



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 or 988

Director's Report – February 2026

In observance of Black History Month, OCHN reaffirms its commitment to honoring the achievements, leadership, and cultural contributions of Black Americans. This annual recognition provides an opportunity to deepen organizational understanding, support meaningful dialogue, and promote equitable practices across our network. Throughout February, OCHN is sharing educational content, highlighting influential figures in behavioral health and civil rights, and encouraging staff engagement in activities that foster learning and reflection. These efforts reinforce the organization's broader commitment to diversity, equity, inclusion, and belonging.

Over the past few weeks, Oakland Community Health Network (OCHN) has made significant strides in expanding access to high-quality, compassionate crisis services for residents across Oakland County. Less than a month after assuming full operational responsibility for crisis services at the Resource and Crisis Center (RCC) in Pontiac, our team demonstrated exceptional dedication, efficiency, and compassion.

OCHN is proud of the progress made in such a short time and remains committed to delivering behavioral health crisis services that are accessible, coordinated, and centered on recovery for every person we serve.

OCHN's mission remains central to all ongoing work: to inspire hope, empower people, and strengthen communities by providing high-quality, recovery-oriented mental health and substance use services that promote resilience, inclusion, and wellness.

ACCESS TO SERVICES

Oakland Community Health Network (OCHN) is the Community Mental Health Service Program and safety-net entity for Oakland County. This includes the responsibility and the obligation to ensure continuity of access when system capacity becomes constrained. During a previous Board presentation, OCHN leadership stated its commitment to implementing processes for monitoring and addressing network adequacy and provider service capacity.

Recently, at least four of our largest case management providers instituted self-imposed referral moratoriums, limiting the system’s capacity to accept new individuals in need of services. These actions have had a direct and immediate impact on timely access to care for Oakland County residents. In response to this priority service need, OCHN will begin directly providing Case Management services. Initiating direct case management services is a measured and necessary step to stabilize access, prevent service delays, and uphold our statutory duty to the individuals and families we serve.

Concurrently, OCHN has opened its network to accept new qualified providers offering these critical services to expand capacity and strengthen long-term system stability. We are actively encouraging interested providers to partner with OCHN to support community needs.

Importantly, OCHN is not in competition with its provider network. Our providers are valued partners and remain central to the delivery of high-quality behavioral health services in Oakland County. The intent is not to replace providers, but to supplement system capacity when necessary to ensure no individual is left without services due to access barriers. A strong public behavioral health system depends on collaboration, transparency, and partnership among OCHN and its contracted providers. Will provide updates as additional information becomes available.

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	January 2026	2026 Fiscal Year to Date
Calls to Access	2,773	10,668
Screenings Completed	436	1,687

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, February 18th, I will be attending the CAC 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. I attended the RRAC virtually on Thursday, February 5th and provided an update on the crisis transition, the cancellation of the State’s PIHP Request for Proposal, and the Direct Care wage discussion.

CUSTOMER SERVICES, COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT & OUTREACH

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

Metric	January 2026	2026 Fiscal Year to Date
Customer Service Call Responses	744	3,362
Community Events	5	32
Email Engagements	22,362	90,238
Website Views	47,960	165,717



OCHN was proud to participate in the Call to Solidarity — a collaborative meeting series hosted by agencies across Oakland County focused on addressing the needs of our community. Held on Monday, February 9, 2026, the event featured an insightful presentation from Alan Bolter, incoming Chief Executive Officer for the Community Mental Health Association of Michigan regarding the state of behavioral health in Michigan.

A strong panel of experts sharing perspectives and solutions, which included Dr. Phillip Knight from The Food Bank Council of Michigan, Jordan Irving from SMART, Tradina Taylor, OCHN Director of Access, Kirsten Elliott, CEO at Community Housing Network, as well as Jessica Zellar and Migel Dalusung with Honor Community Health.

Thank you to everyone who attended, and a special thank you to the planning committee whose dedication and teamwork made this impactful event possible. Together, we continue building stronger connections and a more supportive community.

OCHN CONTINUES CRISIS SERVICES CONTINUUM

Following the abrupt cessation of services by the prior crisis provider on January 29, OCHN implemented immediate contingency operations to ensure uninterrupted services at the Resource and Crisis Center (RCC). The RCC has remained open 24/7 since noon on 1/29/26, and the Sober Support Unit (SSU) resumed operations on 2/1/26.

Since assuming operations, OCHN has rapidly stabilized staffing, filling more than 100 positions (including approximately 80 former Common Ground staff), with continued hiring underway to reach full capacity. Walk-in individuals are evaluated onsite by nursing, clinical, and psychiatric staff. While the Crisis Stabilization

Unit (CSU) and Crisis Residential Unit (CRU) are temporarily paused as we complete mandatory state licensing and credentialing processes, every person who comes to the RCC is evaluated and assisted.

OCHN remains focused on:

- Restoring full crisis stabilization capacity
- Completing licensure for crisis residential services
- Advancing RCC expansion supported by legislative funding

Service Activity (as of 1/29/26)

- Screenings: 272
- Unique Individuals Served: 234
- Assessments: 132
- Triage: 185
- Sober Support Admissions: 124

The OCHN crisis line 888-238-0611 and the 988 Suicide & Crisis Lifeline remain fully available. Walk-ins are still accepted, and licensed clinicians are always on-site to conduct assessments, provide stabilization support, and connect individuals to the appropriate level of care. 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.

OCHN remains committed to collaboration with community stakeholders, advocacy partners, hospitals, law enforcement, and county leadership. Our doors are open. Our clinicians are present. Our crisis response system remains active. OCHN is committed to continued transparency at public Board meetings, as demonstrated during the February 17th session, to keep the community informed throughout this transition.

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

Youth & Family Care Connections (YFCC) Outcomes

Metric	January 2026	2026 Fiscal Year to Date
Service Requests	112	574
Unique Persons Served	87	470
Inpatient Dispositions	31	163
Diversions	61	301
Mobile Crisis Unit Responses	7	64

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.

CoRe Program Data

Metric	January 2026	2026 Fiscal Year to Date
Referrals	355	1,562
Remained in Community	151 / 43%	724 / 46%
Arrests	7 / 2%	34 / 2%
Voluntary Emergency Transports	73 / 21%	301 / 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

The State of Michigan has formally cancelled the Request for Proposals (RFP) intended to competitively procure Prepaid Inpatient Health Plans (PIHPs). The cancellation was issued by the Department of Technology, Management and Budget (DTMB), the state agency responsible for procurement.

This action ends the planned rebid process, halting the proposed transition away from the existing PIHP structure. The Michigan Department of Health and Human Services (MDHHS) confirmed it has withdrawn the PIHP procurement initiative, effectively stopping the competitive bid process.

The cancellation follows multiple Court of Claims opinions indicating that the RFP, as drafted, conflicted with Michigan law in significant ways—particularly around the statutory roles and non-delegable responsibilities of Community Mental Health Service Programs (CMHSPs).

Court findings identified legal conflicts in the RFP language that would have impeded CMHSPs' mandated system steward functions. This outcome is broadly viewed as a win for Michigan's public mental health system, preserving local governance and statutory CMHSP responsibilities while allowing continued collaboration on system improvements.

RECOGNITIONS

Please join us in celebrating an outstanding OCHN staff and board member:

- Linda Bartaloni-Till, OCHN Customer Service Manager, has been honored with The Arc of Oakland County Lifetime Achievement Award. This recognition reflects her unwavering dedication, leadership, and long-standing commitment to supporting individuals and families across our community.
- Adam Fuhrman, OCHN Board Member, is being honored with The Arc of Oakland County Inspiration Award. Adam's passion, advocacy, and lived experience inspire meaningful change and strengthen the work we do every day.

We are incredibly proud of Linda and Adam for their exceptional contributions and their continued commitment to Oakland County residents. Please join us in congratulating them on these well-deserved honors!

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, March 9th at 4:30 p.m.
- **General Board:** Tuesday, March 17th at 6 p.m.

Looking Ahead

As we move forward into FY26, OCHN remains steadfast in its mission to promote stability, wellness, and opportunity across our community. Our focus on fiscal accountability, workforce engagement, advocacy leadership, and compassionate, person-centered care will continue guiding our work.

Together with our community partners, we will strengthen Oakland County’s public behavioral health system and advance high-quality services for every individual we serve.

To support residents in urgent need, OCHN ensures that crisis help is always available. Anyone experiencing a mental health or substance-use emergency can call OCHN’s 24/7 Crisis Line at 888-238-0611 for immediate support. No one should face a crisis alone—help is here, anytime.

Respectfully,

Dana Lasenby
Chief Executive Officer & Executive Director