

Director's Report – April 2026



Dana Lasenby
OCHN Executive Director & CEO

OCHN MISSION:
Inspire Hope • Empower People •
Strengthen 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: 888-238-0611

www.oaklandchn.org

April is a time of spring, renewal, and inspiration, making it an ideal moment to reflect on inclusion and understanding within our community. In recognition of **Autism Awareness Month**, we proudly participated in the “**Light It Up Blue**” initiative, joining communities nationwide in raising awareness and promoting acceptance of individuals on the autism spectrum. This effort was made possible through the dedication and enthusiasm of our staff, who helped bring visibility to this important cause and demonstrated our shared commitment to fostering understanding, celebrating differences, and supporting individuals and families affected by autism. See the photo of our dedicated staff under the Community Outreach section of this report.

OCHN had the opportunity to attend the **NAMI Honors Event on April 11th**, celebrating the remarkable contributions of individuals who have made a meaningful impact in the behavioral health community. The evening also provided an opportunity to honor and remember the life and legacy of our cherished board member, **Malkia Newman**, whose dedication, compassion, and leadership continue to inspire our work and mission. Event highlights are included in the recognition section of this report.

I encourage everyone to participate in the Community Voice Survey, which is open for a limited time. Your insights are essential in guiding our priorities, strengthening our services, and ensuring that the voices and lived experiences of those we serve remain central to our decision-making. This feedback plays a critical role in shaping responsive, inclusive, and effective supports across our system. The survey has been briefly extended and can be found at this [link](#).

Thank you for your partnership and your continued commitment to advancing the health and well-being of our community.

ACCESS TO SERVICES

Oakland Community Health Network (OCHN) is committed to maintaining access to essential behavioral health services for Oakland County residents. Recently, several major case management providers placed temporary referral moratoriums, which reduced system capacity and created delays for individuals seeking services.

To ensure timely access, OCHN has started offering direct Case Management services. This step will help stabilize the system and prevent service gaps. At the same time, OCHN has reopened its provider network to accept new qualified case management partners and expand long-term capacity. OCHN is not competing with its provider network. Our providers remain valued partners, and this action is intended only to supplement capacity, so no individual goes without needed services.

OCHN remains committed to connecting individuals with essential behavioral health services. Our **Access Team** continues to ensure timely service eligibility determinations and provides immediate linkage to critical community resources, helping individuals receive the right support at the right time.

Metric	March 2026	2026 Fiscal Year to Date
Calls to Access	3,191	16,487
Screenings Completed	485	2,572

ADVOCACY & COLLABORATION

OCHN reminds the community that **your voice matters!** Stay informed, share your stories, and support efforts to maintain strong, localized PIHP services focused on people. For more information, visit **OCHN's Advocacy page** at www.oaklandchn.org/advocacy.

- **CITIZENS ADVISORY COUNCIL (CAC)** - On Wednesday, March 18th, I will be attending the CAC meeting virtually and provide an update on the crisis service transition, and progress. I continue to review and integrate CAC feedback into planning and maintain open communication with the Council and Board to ensure community voices guide OCHN’s work.
- **RECIPIENT RIGHTS ADVISORY COUNCIL (RRAC)** - As **CEO & Executive Director**, I support the RRAC’s independence, ensure it has the necessary resources, and promote the integration of its recommendations into OCHN’s quality and compliance activities.
- **COMMUNITY VOICE SURVEY** - OCHN invites feedback from individuals, families, community partners, legislators, employees, and contracted providers to help shape our annual plan. Your participation supports our mission to inspire hope, empower people, and strengthen communities. The submissions due date has been extended. Use this [link](#) or QR code to let your voice be heard!



CUSTOMER SERVICES, COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT & OUTREACH

OCHN remains dedicated to engaging with our community through outreach initiatives and transparent communication.

Metric	March 2026	2026 Fiscal Year to Date
Customer Service Call Responses	912	4,946
Community Events	9	44
Email Engagements	33,766	156,311
Website Views	51,572	263,303

OCHN hosted its **Annual Abilities Awareness Event** on March 31, 2026, from 1:00–3:00 p.m., welcoming more than 60 attendees for an engaging and inspiring afternoon. The event featured 15 vendors, including person-served small businesses, showcasing the talents, creativity, and entrepreneurial spirit of individuals supported within our community.

The program included recognition of the CLS and ESMORC Abilities Champions, honoring their outstanding commitment to promoting inclusion, empowerment, and advocacy. The event was expertly hosted by Jackie Paige of WWJ, who also moderated an interview-style panel discussion with OCHN Board members John Young, Adam Fuhrman, and Dr. Hans, offering valuable insights on leadership, inclusion, and community impact.

A highlight of the program was the powerful and inspiring personal story shared by Fran King, OCHN staff, whose remarks resonated deeply with attendees and reinforced the importance of recognizing abilities, fostering opportunity, and celebrating individual journeys. The event successfully advanced OCHN’s mission of inclusion, awareness, and community connection.



OCHN’s Substance Use Disorder (SUD) Team hosted a Behavioral Health Resource Expo and Job Fair on March 24, 2026, at Oakland University, creating a valuable connection point between students and behavioral health employers. The event drew 105 students interested in pursuing careers in behavioral health and featured participation from 43 provider organizations, reflecting strong workforce interest and engagement across the region.

The job fair further extended its impact through media coverage in **Oakland University’s student newspaper, *The Oakland Post*** at this [link](#), helping amplify awareness of behavioral health career opportunities and OCHN’s role in supporting workforce development.

OCHN hosted its **first Veterans Faith-Based Suicide Prevention event** on March 19, 2026, at Kensington Church, bringing together faith leaders, service providers, and community members to focus on suicide prevention among veterans. The event drew 92 attendees and featured 15 vendor tables, offering resources, support, and education tailored to veterans and their families.



Members of the OCHN team came together throughout the month of April to wear blue in support of the Light It Up Blue initiative for Autism Awareness Month. This visible show of unity reflected our shared commitment to understanding, acceptance, and inclusion, and reinforced the importance of recognizing and valuing every voice within our community.

OCHN CRISIS SERVICES CONTINUUM

OCHN’s Crisis Services continues to provide a comprehensive, 24/7 response to individuals experiencing behavioral health emergencies. Services are designed to deliver immediate assessment, stabilization, and connection to ongoing care in a safe and supportive environment.

Key Service Components:

Resource & Crisis Center (RCC)

Offers round-the-clock -Walkin- access for individuals seeking urgent behavioral health support. The crisis line **(888-238-0611)** continues to provide 24/7 support. All adults presenting at the RCC receive clinical assessment and connection to appropriate levels of care, including hospitalization support, withdrawal management, treatment referrals, and community-based services.

Crisis Stabilization Unit (CSU)

Provides short-term, clinically supervised stabilization for individuals requiring a safe environment and intensive support to reduce acute symptoms.

Sober Support Unit (SSU)

Supports individuals needing observation and assistance related to substance use or intoxication, with a focus on safety and rapid engagement in treatment resources.

Law Enforcement Coordination

Provides a safe alternative destination for individuals in crisis, reducing unnecessary emergency department utilization and supporting diversion efforts.

Crisis Residential Services (*in development/licensure*)

Expands the continuum with longer duration stabilization in a structured, therapeutic, homelike setting for individuals who need additional support beyond immediate crisis care.

Metric	March 2026	2026 Fiscal Year to Date
Crisis Services Request	677	3,954
Unique Persons Served	531	3,129
Assessment	338	3,145
Triages	450	3,442
Sober Support Admissions	52	744

Priority Focus: Workforce stabilization, residential licensure completion, and strengthening the full crisis continuum to ensure timely, clinically appropriate response for Oakland County residents.

Youth crisis services remain available onsite through the Youth and Family Care Connection (in partnership with New Oakland Family Centers), providing immediate, developmentally appropriate intervention for individuals age 17 and under.

Youth & Family Care Connections (YFCC) Outcomes

Metric	March 2026	2026 Fiscal Year to Date
Service Requests	175	867
Unique Persons Served	146	718
Inpatient Dispositions	38	225
Diversions	98	470

Mobile Crisis Unit Responses	15	102
------------------------------	----	-----

Justice-Related Initiatives & Training

OCHN’s **Co-Responder (CoRe) Program** strengthens partnerships with law enforcement, policymakers, and the judiciary to divert individuals from incarceration to behavioral health services. OCHN currently has 10 co-responders in 21 communities, including Auburn Hills, Birmingham, Bloomfield Twp, Crisis Response Unit (OCSO/county-wide), Ferndale, Franklin / Bingham Farms, Hazel Park, Madison Heights, Pontiac (OCSO), Orchard Lake, Rochester, Royal Oak, Sylvan Lake, Troy, Walled Lake, Waterford, West Bloomfield, White Lake, Wixom, and Wolverine Lake.

CoRe Program Data

Metric	March 2026	2026 Fiscal Year to Date
Referrals	381	2,310
Remained in Community	212 / 56%	1,115 / 48%
Arrests	6 / 2%	53 / 2%
Voluntary Emergency Transports	71 / 19%	434 / 19%

Additionally, OCHN continues to provide **Crisis Intervention Team (CIT) training** to law enforcement, **Assisted Outpatient Treatment (AOT) services**, and **jail diversion programs** to support individuals with mental health and substance use challenges.

LEGISLATIVE AND POLICY UPDATE

OCHN and partners across the state continue to collaborate with MDHHS to improve access, quality, accountability, and data transparency within the public behavioral health system. State leaders have indicated that reform efforts will now occur through policy development, operational improvements, and stakeholder engagement, rather than competitive procurement.



OCHN hosted a productive Roundtable Discussion with local legislative aides on Friday, April 10th, creating space for meaningful dialogue around community needs, behavioral health priorities, and system-level challenges. This engagement coincided with a unique opportunity to collaborate with the **American Psychiatric Association (APA)** on on-site filming to highlight OCHN’s crisis services and other essential programs. Together, these efforts strengthened relationships with policymakers while elevating awareness of the critical role OCHN plays in supporting individuals and families throughout our community.

Oakland Community Health Network (OCHN) gathered policymakers, community leaders, and service providers on Monday, April 20th for its annual **Legislative Breakfast**, underscoring the critical role of partnership, innovation, and coordinated care in strengthening Oakland County’s behavioral health system.

The event highlighted OCHN’s strategic priorities and ongoing efforts to meet rising demand for services while ensuring accessible, person-centered care. Focusing on the organization’s four key focus areas: Managed Care Administration and Operations; Advocacy, Partnership, and Outreach; Comprehensive Systems of Care; and Crisis Continuum of Care.

Together, these pillars guide efforts to enhance workforce capacity, improve care coordination, and expand access to services across the county.

RECOGNITIONS

OCHN proudly recognizes the many honorees celebrated at **NAMI Honors Night**, held on **April 11, 2026**, at **The Henry in Dearborn**. This special evening acknowledged individuals whose dedication, leadership, and advocacy have made a meaningful impact on mental health awareness and support within our community.

Below are the outstanding individuals recognized at this year's event, each of whom exemplifies commitment, compassion, and service.

*Clinical Professional, **Sherrie Cook**, OCHN Lead Clinical Analyst
Administrator, **Adam Hamilton**, Clinical Director
Administrator, **Trisha Zizumbo**, OCHN Chief of Operations*

*Administrator, **Dr. Vasilis Pozios**, OCHN Chief Medical Officer
Hospital, **OCHN Youth and Family Care Connection**
Peer Support, **Carrie Beranek**
Peer Support, **Pepper Catt**, The Alliance
Legislator, **Natalie Price***



Thank you to each of you for your dedication, leadership, and impact in our community. Your work does not go unnoticed.

Additionally, I'd like to congratulate **Dr. Vasilis Pozios** for his recent appointment to **the American Psychiatric Association Foundation (APAF) Board of Directors** for a three-year term. His distinguished service, leadership, and commitment to advancing the field of psychiatry and mental well-being is attributed to this appointment.

STRATEGIC GOALS & PRIORITIES (FY26-28)

- 1. Managed Care Administration and Operations** - This priority focuses on strategies that increase efficiency and strengthen administrative and operational services.
- 2. Advocacy, Partnership, and Outreach** - Under this focus area, our strong, trust-based partnerships power a responsive and inclusive behavioral health system.
- 3. Comprehensive Systems of Care** - This priority demonstrates OCHN's commitment to establishing and reaching key milestones to ensure optimal whole-health outcomes for individuals receiving services.
- 4. Crisis Continuum of Care** - This priority focuses on enhancing access to a full continuum of crisis services that ensures timely, clinically driven assessment and stabilization for individuals during their most vulnerable moments.

Please see OCHN's FY 26 Annual Plan and FY26-28 Strategic Plan for more details.

CALL TO ACTION

If you or someone you know needs immediate support, contact:

- **OCHN Crisis Line:** 888-238-0611
- **National Suicide Prevention Lifeline:** Call 988, Text 988, or visit online. **Crisis Text line:** Text TALK to 741741
- **OCHN Access Line:** 248- 464-6363

Upcoming OCHN Board Meetings:

- **Committee of the Whole:** Monday, May 11th at 4:30 p.m.

- **General Board:** Tuesday, May 19th at 6 p.m.

Looking Ahead

As Fiscal Year 2026 progresses, OCHN remains firmly committed to promoting stability, wellness, and opportunity throughout our community. Our ongoing focus on fiscal responsibility, workforce engagement, advocacy leadership, and compassionate, person-centered care continues to guide our work.

Together with our community partners, we are strengthening Oakland County's public behavioral health system and advancing access to high-quality services for every individual we serve.

To ensure support is always within reach, OCHN provides 24/7 crisis assistance for residents experiencing urgent mental health or substance-use challenges. Anyone in need can call OCHN's Crisis Line at 888-238-0611 for immediate help. No one should face a crisis alone, support is available anytime.

Respectfully,

Dana Lasenby
Chief Executive Officer & Executive Director