

## Director's Report – March 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](http://www.oaklandchn.org)

As we begin this month, Oakland Community Health Network (OCHN) wants to recognize several important initiatives that reflect the strengths, values, and commitments of our organization and community. March is both Social Work Awareness Month and Abilities Awareness Month, and each offers an opportunity to highlight the people and principles that drive our work.

Last week, we were honored to participate in the acceptance of the Social Work Awareness Month proclamation at the Board of Commissioners (BOC) where I also provided an OCHN Quarterly Update. This recognition underscores the essential role social workers play across our continuum of care. Their dedication, professionalism, and compassion make a profound difference for individuals and families every day, and we are proud to see their work celebrated at the county level.

Abilities Awareness Month further reminds us of the importance of inclusion, accessibility, and respect for the unique strengths of individuals of all abilities. It reinforces our responsibility to create environments where everyone can participate fully and be supported in achieving their goals. OCHN celebrates these achievements later this month at the Abilities Awareness Month event on March 31st.

As we reflect on our shared values, we must also acknowledge the tragic and deeply unsettling, targeted act of violence that occurred last week at Temple Israel in West Bloomfield. In times like this, our hearts are with everyone affected by this senseless act. We are grateful for the swift response of first responders and law enforcement. No one should fear for their safety while practicing their faith, and violence or antisemitism has no place in our community. OCHN stands ready to offer trauma-informed mental health resources and compassionate support to anyone impacted. Community members feeling anxious or overwhelmed are encouraged to seek support through confidential crisis services that can be reached at 888-238-0611 or with one of our licensed trauma-informed providers across Oakland County.

Finally, I encourage everyone to take part in our Community Voice Survey, now open. Your insights guide our priorities, strengthen our services, and help ensure that the voices and experiences of those we serve remain at the center of our decision making. The survey ends on April 17th and can be found at this [link](#).

Thank you for your partnership and your continued commitment to 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	February 2026	2026 Fiscal Year to Date
Calls to Access	2,628	13,296
Screenings Completed	398	2,087

## 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](http://www.oaklandchn.org/advocacy).

- **CITIZENS ADVISORY COUNCIL (CAC)** - On Wednesday, March 18<sup>th</sup>, 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. Survey submissions are due by Friday, April 17, 2026. Use this [link](#) or QR code to let your voice be heard!



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## CUSTOMER SERVICES, COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT & OUTREACH

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

Metric	February 2026	2026 Fiscal Year to Date
Customer Service Call Responses	672	4,034
Community Events	3	35
Email Engagements	32,307	122,545

Website Views	46,016	211,731
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**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	February 2026	2026 Fiscal Year to Date
Crisis Services Request	600	3,277
Unique Persons Served	469	2,066
Assessment	391	1,792
Triages	398	2,989
Sober Support Admissions	147	653

**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	February 2026	2026 Fiscal Year to Date
Service Requests	118	692

Unique Persons Served	102	572
Inpatient Dispositions	24/ 25.27%	187/33.45%
Diversions	71/ 74.73%	372/66.55%
Mobile Crisis Unit Responses	23	87

**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	February 2026	2026 Fiscal Year to Date
Referrals	366	1,928
Remained in Community	174 / 48%	901 / 47%
Arrests	13 / 4%	47 / 2%
Voluntary Emergency Transports	60 / 16%	362 / 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**

With the State’s cancellation of the PIHP RFP, Michigan’s public behavioral health system remains under the current PIHP/CMHSP structure. This provides stability for individuals served, provider networks, and county-based governance. Moving forward, the focus now shifts to strengthening system performance rather than restructuring it.

In the coming months, OCHN and partners across the state will continue collaborating with MDHHS to improve access, quality, accountability, and data transparency within the existing framework. State leaders have indicated that reform efforts will now occur through policy development, operational improvements, and stakeholder engagement, rather than competitive procurement.

For OCHN this means:

- Reaffirming our statutory role as the system steward for Oakland County.
- Deepening partnerships with CMHSPs, PIHPs, providers, and community stakeholders.
- Advancing system improvements through innovation, data-driven planning, and person-centered practices.
- Ensuring continued advocacy for a strong, publicly governed behavioral health system.

While the RFP cancellation closes the chapter on the proposed rebid, it also creates space to refocus on collaborative solutions that protect local accountability and enhance services for the people we serve.

OCHN Board of Director’s recently adopted a proclamation recognizing Direct Care Workers as essential to the health and stability of Oakland County’s behavioral health system. Michigan has extended the \$3.40 per-hour DCW wage increase through September 30, 2026, strengthening the workforce that supports our most vulnerable residents. The State also implemented a \$0.20 supplemental increase effective October 1, 2024, maintaining the total wage increase

at \$3.40 per hour for eligible clinical workers. These wage supports align with OCHN’s proclamation by acknowledging the critical role of DCWs in ensuring safe, high-quality care. However, state budget proposals include a 20% reduction in Medicaid reimbursement for direct care services, which provider agencies warn could limit services and undermine workforce stability.

OCHN remains committed to advocating for strong, sustainable Direct Care Worker funding and will continue to champion DCWs as vital partners in community health.

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### RECOGNITIONS

I am honored to accept the Women of Merit Award at the upcoming Unity Collaborative, Women in LeadHERship, Navigating Your Journey Conference being held on Tuesday, March 24, 2026 at The Grecian Center in Southgate.

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### 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.*

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### 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, April 13th at 4:30 p.m.
- **General Board:** Tuesday, April 21th at 6 p.m.

### Looking Ahead

As we are reaching the midpoint of FY26, 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**