

# Citizens Advisory Committee Minutes

Meeting Date / Time: July 16, 2025 9:30-11:30am

Location: OCHN (Troy) – Teams Virtual /Call-In

Facilitator: Diane Sansalone, Chairperson

Liaison: Linda Bartaloni-Till, OCHN Customer Services Manager

Scribe: Linda Bartaloni-Till, OCHN Customer Services Manager

Desired Results: ***Teamwork toward achieving committee goals.***



Present: **Adrienne Gasperoni**, Community Housing Network; **Amelia Jacobs**, CLS-OC; **Chakusola Guinn**, Easterseals; **Christie Kay**, ARC Oakland County; **Christina Root**, OCHN Board; **Diane Sansalone**, Common Ground; **Glenda Vidosh**, Oakland Family Services; **James Helstowski**, FAIR Drop-In Center; **Lloyd Austin**, Member At-Large; **Lois Shulman**, Member At-Large; **Matthew Fritzen**, Easterseals MORC; **Nancy Diane Carter**, OCHN CEEC; **Pam Casper**, CNS Healthcare; **Renee Bacci**, TTI; **Steve Ludwig**, JARC; **Suzanne Serlin-Resnick**, Member At-Large; **Tammy Wallace**, Our House Clubhouse; **Verdrina Mathews**, Member At-Large; **Victoria Peterson**, Member At-Large

Absent: **Cheryl Patel**, OCHN CAC Member At-Large; **Chris Wright**, My Place Center for Wellness; **Malkia Newman**, CNS Empowerment Team; **Paulette Howell**, New Horizons; **Zach Cardinell**, Member At-Large

Guests: **Tiffany Devon**, OCHN Lead Communications and Community Outreach Specialist

	Agenda Item	Presented By	Discussion
I	<p><b>Welcome to Members, Guests</b></p> <p><b>Approval of July 2025 Agenda and June 2025 Minutes</b></p>	<p><i>Diane Sansalone, CAC Chair</i></p>	<p>The meeting was called to order at 9:30 am. Roll call attendance was taken by J. Space. S. Serlin-Resnick motioned to approve July 2025’s agenda and A. Jacobs seconded the agenda. M. Fritzen motioned to approve the minutes from June 2025 and was seconded by C. Guinn.</p>
II	<p><b>Public Comment / Announcements</b></p>	<p>Members &amp; Guests</p>	<p>Just a reminder that there will not be a September CAC meeting.</p> <p>Glenda gave a reminder that August 5<sup>th</sup> is Your Voice, Your Values conference.</p>

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III	<p><b>New Business</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li><b>Fear Response After Trauma and Coping Skills</b></li> </ul>	<p><i>Adam Hamilton, OCHN Clinical Director</i></p>	<p>Adam explained that Trauma is a distress response experienced after enduring a traumatic event. Traumatic events can take many forms: Accidents, natural disasters, bullying, childhood trauma, interpersonal violence, medical trauma. What makes an experience traumatic can be significant fear related to perceived threat of harm or death, feelings of helplessness or confusion, and challenges an individual's view of themselves and the world around them.</p> <p>According to DSM-5-TR, PTSD is a psychiatric disorder that occurs after an individual experiences or witnesses a traumatic event such as serious injury, natural disaster, serious accident, war/combat, actual or threatened death, sexual violence, or acts of terror. There are 4 categories of symptoms: intrusion symptoms, avoidance symptoms, negative alterations in thoughts and mood, and alterations in arousal and activity. After a traumatic event many people experience fear / anxiety, re-experiencing the traumatic event, increased arousal, avoidance, anger, guilt, shame, and grief. For many, these will abate through natural recovery. For others, these symptoms persist and may become PTSD. There are temperamental, environmental, genetic, and physiological factors. Fear is a 'program' for escaping danger. The 'fear program' includes information about the thing we are afraid of and our fear responses (e.g., heart racing). Normal fear is experienced when we are in actual danger. When there is actual danger, the 'fear program' motivates us to safety. When the information that activates the 'fear program' is not accurate, the program can be problematic. For example, when I'm safe, but reminded of a Trauma, responses persist because of avoidance: avoidance of reminders of the trauma, avoidance of the memory of the trauma. When avoided pervasively, the trauma memory is never 'processed', and unprocessed trauma memories continue to hold a</p>
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	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b>School Mental Health Navigator Overview</b></li> </ul>	<p><i>Adele Gardynik, OCHN School Mental Health Navigator</i></p>	<p>strong emotional 'charge'. When avoided pervasively, the trauma reminders continue to provoke fear and avoided trauma reminders, when encountered, continue to activate a fear response where trauma, my urge to avoid/escape, might be triggered</p> <p>90% of public mental health consumers have been exposed to trauma and most have multiple experiences of trauma. 97% of homeless women with SMI have experienced severe physical &amp; sexual abuse – 87% experienced this abuse both in childhood and adulthood. In the general population, 61% of men and 51% of women reported exposure to at least one lifetime traumatic event, with the majority reporting more than one traumatic event. Individuals who have experienced trauma are found across all systems of care. Coping with Trauma skills include acknowledging the trauma, normalizing your schedule, creating balance, practicing basic self-care, balanced eating, sleeping, exercising, expressing your emotions, seeking support, and practicing grounding and mindfulness. Some CAC members spoke about their own experiences of traumatic situations.</p> <p>Oakland Community Health Network (OCHN) is a community-based, local public mental health system that manages specialty support and services to persons with serious mental illness, serious emotional disturbances, intellectual or developmental disabilities, infant mental health, and substance use disorders. Most people who receive</p>
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			<p>services through Oakland County’s public mental health system, which is managed by OCHN, have Medicaid insurance coverage. The number of people served is 29,000. Access is the central screening center for Oakland County. The phone number is 248-464-6363 and the call in line is open Monday –Friday from 8:00 a.m. -8:00 p.m. In person Access is in the Resource and Crisis Center at 1200 North Telegraph Rd., 32E, Pontiac, MI and the walk-in hours are Monday - Friday from 8:00 a.m. -3:30 p.m. The School Mental Health Navigator (SMHN) Program is a program to reduce barriers to mental health, intellectual / developmental disabilities, and substance use services, increase awareness about services / resources and provide support and guidance to children, adolescents, and families, identify financial assistance and insurance co-pay benefits, helping families get connected to and utilize Medicaid, provide referrals and ongoing coordination, and recommendations for services. Anyone with a connection to the student can make a referral to SMHN. Referrals need to include contact information for the parent/guardian and verbal consent from the parent/guardian to discuss the program. You can contact the team via 248-462-6294 or <a href="mailto:SchoolNavigator@oaklandchn.org">SchoolNavigator@oaklandchn.org</a>. Follow-up is provided in 30 days and families can re-connect with SMHN at any time for additional needs. Oxford School Mental Health Funding Assistance provides up to \$4,000 in reimbursement (per family) to help cover co-pay and deductible costs of mental health services for individuals affected by the Oxford tragedy. Rochester Hills Mental Health Funding Assistance</p>
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	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b>Communications Report</b></li> </ul>	<p><i>Suzanne Weinert, Director, Communications &amp; Community Outreach</i></p>	<p>provides up to \$4,000 in reimbursement (per individual) to help cover co-pay and deductible costs of mental health services for individuals affected by the Rochester Hills Brookland Plaza Splash Pad incident in June 2024. For more information contact 248-462-6294 or <a href="mailto:SchoolNavigator@oaklandchn.org">SchoolNavigator@oaklandchn.org</a>. S. Serlin-Resnik spoke about the importance of interviewing your therapists.</p> <p>Suzanne introduced Tiffany Devon. Tiffany is our new Lead Communications Specialist, and she has stepped right in and hit the ground running, doing a fabulous job. We had a Minority Mental Health event last month and we had some fabulous speakers about resilience across generations and cognitive wellness as well as had an amazing student panel. Suzanne expressed that she is so impressed with the generation we have coming. The Your voice, Your Value event is coming up on August 5th from 9:30 to 12:30. We will celebrate our Achievement Award winners and our Peer Award winners, and this will be located here at Troy OCHN in our Michigan Room. Walk a Mile is coming up on September the 17th in Lansing and it's from 12:00 to 3:00pm. We will be providing transportation. The pick-up will be in Waterford and here at the Troy Building. We are also getting a new website. We're making some changes to make it as user friendly as possible. We will be asking for feedback and will be</p>
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	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li><b>Director’s Report</b></li> </ul>	<p><i>Dana Lasenby, Executive Director/CEO, OCHN</i></p>	<p>organizing a work group. We're looking at Monday, July the 28th at 11:00 AM or 2:00 PM and it will be a remote workgroup. Suzanne took a poll, and it was decided to have the work group on Monday, July the 28th at 11 AM. Invites will be sent to CAC members. Diane and Amelia have participated in our ambassador program and have done a fabulous job and Suzanne is looking for an ambassador for the Your Voice, Your Value event.</p> <p>July marks two significant observances at Oakland Community Health Network (OCHN) that highlight the importance of equity, inclusion, and visibility: Minority Mental Health Awareness Month and Disability Pride Month. Both observances remind us that inclusion is not optional — it is essential. Mental health and disability justice must be integrated into our policies, programs, and everyday practices. By acknowledging these identities and addressing intersecting barriers, we move closer to a society where every person can thrive with dignity and support. As part of our broader commitment to mental health and diversity, equity, and inclusion, we recognize the importance of creating spaces where everyone feels seen, heard, and supported — both emotionally and culturally. OCHN remains committed to connecting individuals with essential behavioral health services. Our Access Team makes timely service</p>
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			<p>eligibility determinations and links individuals to critical community resources. Through a robust network of contracted providers, OCHN offers crisis and support services for individuals with Medicaid, Medicare, the Healthy Michigan Plan, private insurance, or underinsured. These services include: • Crisis Intervention • Crisis Stabilization • Crisis Residential Services • Pre-Admission Review for Psychiatric Hospitalization Authorization • Local management of Common Ground (988 Suicide &amp; Crisis Lifeline).</p> <p>To continually raise awareness about the vital work being done every day, OCHN educates advocates and the community about the overall system. We want to reinforce the importance of the Prepaid Inpatient Health Plan (PIHP), which plays a crucial role in supporting children, adults, and families dealing with mental health issues, substance use, and developmental disabilities. These services are community-based, person-centered, and provided at no cost to qualifying individuals.</p> <p>OCHN received a grant through the State of Michigan for \$1 Million in FY25 thanks to the support of the Michigan Legislature and Governor. These enhancements are designed to strengthen access and improve care coordination. To achieve this, OCHN plans for significant infrastructure improvements in: • OCHN Assessment Center – Troy: This site will enhance access to screenings and early intervention services, streamlining entry into the behavioral health system. • Resource &amp; Crisis Center (RCC): Focused on urgent and walk-in</p>
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			behavioral health needs, this facility ensures timely support and reduces reliance on emergency departments. The RCC supports the crisis continuum and, more importantly, reinforces our unwavering commitment to trauma-informed care. These centers support our broader strategy to build a responsive, person-centered service delivery infrastructure that adapts to community needs in real time. OCHN is actively engaged in addressing the following challenges impacting the public behavioral health system: • Potential Loss of Local Oversight • Federal and MDHHS Budget Challenges – a reduction in Medicaid funding and eligibility. • MDHHS Contractual Requirements • Privatization Threats These collaborative efforts are essential to OCHN’s mission to protect and advance accessible, equitable, and high-quality behavioral health services.
IV	Old Business – Provider & Committee Reports	<p><b>Christina Root</b>, OCHN Board</p> <p><b>Adrienne Gasperoni</b>, Community Housing Network</p> <p><b>Amelia Jacobs</b>, Community Living Services</p> <p><b>Chakusola Guinn, (Vice Chairperson)</b> Easterseals</p>	<p>No Report Submitted</p> <p>No Report Submitted</p> <p>No Report Submitted</p> <p>No Report Submitted</p>

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	<b>Cheryl Patel</b> , Member At-Large	No Report - Absent
	<b>Chris Wright</b> , My Place Center for Wellness	No Report - Absent
	<b>Christie Kay</b> , ARC of Oakland County	No Report Submitted
	<b>Diane Sansalone, (Chairperson)</b> Common Ground	No Report Submitted
	<b>Glenda Vidosh</b> , OFS	No Report Submitted
	<b>James Helstowski</b> , F.A.I.R., Drop-In	No Report Submitted
	<b>Lloyd Austin</b> , Member At-Large	No Report Submitted
	<b>Lois Shulman</b> , Member At-Large	No Report Submitted
	<b>Malkia Newman</b> , OCHN Board / CNS Anti-Stigma	No Report - Absent
	<b>Matthew Fritzen</b> , Easterseals MORC	No Report Submitted

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		<b>Nancy Diane Carter</b> , CEEC	No Report Submitted
		<b>Pam Casper</b> , CNS Healthcare	No Report Submitted
		<b>Paulette Howell</b> , New Horizons	No Report Submitted
		<b>Renee Bacci</b> , TTI	No Report Submitted
		<b>Suzanne Serlin-Resnick</b> , Member At-Large	No Report Submitted
		<b>Tammy Wallace</b> , Our House Clubhouse	No Report Submitted
		<b>Verdrina Mathews</b> , Member At-Large	No Report Submitted
		<b>Victoria Peterson</b> , Member At Large	No Report Submitted
		<b>Zach Cardinell</b> , Member At-Large	No Report - Absent
V	Public Comment / Announcements		

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VI	Adjournment		The Meeting was adjourned at 11:28 am. S. Serlin-Resnick motioned, L. Austin seconded.
VII	Next Meeting		August 20, 2025

Respectfully submitted,

Jessica Space

Jessica Space, OCHN Support Specialist

August 11, 2025