Director's Report

Oakland Community Health Network

October 2026



OCHN remains committed to strengthening behavioral health support, advancing inclusion, and expanding opportunities for all. October's observances reinforce the importance of this work and our collective responsibility to build healthier, more inclusive communities.

National Disability Employment Awareness Month highlights the value of inclusive workplaces and the contributions of people with intellectual and developmental disabilities, whose skills, dependability and dedication strengthen employers and communities alike.

Bullying Prevention Month reminds us that every child deserves to feel safe and supported. OCHN's Mental Health School Navigators advance this commitment by helping students navigate services while partnering with families to ensure children receive the support they need.

World Mental Health Day, observed October 10, reinforces the importance of mental health awareness, access to support and advocacy to reduce stigma.

ACCESS TO SERVICES

OCHN's Access Team plays a critical role by screening, determining eligibility, and connecting individuals to essential community resources. These efforts reflect OCHN's ongoing commitment to timeliness, partnership, and ensuring every person can access high-quality, person-centered behavioral health services.

Metric	Sept. 2026	2026 Fiscal Year to Date
Calls to Access	3,464	34,161
Screenings Completed	466	5,631

Strategic Alignment: Access calls increased 77% in September 2026 compared with September 2025, rising from 1,957 to 3,464. Year-to-date calls increased 2%, reaching 34,161. Screenings increased 5% for the month but declined 13% year-to-date, from 6,495 to 5,631. These results support OCHN's focus on improving **access, quality, and equity** by connecting more people to behavioral health services. Increased call volume reflects greater use of the Access system. The year-to-date decline in completed screenings warrants further review to identify potential barriers and ensure people receive timely assessments and appropriate care. This supports the strategic priority of **Managed Care Administration and Operations** through ongoing monitoring of service access, system performance, and opportunities for improvement.

ADVOCACY & COLLABORATION

OCHN continues to encourage individuals, families and community members to advocate, stay informed and participate in efforts that strengthen a localized, person-centered public behavioral health system.

Citizens Advisory Council (CAC) – I was unable to attend however the Committee received an informational presentation on autism and learned about the upcoming Community Town Hall regarding Medicaid changes. A few CAC members also attended OCHNs Vaccine Champions conference where they discussed their concerns with medical professionals.

Recipient Rights Advisory Council (RRAC)– The RRAC discussed revitalizing its Mentoring program and its roles and responsibilities. The group also discussed FY'27 goals and recommendations. As CEO & Executive Director, I support the RRAC's independence, ensuring it has the resources necessary to fulfill its role and promote the integration of its recommendations into OCHN's quality and compliance activities.

Strategic Alignment: These efforts directly advance the strategic priority of **Advocacy, Partnerships and Outreach** by engaging people served, families, community partners and advisory councils in shaping and strengthening the public behavioral health system.

CUSTOMER SERVICE, COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT & OUTREACH

Metric	Sept. 2026	2026 Fiscal Year to Date
Customer Service Call Responses	884	10,194
Community Events	14	100
Email Engagements	7,026	294,221
Website Views	49,403	537,885

Strategic Alignment: Customer service call responses increased 23% in September and 31% year-to-date, while website views rose 14% for the month and 11% year-to-date. Community events increased from 12 to 14 in September, but year-to-date events declined 40%. Email engagements declined 68% for the month and 6% year-to-date. These efforts advance **Advocacy, Partnerships and Outreach** by strengthening connections with all stakeholders. Increased call responses and website traffic indicate continued demand for information and support. Declines in email engagement and year-to-date community events highlight opportunities to reassess outreach strategies and strengthen community reach.

COMMUNITY HIGHLIGHTS

Vaccine Champions Mini Conference



OCHN along with partners CNS Healthcare, DWIHN and Macomb County Community Health, hosted its first Vaccine Champions event. We were honored to have Dr. Natasha Bagdasarian, Chief Medical Executive for MDHHS as our keynote speaker as well as Dr. Debra Pinals, MDHHS Medical Director, Behavioral Health and Forensic Programs, provide opening remarks. The conference included a panel discussion and Q&A, which was made available to persons served. About 75 people attended, the conference offering CME credits through Corewell Health. The Health Department also administered almost 40 vaccines.

Pictured from L to R: Dr. Allison Palmer, CNS Healthcare, Dr. Cyril Davis, OCHN Board member, Dr. Michele Reid, CNS Healthcare, Dana Lasenby, OCHN CEO



OCHN Sponsors Arc Oakland County Walk for Inclusion The ARC Oakland County held its annual Walk for Inclusion at Troy's Boulan Park. The annual event brought in almost $21,000 to help support their mission and create a more inclusive community for everyone. More than 100 people showed up to support the event. There was also a ribbon cutting for Phase 1 of a new inclusive playground.



Dutton Farm-The Economic Power of Doing Good OCHN leadership and staff attended Dutton Farm's The Economic Power of Doing Good event this month. The gathering included speakers from Blue Cross Blue Shield, the Small Business Association of Michigan, Community Housing Network and Forgotten Harvest. The panel discussion focused on how non-profits and businesses can collaborate to drive stronger outcomes for everyone. The discussion was moderated by Dutton Farm CEO Jenny Brown. Pictured here: OCHN CEO Dana Lasenby, Provider Network Director Jillian Trumbull, Deputy Chief of Executive Operations and Board of Directors Liaison Sheila Barrett, Executive Assistant to the CEO Kathy Porter and Chief Clinical Officer Kimberly Flowers.

OCHN Receives 2026 Salute to Civility & Inclusion Corp! Business magazine recognized OCHN along with several other organizations as a 2026 Salute to Civility & Inclusion in the Workplace nominee at its annual breakfast. HR staff Emily Cedar and Jerri Lyons provided information and resources to attendees. The annual event recognizes organizations for their commitment to respect, belonging, collaboration, and inclusion.





Calming Kits

OCHN had the opportunity to provide Calming Kits to OCHN Board member Dr. Cyril Davis who distributed them to students who are part of the Impact Committee at Oakland Community College. These kits are helpful to women who are expecting and need items that will help them stay calm during pregnancy. It was also an opportunity to share OCHN information and resources with individuals in the community. OCHN received a thank you letter from the group. These kits include OCHN resources, and several products for new mothers and babies.

Save-a-Life Stations

Great News! According to Substance Use Disorder provider partner, The Alliance, a project that has taken over a year to come to fruition is finally happening at The Detroit Zoo where a Save-a-Life Narcan Station will be installed this month. This participation represents a national milestone in overdose prevention and community safety. As the first zoo in the United States to host a Save A Life Station, the Detroit Zoo is setting a new standard for how family destinations can support public health, provide access to lifesaving resources, and demonstrate a commitment to the wellbeing of the many communities they serve. The partnership reflects a growing movement to make overdose prevention resources accessible wherever people gather, learn, and connect. Additionally, this expansion will also include SMART bus sites and Oakland County Parks where an additional six Save-a-Life stations will be installed at various parks throughout Oakland County this month.

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.

Crisis Residential Services (CRU) Opening in November, OCHN has received AFC licensing and certification for this voluntary program which expands the continuum of care with longer duration stabilization in a structured, therapeutic, homelike setting for individuals who need additional support beyond immediate crisis care.

Resource & Crisis Center (RCC) Round-the-clock -walk-in- 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 a clinical assessment and connection to the appropriate levels of care, including hospitalization, withdrawal management, treatment referrals, and community-based services.

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.

Metric	Sept. 2026	2026 Fiscal Year to Date
Crisis Services Requests	635	7,612

Metric	Sept. 2026	2026 Fiscal Year to Date
Unique Persons Served	502	6,055
Assessments	346	4,093
Triages	397	5,793
Sober Support Admissions	167	1897

Strategic Alignment: OCHN continues to oversee and strengthen the crisis continuum with enhanced data collection providing greater insight into service utilization, outcomes and supports. This supports the strategic priority of providing a full Crisis Continuum of Care, with a continued focus **on improving access, quality and community-based alternatives to hospitalization**.

Youth & Family Care Connections (YFCC) Outcomes

Metric	Sept. 2026	2026 Fiscal Year to Date
Service Requests	124	1,567
Unique Persons Served	102	1,302
Inpatient Dispositions	30	458
Diversions	69	833
Mobile Crisis Unit Responses	19	216

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

Strategic Alignment: Youth & Family Care Connections served 102 individuals in September and increased Mobile Crisis Unit responses to 19, up from 12 in August 2025.

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 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	Sept. 2026	2026 Fiscal Year to Date
Referrals	468	4,991
Remained in Community	252 (54%)	2,619 (53%)
Arrests	10 (2.14%	141 (2.83%)
Voluntary Emergency Transports	(17.52%)	849 (17.02%)

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.

Strategic Alignment: The Co-Responder Program advances OCHN's **Comprehensive System of Care** by bringing behavioral health expertise directly into crisis responses alongside law enforcement. It also strengthens **Advocacy, Partnerships and Outreach** through collaboration with law enforcement and other community partners to provide alternatives to incarceration and connect people to services.

LEGISLATIVE AND POLICY UPDATE

Looking Ahead

The upcoming November General Election will shape the policy environment for Michigan's public behavioral health system for years to come. Voters will select a new Governor, fill an open U.S. Senate seat, and decide every seat in the Michigan House and Senate, along with Michigan's congressional delegation. OCHN continues to monitor these races and their potential implications for behavioral health policy, Medicaid financing, and the structure and funding of the public system.

Following the election, OCHN will track lame duck session activity, when legislation affecting the behavioral health system may move quickly and with limited opportunity for public input. OCHN will also assess changes in executive branch and legislative leadership, committee chairs, and assignments, with particular attention to the Appropriations and Health Policy committees.

As the new administration and legislature take shape, OCHN will identify opportunities to engage newly elected and returning policymakers, including introductory meetings and educational outreach. These efforts will help OCHN in advancing its legislative and policy priorities at the start of the new year.

Strategic Alignment: This work advances the Advocacy, Partnerships & Outreach priority in OCHN's FY27 Annual Plan, specifically the goal to strengthen legislative and governmental partnerships supporting public behavioral health. Post-election engagement with legislative offices through meetings, briefings, and site visits will support coordinated advocacy around OCHN's key legislative and budget priorities.

H.R. 1 Implementation

Planning is underway for OCHNs Community Town Hall about upcoming Medicaid changes. The event has two sessions and will be held on Thursday, November 12th from 3-5pm and 6-8pm. This is a collaborative effort with core providers, the Arc of Oakland County and community partners. Attendees will learn about the new Medicaid work requirements for those on the Healthy Michigan Plan and meet with organizations that will help them navigate the new work requirements. Community partners that have been invited include Michigan Works, Disability Network, Lakeshore Legal Aid, Oakland County Intermediate School District and many others. We continue monitoring all communications and meetings sent out by MDHHS. An internal implementation workgroup, comprised of OCHN and MDHHS staff, has been established to assess the operational and financial impacts of the new requirements, streamline internal processes, and coordinate implementation efforts. The OCHN website has been updated to reflect a FAQ section for those interested in learning more. Click the link below.
https://oaklandchn.org/news-and-information/healthy-michigan-plan-h-r-1/

Strategic Alignment: OCHN's work to prepare for H.R. 1 reflects the strategic priority of **Advocacy, Partnerships and Outreach** by bringing together behavioral health providers, government agencies, advocacy organizations and community partners to help people understand changes that may affect their access to health coverage.

STRATEGIC GOALS & PRIORITIES (FY26-28)

Managed Care Administration and Operations-This priority focuses on strategies that increase efficiency and strengthen administrative and operational services.
Advocacy, Partnership and Outreach- Under this focus area, our strong, trust-based partnerships power a responsive and inclusive behavioral health system.
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.
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.
REPORT SUMMARY: *September's accomplishments reflect progress across all four FY26-28 Strategic Priorities by expanding access to services, strengthening community partnerships and advocacy efforts, advancing the crisis continuum of care, and enhancing organizational readiness for emerging state and federal requirements. There are some opportunities for continued improvement to reduce barriers to access to care that will be monitored and enhanced.*

CALL TO ACTION

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

OCHN Crisis Line: 888-238-0611
National Suicide Prevention Lifeline: Call or text 988. Crisis Text line: Text TALK to 741741

OCHN Access Line: 248- 464-6363

Upcoming OCHN Board Meetings:

General Board: Tuesday, November 17th at 6 p.m.

Looking Ahead

As we begin a new fiscal year, our focus remains clear: ensuring the people we serve continue to receive timely access to the highest quality behavioral health care while preparing for the opportunities and challenges of the year ahead. We will work closely with our state and local partners to successfully implement the requirements of H.R. 1, advance sustainable solutions for Michigan's direct care workforce, and build strong relationships with the new administration in Lansing. Through collaboration, innovation and an unwavering commitment to our mission, OCHN will continue to inspire hope, empower people and strengthen communities.

Respectfully,
Dana Lasenby
Chief Executive Officer & Executive Director