

Director's Report – August 2024



Dana Lasenby
OCHN Executive Director & CEO

OCHN MISSION:
Inspire Hope • Empower
People • Communities

OCHN VISION:

OCHN will be a champion for the empowerment of persons seeking quality integration of physical and mental health supports and services. This includes youth and adults with developmental or intellectual disabilities, mental health concerns, and substance use disorders. We listen and respond to our community's needs, providing support and opportunities for people to lead independent and self-directed lives.

OCHN Access: 248-464-6363
Crisis Line: 988

www.oaklandchn.org

It was my sincere privilege to participate in OCHN's Your Voice Your Value conference earlier this month. More than 100 people filled our Michigan Conference room to hear important messages about ending stigma, voting rights, and OCHN's Fiscal Year (FY) 2025 Annual Plan.

Most importantly, people came together to honor this year's amazing awardees. Twelve individuals were selected from an impressive list of forty nominees under various award categories ([click here](#)). The audience included proud parents, grandparents, and allies of those being acknowledged. The testimonials provided by the nominators and the award recipients were filled with joy and inspiration that influenced everyone in attendance.

ACCESS

OCHN remains committed to ensuring that the exceptional Access Team connects people who need public behavioral health services. Last month, OCHN's Access Team received 2,979 calls and completed 599 screenings for people. Linking people to services when and where needed, including determining network service eligibility, and identifying follow-up resources is a vital agency priority.

ADVOCACY

OCHN leadership worked with the Tri-County Interim CEOs Manny Singla (Detroit-Wayne Integrated Health Network – DWIHN) and Traci Smith (Macomb County Community Mental Health- MCCMH) along with respective finance and legal teams to advocate for the Michigan Department of Health & Human Services (MDHHS) Director and team related to FY25 contract language concerns regarding the following:

Certified Community Behavioral Health Clinics (CCBHC) language added to the Paid Inpatient Health Plan (PIHP) contract about service access to ensure members are at the appropriate level of care. For example, mild to moderate, American Society of Addiction Medicine (ASAM) level of care; and the PIHP Utilization Management function will continue to address compliance

concerns regarding Medicaid fraud, waste, and abuse, and the ability to recoup funds from providers after the fact based on medical necessity.

Existing Internal Service Fund (ISF) requirements are the only mechanism available for the PIHPs to hold funds in reserve to manage their portion of the risk sharing arrangement. The request of MDHHS is to allow future funding limitations for the ISF to be based on actuarially sound analysis and generally accepted accounting principles.

The Waskul Case Settlement is currently pending but included in the PIHP FY25 contract.

BUDGET & FINANCE

Bi-weekly Finance meetings continue to address action steps in developing FY25 budget and fund source management related to CCBHC, end of Public Health Emergency and Medicaid redeterminations.

OCHN's Claims department is operating with 4 staff and preparing for transition from service models to standardized rates with fee for service reimbursement. The goal is to reduce provider administrative costs by directly contracting with providers, i.e., transportation and Fiscal Management Services (FMS).

COLLABORATION

Positive outcomes of OCHN's ongoing and close partnership with the Oakland County leadership served as important behavioral health highlights in the [County's 2024 Annual Report](#). OCHN is especially grateful for funding and support to provide critical community services that include, but are not limited to, Crisis Intervention Team (CIT), School Mental Health Navigators (SMHNs), School Mental Health Benefit, and Law Enforcement Co-Responders mentioned in the report.

On Friday, August 15, 2024, OCHN released its draft [FY 2025 Annual Plan](#) for review by persons served, service providers, and valued community members. Input from all stakeholders is essential to meet the behavioral health needs of all Oakland County residents. I encourage everyone to read this important document and offer suggestions.

COMMUNITY OUTREACH AND EDUCATION

- In preparation for September being recognized as Recovery Celebration and Suicide Awareness Month, OCHN proposed two proclamations to its Board of Directors for approval ([link to proclamations](#)). OCHN will distribute these meaningful resolutions throughout the county as a reminder to all Oakland County residents that recovery is possible, and suicide is preventable. Local municipalities, school boards, and faith-based organizations are being asked to adopt both proclamations and to share this beneficial information with their constituents.

- Also, OCHN expects over 400 people to attend its Recovery Celebration on Friday, September 20, 2024, at its administrative offices in Troy. Also being held at OCHN's Troy building next month is the Annual Suicide Prevention Community Forum hosted by Oakland County Health Division's Suicide Prevention Task Force on Tuesday, September 12, 2024. More information about both events is available at oaklandchn.org.
- In recognition of its 20-year anniversary, OCHN's Substance Use Prevention Provider, The Alliance is featuring 20 Impact Stories on its website. This includes an informative article by OCHN's Director of Substance Use Services, Megan Phillips ([article link](#)).

CRISIS SERVICES

OCHN's crisis services, through its contracted provider network, include supporting those with Medicaid, Medicare, Healthy Michigan Plan, private insurance, or underinsured insurance. Crisis services include:

- Crisis Intervention
- Crisis Stabilization
- Crisis Residential Services
- Pre-Admission Review for authorizing Psychiatric Hospitalization
- Local management of Common Ground (the vendor for the 988 Suicide & Crisis Lifeline)

Using grant funds, OCHN supported substance use disorder (SUD) services to 33 underinsured individuals who would not otherwise receive treatment. Last month, the Sober Support Unit (SSU) served 136 individuals and 1,306 people this fiscal year.

INTEGRATED HEALTHCARE

- Among reports of increased COVID-19 cases, OCHN is sharing helpful information about prevention measures to help minimize the spread of this illness. **This information includes COVID-19 Guidance for Exposure and Infection:**
 - Take extra precautions to prevent COVID-19 if you have a [medical condition](#) that places you at higher risk for severe illness.
 - Review and follow healthcare personnel [guidelines](#).
 - Use [key prevention strategies](#) such as testing or wearing a mask.
- OCHN manages Behavioral Health Homes (BHHs) in Oakland County. Health Homes prioritizes a "whole person" philosophy, paving the way for integrating physical and behavioral health services. The BHHs provide comprehensive care management and service coordination to individuals with serious mental illness. OCHN enrolled 33 new people in BHHs last month out of 918 program enrollees.

SYSTEMS OF CARE VALUE-BASED CARE & OUTCOMES

- OCHN continues to move forward with its FY 2025 plans to standardize contracted funding rates and promote service provider network equity. OCHN hosted two forums to meet with families, persons served, and providers to address concerns and prioritize collaboration for everyone involved.
 - A fact sheet explaining this critical system of care transition has been developed to ensure transparent communication ([click here](#)). In addition to discussing standardized rates, the fact sheet highlights the transition of several service lines from the provider network back to OCHN's oversight.
 - Inquiries about rate standardizations and service transitions from contracted service providers are being answered by OCHN's leadership. Individuals receiving services and their families' members are encouraged to contact OCHN's Customer Services Team with questions. Customer Services can be reached by telephone at 800.341.2003, using OCHN's online contact form at oaklandchn.org, or via email at CustomerServicesTeam@oaklandchn.org
- For nearly a decade, OCHN has made online behavioral health support available to Oakland County residents, free of charge, through myStrength., which is confidential resource that offers personalized resources for improved mental health and to overcome substance abuse challenges. [Click here](#) to start using myStrength today.

RECOGNITION

- OCHN is proud to be awarded Mental Health America's (MHA) 2024 Platinum Bell Seal for Workplace Mental Health for the second year in a row. The Bell Seal for Workplace Mental Health is a national certification program that recognizes employers committed to creating mentally healthy workplaces. Those awarded the Bell Seal have policies and practices in place that support employee's overall wellness. To learn more about MHA's Bell Seal, [click here](#).
- OCHN achieved its compliance rate for the annual Synar study with a passing score of 91%. The Synar Amendment requires states to have laws that prohibit the sale and distribution of tobacco products to underage youth. According to [MDHHS](#), annual Synar checks show the great strides made in reducing the number of retailers who have violated the law and those who give youth access to tobacco, vapor, and other alternative nicotine products in Michigan.

WORKFORCE DEVELOPMENT

- Plans are underway to again provide OCHN staff with the opportunity to engage in the Courageous Conversations workgroup facilitated by the organization's I.D.E.A. (Inclusion,

Diversity, Equity, and Accessibility) team. Small groups discuss differing viewpoints to cultivate a positive and respectful work environment.

- Staff recruitment and retention at OCHN and throughout its provider network is ongoing. OCHN's Human Resources continues to participate in college-sponsored career fairs. OCHN is also developing a robust advocacy workplan to champion for increased Direct Support Professional (DSP) wages.
- The Michigan Department of Health and Human Services (MDHHS) is currently conducting a statewide survey to better understand the work-related experiences of substance misuse prevention professionals. Individuals who complete the survey will have a chance to win a \$25 Amazon gift card. [\(survey link\)](#)

CALL TO ACTION - If you or someone you know needs support now:

- [National Suicide Prevention Lifeline](#) – [Call 988](#), [Text 988](#), or [Chat with Lifeline](#)
- [Crisis Textline](#) – Text TALK to 741741
- OCHN Access (248) 464-6363
- Attend an OCHN Board Meeting:
 - [Committee of the Whole](#) (COW): Monday September 9th at 4:30 p.m.
 - [General Board](#): Tuesday, September 27th at 6 p.m.