seen no significant improvement 4 months into drug therapy). Drug company assistance has benefitted me a great deal towards acquiring prescribed drugs; the drugs themselves have benefitted me little.
Abilify was expensive even with help from my doctor.
Although unemployed for more than three years (and supporting myself), I was turned down for assistance because my withdrawals from my IRA and 401K retirement savings counted as income, so my current income level (even though in reality--zero) was too high,...
Atypical antipsychotics are unbelievably expensive. I have to carry two insurance policies just to get coverage for them.
Blarg!
Cannot take brand name drugs. Have been using generic. Some medications are cost prohibited even as generics.
Concerned that maybe generic medications are not as effective as brand names. But I cannot afford to choose brand name products.
es malo dejar los remedios x cuenta propia
Eventually I was granted a "Special Authority" for a specific anti-depressant, that was subsidised in Australia, but not in NZL, but at first there was no option but to pay hundreds of dollars per packet, so was forced to change to an inferior product. A few years later, they began allowing applications for the "Special Authority".
Every instance where I have openly sought assistance for expenses related to medicine and/or treatment I have been denied. The response each time has been, "You make too much money." I went into a severe state of depression several years ago. I tried to apply for Medicare (or whatever) to help with medical expenses but was denied within 4 minutes. I was given the same response, "You make too much money." But I wasn't even working or able to work. All of the illegal immigrants in that office had been approved and they were their for more help. I am a "legal" citizen of this country and cannot even receive help from the government I pay taxes to.
Finances have often been an issue in being able to fill my medications even when I have insurance.
Hello i like to take surveys because they help me under stand
I am fortunate to have good insurance, but my copays for medication are high.
I am thankful that I have insurance coverage for my medications.
I believe that medication is only a part of the program. There should be more emphasis on non chemeical means to recovery. I think that people who claim that their medications do not work, are not doing those things. There is no "magic pill!"
I believe that pharmaceutical companies provide this service for 2 reasons: taxes and public image.

04) Please write any additional comments here:
I believe the pharmaceutical companies guidelines for medication assistance that's based on annual household income,is unfairly biased. I'm incapable of working due to my psychiatric disorders & my husband's full-time job provides our only source of income. Aside from our monthly cost of living expenses, my monthly doctor co-pays & medication co-pays are $250+, yet I am still denied pharmaceutical assistance. It's very discouraging & a huge anxiety trigger for my husband & myself.
I found most of the programs available to be very limiting, i.e. they either would only allow a once or two time use of the medication (no refills) or they would not help you if you had insurance (i.e. Medicare) even if Medicare did no cover that specific drug (i.e. Klonopin.) I am glad you are doing this survey. Keep up the good work. I suffer from Bi-polar 2 disorder.
I got off all my psychotropics in 2002
I have attempted all kinds of cost-saving programs from prescrip. companies, drugstores,my insurance carriers and by getting free samples from my doctor. The result is always destructive. I am depressed and unorganized. I have a hard time getting up and deciding what to eat. The paperwork, notetaking,details, storage, counting, etc., are always too much trouble, and I end up running out of medication unexpectedly and getting sicker. So if I weren't depressed, I'd be much better able to manage the details around getting assistance. But right now I can't afford to make any more mistakes.
I have been a volunteer at a free clinic for many years and help patients fill out the forms for PAPs. I have seen many many people benefit from these programs but you have to fill every form out perfectly and most require income documentation. I was blessed when I needed a med I couldn't afford because I already knew of these programs. My children also get many of their meds from these programs.
I have been through many medications, and have received very little improvement from them, which makes the cost of the medications another frustration.
I have been told that medications for depression are not considered addictive drugs. I'd like to say that having gone off of them in the past and I mean being weened off properly,made me feel as though I was an addict and I couldn't stand to be without them. My body seemed to crave depression medications. I have had other people tell me they feel the same way as I do. I also realize I am not a doctor so could someone explain this to me please?
I have depended on friends to acquire medication.
I have excellent medical insurance thru my husband's insurance plan.
I have good insurance benefits with BC/BS.
I have Medicare part D and the copays and coinsurance fees are too much for someone on disability.
I have no one to help me work through the maze of complicated requirements to receive assistance . seems they make it complicated enough that gets help...just an observation. I was frustrated enough that I no longer try for help.
I have received Lexapro by submitting an application for assistance to the manufacturer.
I have the full active life I have today due in large part to the medication that I take every day and I take a lot of psychiatric medication. I also live independently, have a new car, a full time job, active in the community. Those little pills help make all that possible. I have to make a few adjustments to my life like being home early enough to take my meds so I can take meds as prescribed. Compared to living in a nursing home at age 50 because I couldn't take care of myself, it's a small price to pay for the life I have today.
I only have Medi-Cal to pay for my meds. I thank God for that!
I own my own house it is a challenge to get all the repairs for house and car if med's. are so high
I pay $ 500 a month for insurance. I have a $ 50 copay to see MD and a $ 75 copay for Cymbalta. I can not afford insurance and treatment. My daughter is on Pristiq. I pay the $ 75 copay for her. Pristiq supposedly has a copya assistance program.....but it cannot be accessed online and I called twice asking for help and they did not help me. I am not passive about seeking assistance and I work in the mental health system. If I can not get help....how can anyone get help.
I receive medicare
I receive too much money through SS disability to get assistance with my meds. But many are so expensive! It really cuts into my ability to work towards a healthier, more active life. I'm always broke. And Medicare Part D plans are ridiculous. I hit the doughnut hole in a matter of months. I now get many of my meds online, from Canada.
I received medication from my doctor when i was unable to afford them myself.
I usually have to call around to different pharmacies to check the prices of my meds, since I do not have health insurance or any income to help with medical treatment.
I was just prescribed Abilify. I received a few samples. My insurance will not cover it. it will cost about $600+ a month. i am not able to work due to medical problems and i might not be able to keep taking the meds. I am depressed enough and it does not help that if this medication does work i might have to stop taking it due to cost. that makes me more depressed.
I was on Wellbutrin for a while, and received coupons to help pay for it. That was nice. But I do not receive coupons to pay for my current medication, which is nortriptyline.
I was prescribed Paxil. It did nothing for me. A week ago, GSK was fined for not having enuogh of the active ingredient in it. I believe I was one of these people who was impacted. (This was several years ago.) I was going through very hard times. Another med I took was Cymbalta. Please warn people that this will zombify your emotional responses to life.
I was started on a very costly medication which was $310.00 for 3 months then was advised to start on another medication at bedtime shortly after the first drug was started.
I work and have as health insurance through my employer a HSA (Health Savings Account). If a medication is new I cannot afford to pay for it and since I am considered by the pharmaceutical company as being "insured" I do not qualify for their assistance.
I work full-time and have insurance. I am not happy that my insurance company doesn't approve or charges much more for cymbalta.
I would not be taking the medications my psychiatrist prescribes if it were not for the free medications I qualify for through drug companies.
I wouldn't be able to get my meds without help.
If I weren't able to obtain assistance through my pharmaceutical company,I don't think I would have been able to continue on present medication.
If it weren't for my flex plan at work, getting medications would be out of the question.
If Obama's Health Plan sticks and January 1, 2011 rolls around, none of us are going to be able to get our meds. I am on Medicare with United Health Care and according to records, he wants to cut these services by 60% come next year which means doctors and hospitals will drop us like flies!
If we did not have insurance coverage, we would not be able to afford these medications that help keep my son stable and alive.
Initially, I got a "pay 1/2 of your copay" deal & it helped for 2-3 months, then the corporation doubled the copay so they could claim they were paying half. Pathetic!
insurance and help from pharm comp were not flexible enough to help me the way i needed. i am currently not on - and have not been prescribed- any western drug. my body got used to the drug/dose quickly and any effect was gone. the dose had to be increased frequently. insurance & pharm help wouldn't increase dosage as 'i' needed it.
It is a challenge to find some consistency from one health insurance plan to another, regarding the drugs the plan will or will not cover. I recently changed jobs, and my new job provided a better healthcare plan which reduced my out of pocket expenses for medications.
Lexapro has given me a life that I could not have dreamed of.

04) Please write any additional comments here:
Medicare's donut hole is my demise in the second half of the year. With time and research I have been able to apply, qualify, and receive my more expensive drugs--I take 7 different medications--by direct access with the drug companies. What has happened in the past years is decrease of free medications from my doctor/s.
Medication costs at any cost level can't be a burden to me cause I really need my medications to exist. I can always use a credit card to charge my meds but i try not to worry about the costs. Regardless of costs, i need my meds. This is my priority right up there with food!
My biggest problem is affording therapy and counseling. I live in an area where charging $200-300 an hour is normal. I go to my family physician for the meds and do not go to counseling which I need. I am lucky to have a good prescription plan to pay for the meds.
My dr was able to modify my prescription so the less costly non ER formula was useable so I could afford the med I just take 2 of the 75mg of effexor since it isn't available in 150 mg for the generics.
My insurance covers the meds.
Not all medications works the same, with every person.
One of my MAIN issues with prescription medicine is getting in to see the doctor in order to get the prescription re-written when I run out. I have a host of emotional, mental, and physical issues that make this extremely difficult fo me. Seeing the psychiatrist at all is a huge emotional struggle, so it's hard for me to make an appointment, and sometimes I cancel them even when I do make them.
psychiatric medications saved my life
Q 7 & 8 below ask for reasons for stopping meds. Mine was not listed: did not think they were helping, so why take them.
Regarding Question #1: I am fortunate enough that my psychiatrist is able to give me enough samples to last until the next time I see her if the drug I am taking does not have a generic. If it is generic I purchase it myself since I do have health insurance.
Some meds have been distructive to me.
The answers #1-3 are concerning psychiatric meds only. I also have been severely impacted by the cost of medication for substance addiction (methadone).
The anti-depressants never made me feel like someone else, and I feel safe by taking them.
The astronomical prices charged for certain meds pose a major temptation for companies to promote them for conditions for which they are not indicated. This is becoming a public health crisis with Seroquel and other "atypicals."
The cost alone is part of why I want to get off of meds as quickly as possible.
The cost of psychiatric medications is outrageous. As a physician with a mood disorder, I can afford them, but many of my patients cannot. As a consequence, I have located two Canadian pharmacies that pass muster for their competence, ethics and professionalism. I purchase my own medications from them and refer my patients to them as well.
The hardest part of medications for psychiatric issues is the side effects..Ive been through many with varying bad side effects!
the med,s that i am on make me really tired and just want to sleep all the time but thay do work in away that keeps me under contl and keeps me out of the hosp,s for right now thay are working
When I most needed it, I was unable to attain assistance. My med costs were approximately $1500-$2000 p/month. Bankruptcy was the result.
When I took pharmaceuticals only, some was covered by free Pharma programs. I now only take vitamins/supplements (some of which are prescription like Deplin) - and none are covered by Medicare or my pres. plan at all. It costs me $300.-$700. a month out of pocket, but it's the only plan that's helped so far (meds never did).
When I was in the U.S., I did have trouble affording medication. Now I live in Canada and have no trouble whatsoever.
while I currently can pay for my medication with help from my former employers benefits, that will be ending soon and then I don't know what I'll do. My wife requires very expensive medication and they don't exist in generic form. I guess I'm waiting for the next "shoe to drop" and see where it leaves me and my family. Can only hope new laws will help us somewhat.
With the merger of two pharmaceutical companies, Wyeth and Pfizer, there will be changes in my ability to qualify for assistance with Pristiq. I will, I am told, need this medication for life. I also take a total of 500 mg of Depakote as a mood stabilizer and 2.5 mg of Zyprexa nightly to help battle intrusive thoughts and improve my sleep cycle. Without prescription assistance, I would not be doing at all well, but I worry about losing this, as I have finally found a part-time job.
Without the prescription assistance by the companies I would not be able to afford my medication. Now if there was a way to afford the office visits.
Drug prices are extremely high. A month's supply of 5mg Abilify is over $600.
During the early 80's when I was misdiagnosed & mistreated ie; shock tx's that took memory & confidence for 15yrs--the Psych meds caused me to be a"zombie" & my thought processes were changed in such a way I could no longer read & remember--(I had previously been an avid reader); I was in my early mid 20's @ the time.
Generic would be helpful for the newer medications. Unfornately, those medications are very expensive and leave us labeled as high risk by insurance companies, which creates a problem in getting coverage.
I asked specifically for medication which is available in inexpensive generic version.
i do not qualify income wise
I pay more for health ins. so I have better coverage. What is expensive is paying for a drug that ends up not working. It's not like you can return them like a pair of shoes of something. The pharma companies should take them back. They can afford to.
I receive Medicaid so the cost wasn't prohibitive.
I stopped all psyciatrc medicine nearly two years ago. I recovered my mind and memory since then and never hade a manic attack after stoping anti depressants nearly 10 years ago. It is my beleife that Dr's need to stop anti-depresants and see if they are trully effective or if they are the cause of bipolar swings. I also beleive Dr's need to ween clients completly off before they switch drugs and go by the weight of the client. Someone like me who was 85 pounds should not be given the same dose as a 200 lb person. It took me years to recover from being misdiagnoused and over medicated. I now have my life in my control and the proper diagnouse and a good psychologist.
I would not be able to take consistently had I not had to help from company. Unfortunately it took 3 months to process.
I'm lucky to have a husband who makes enough that I can have health insurance. If he lost his job, I would not be able to afford medication and my health would deteriorate significantly. Even now it is a strain on the budget.
Medicare Part D and Medicaid
Mistrust of the science from pharmaceutical industry about effecacy, along with the devastating side effects including impact on physical health are some of the major reasons why I have a very difficult relationship with meds.
My answer to #1 is currently true, but in the past inability to pay for meds prevented me from taking them. This is my reason for answering 'Yes' to the following question; in the past I have not taken meds because I couldn't afford them.

04) Please write any additional comments here:
My biggest worry is the Health care reform laws provision of 30 Centers of Excellence for Bipolar and Depression treatment and research that was passed. The Centers were passed by law, but the funding was not. The funding has to be appropriated by Congress yearly for the next 5 years in July. This past July 10 million dollars out of a possible 100 million dollars was appropriated for the project.   NAMI was under the impression no funds would be appropriated which I thought was taking a defeated position before the decision was even made. Research for Mental Illness is of the upmost importance. Without research, the movement is stagnant with no progress. This funding is vital to the mental health community. If there is no improvement in quality of life due to lack of research and better treatments than do people think those with mental illness really care about jail diversion, housing or medication benefits? People without the illnesses do not realize the most important thing to those of us that suffer with mental illness is to feel better. That will only come with research and better treatments whether that includes
My problem seemed to be I can take name brand and not generics.   generics not effective or allergic to the fillers. It took 8-10 years to find the right med. I was beginning to think I was treatment resistant. I have received help from anti-convulsants and epilepsy drugs.
my workplace discourages me from using pharmacy benefits because it causes increase in insurance costs. psych meds cost too much.
Not all the medications were available for cost assistance.
Rite aid Pharmacy's "Wellness discount" card
The biggest barrier is not being able to afford the cost to seek a professional to get help with or with out medication.
The cost of medication has forced me into using older, cheaper and probably less effective medications. Adverse side effects have forced me off some older medications, when they might have been avoided with the newer, but more expensive, medications that are available.
While I responded to an ad that clearly stated that, due to my limited financial situation, I qualified for free medication, a third party contacted me (obviously a scam situation) and would only offer the medication for the full amount.
You have mistakenly forgotten to consider the other extreme in your survey....where is the all of the above answer?