2025 ANNUAL REPORT

Be Well

Get Well

Stay Well

Ohio™

Department of Mental Health & Addiction Services

Table of Contents

Dear Ohioans,

As I reflect on the past year, I'm invigorated by all that we accomplished as an agency. Collectively, we worked with urgency to expand services and fill gaps in care. I'm proud of the strides we've made, especially in the area of crisis services, where we continue to boost awareness of Ohio's 988 Suicide & Crisis Lifeline, which responded to more than 600,000 contacts since it launched in January 2022. We also worked to expand the highly effective Mobile Response and Stabilization Services (MRSS) statewide. We contracted with 12 behavioral health providers to ensure every youth in the state has access to mobile crisis response when and where they need it.

In the areas of Hospital and Forensic Services, we released the recommendations that came out of the Governor's Work Group on Competency Restoration and Diversion. Governor DeWine called for the formation of the Work Group in April 2024 to address the increase in criminal-justice involved patients in our six regional psychiatric hospitals. Over the course of 17 weeks, the Work Group developed 15 recommendations across six domains, many of which have been or are in the process of being implemented.

I'm also proud of the work to implement the Epic Electronic Health Record in our six regional hospitals. In preparation for the transition, two dozen work groups were developed to collaborate and make decisions related to the design, content, workflow, functionality, and usability of the Epic system. Because of their diligent work, Ohio became the first state in the nation to implement Epic in a state-run hospital system.

In the midst of creating new programs and launching new systems, we made time to pause this year to recognize decreases in drug overdoses and suicide. Ohio Department of Health data showed a 9% decline in verified overdose deaths across the state in 2023, and a decline of 1% in suicide deaths, the first decrease in suicide deaths in more than three years.

The progress we are seeing is reassuring that we are on the right track. Under Governor DeWine's leadership, we are working hard to position Ohio as the Heart of Hope where all Ohioans have access to the services and supports they need to be well, get well, and stay well. I look forward to continuing to build upon our progress in the upcoming year.

In service,

LeeAnne Cornyn, OhioMHAS Director

Crisis Services

988 Suicide & Crisis Lifeline Usage Grows

Three years after its debut, the 988 Suicide & Crisis Lifeline is a proven safety net for thousands of Ohioans each month who face emotional distress or thoughts of suicide. Since its launch on July 16, 2022, the service has grown steadily, with Ohio's 19 call centers responding to more than 590,000 calls, texts, and chats: an average of more than 16,400 contacts each month.

"988 is saving lives...the lifeline is providing free, around-the-clock support to Ohioans in crisis by connecting them with someone to talk to for help at the moment it's needed most. I am proud of the impact 988 has made in Ohio and we fully intend to continue building on that momentum moving forward."

OHIO GOVERNOR MIKE DEWINE

The First Three Years

988 BY THE NUMBERS | JULY 2022-JUNE 2025

The 988 Suicide & Crisis Lifeline launched in Ohio and across the nation on July 16, 2022. Ohioans who are experiencing a mental health or addiction crisis, and their family members, are able to call or text 988, or chat **988Lifeline.org** to reach a trained call specialist who can offer help and support.

592,294 total 988 contacts (calls, chats, and texts) since July 2022

2,026 average number of chats recieved per month from Ohio area codes

16,453 average number of 988 contacts per month

3,131 average number of texts recieved per month from Ohio area codes

1.5% average percentage of calls rolled over to a national backup call center

11,296 average number of monthly 988 calls from Ohio area codes, including veteran and Spanish-speaking calls routed to speiclaized national call centers

23 Seconds average speed to answer rate in Ohio, compared to **34 seconds nationally**

988 Suicide & Crisis Lifeline Public Awareness Campaign Earns National Recognition

Ohio's 988 Suicide & Crisis Lifeline public awareness campaign was named the winner of the Silver Anvil Award, which is a prestigious national honor presented by the Public Relations Society of America (PRSA). The award recognizes excellence in public relations and communications and public relations campaigns that meet the highest standards of performance —based on the criteria of research, planning, execution, and measurable results. Additionally, the campaign was named a finalist for the national Sabre Award, which is presented by Provoke Media, a leading voice in the public relations industry.

988 Administrator Doug Jackson (on right) accepts the Silver Anvil Award.

Senate Bill 211 Codifies Lifeline, Administrator Role

OhioMHAS worked with Ohio's 135th General Assembly to codify Ohio's 988 Suicide & Crisis Lifeline through Senate Bill 211. This formally established 988 in the state, as well as the position of 988 Administrator within OhioMHAS. The bill was signed by Governor DeWine in January, and it took effect April 9, 2025.

OhioMHAS, ODEW Partner to Increase Awareness Among Students

In early 2025, Senate Bill 234, which requires schools and higher education institutions to advertise the national suicide and crisis lifeline telephone number to students, was signed by Ohio Governor Mike DeWine. The bill also requires higher education institutions to provide information about declarations for mental health treatment. OhioMHAS worked with the Ohio Department of Education and Workforce (ODEW) to ensure schools had appropriate materials to comply.

(L to R) OSPF Executive Director Tony Coder, Ohio Governor Mike DeWine, Debbie McClintock, Chip McClintock and OhioMHAS Director LeeAnne Cornyn at a news conference announcing the new license plate.

OhioMHAS, Ohio Suicide Prevention Foundation Unveil New Specialty License Plate

OhioMHAS partnered with the Ohio Suicide Prevention Foundation (OSPF) to create a specialty license plate to raise awareness of 988. The Ohio Suicide Prevention Foundation receives $25 from the sale of each plate to support suicide prevention initiatives in communities throughout Ohio. The plates are available for purchase at all deputy registrar locations and online at BMV.ohio.gov.

"I'm beyond grateful to everyone who worked so hard to make this suicide prevention license plate a reality... this is a small but powerful way to show that help is available, and you are never alone. I hope it reminds others that asking for help is always OK. If it helps just one person, it means the world."

DEBBIE MCCLINTOCK

Wife and mother impacted by suicide that petitioned to make a 988-license plate possible

988 State-Centralized Platform Moves Forward

OhioMHAS and the Department of Administrative Services (DAS) selected a vendor to create a 988 state-centralized platform, which will allow for streamlined 988/911 interoperability. The platform will also provide robust 988 data for Ohio stakeholders and coordinate a system of "care traffic control," allowing 988 specialists to better connect help seekers to higher levels of mental health services when needed.

Mobile Response and Stabilization Services Expand

In April 2025, Governor DeWine announced 12 different organizations were selected to provide Mobile Response and Stabilization Services (MRSS) across the state. These organizations will cover 18 regions, enabling response teams to get to any location in the state in less than 60 minutes after receiving a call through **Ohio's 988 Suicide & Crisis Lifeline.**

MRSS
Mobile Response &
Stabilization Services

REGIONAL MAP

REGIONS	COUNTIES
1	Hamilton County
2	Franklin County
3	Cuyahoga County
4	Defiance County, Fulton County, Henry County, Lucas County, Mercer County, Paulding County, Putnam County, Van Wert County, Williams County
5	Ashtabula County, Geauga County, Lake County
6	Portage County, Summit County
7	Mahoning County, Trumbull County
8	Adams County, Brown County, Clermont County, Lawrence County, Scioto County
9	Delaware County, Knox County, Licking County, Morrow County
10	Coshocton County, Fairfield County, Guernsey County, Morgan County, Muskingum County, Noble County, Perry County, Washington County
11	Belmont County, Carroll County, Columbiana County, Harrison County, Jefferson County, Monroe County, Stark County, Tuscarawas County
12	Ashland County, Holmes County, Richland County, Wayne County
13	Montgomery County, Preble County
14	Crawford County, Erie County, Hancock County, Huron County, Marion County, Ottawa County, Sandusky County, Seneca County, Union County, Wood County, Wyandot County
15	Butler County, Clinton County, Warren County
16	Lorain County, Medina County
17	Clark County, Darke County, Greene County, Madison County Miami County, Shelby County, Allen County, Auglaize County, Champaign County, Hardin County, Logan County
18	Athens County, Fayette County, Gallia County, Highland County, Hocking County, Jackson County, Meigs County, Pickaway County, Pike County, Ross County, Vinton County

12 PROVIDERS BY REGION

Allwell Behavioral Health
region 10

Alta Care Group
region 7

Applewood Centers
region 16

Butler Behavioral Health
regions 1,15

Child Focus
region 8

Choices Coordinated Care Solutions
region 13

Coleman Health Services
regions 6, 14, 17, 18

The Counseling Center of Wayne and Holmes
region 12

Nationwide Children's Hospital
region 2

Ohio Guidestone
regions 3, 9, 11

Ravenwood
region 5

Unison Health
region 4

Governor DeWine speaks at a news conference announcing MRSS expansion.

MRSS is a service that provides immediate help for children and young adults aged 20 and under who are experiencing overwhelming mental, emotional, or behavioral distress. With MRSS, when a crisis occurs, a team of trained professionals responds directly to the young person's home, school, or other safe location within the community to de-escalate the crisis and provide ongoing support all at no cost to the young person or their family.

MRSS was previously only available in about half of Ohio counties. Places across the state that have already offered MRSS have seen better behavioral health outcomes, less juvenile-justice involvement, fewer in-patient residential stays for kids, and fewer kids spending the night in emergency departments because of behavioral health crises.

The statewide model is expected to be in place by summer 2025.

Planning Begins for Adult Mobile Crisis Services

Currently, about 60 Ohio counties offer some type of mobile crisis service for adults. To ensure every Ohioan has access to emergency behavioral health care when they need it, OhioMHAS contracted with Clear Pathways to assist with designing community-based mobile crisis services for adults.

Mobile crisis response reduces the burden on law enforcement, criminal justice, and hospital emergency departments, and is a more appropriate response for individuals experiencing a behavioral health crisis.

OhioMHAS will begin hosting listening sessions in July 2025 to understand the current landscape of adult mobile crises response, gather input, learn from promising local practices and challenges, and build a foundation for ongoing collaboration.

Director LeeAnne Cornyn joins Governor DeWine and others to break ground on the new behavioral health urgent care in St. Clairsville.

More Options for Crisis Care Take Shape

Construction began in the fall on a new mental health urgent care and crisis stabilization center in St. Clairsville. The $7.3 million center will be the first of its kind in the region and will serve people of all ages when it opens in spring 2026.

The 8,500 square-foot facility is part of the state's $90 million investment using American Rescue Plan Act (ARPA) funds to strengthen mental health crisis response services in communities across Ohio.

The facility, which will be operated by Coleman Health Services, will have eight crisis stabilization beds, and mobile response services for individuals of all ages in Belmont, Harrison, and Monroe counties.

Once it's fully operational, the facility is expected to serve up to 1,500 individuals each year, both through in-person and telehealth services.

This facility is one of 26 crisis centers being constructed or renovated across the state as a result of the ARPA funding.

Community & Family Resiliency

Investments in Suicide Prevention Save Lives

Deaths by suicide declined for the first time in three years in 2023, decreasing by about 1% compared to 2022, according to the 2023 Ohio Suicide Report released by the Ohio Department of Health (ODH). The report, published in January 2025, recorded 1,777 suicide deaths in Ohio, which is 20 fewer than the previous year. Suicide remained the second leading cause of death among Ohioans aged 10–14 and 20–34, and the 12th leading cause of death overall.

OhioMHAS supports several programs to reach those populations at a higher suicide risk, which include:

- Be Present Ohio (ages 10-24)
- Life is Better with You Here (communities of color)
- Black Youth and Young Adults Suicide Prevention (Black community)
- OhioCares (veterans and military members)
- Life Side Ohio (firearms communities)
- Got Your Back (agricultural/rural communities)
- Man Therapy Ohio (men)

68.7%
Of all suicide deaths were White non-Hispanic men

↓6%
Black, non-Hispanic females and White non-Hispanic females had the largest decrease in suicide deaths

45-54
The age group of Ohioans with the highest rate of suicide deaths (20.1 per 100,000 population)

58%
Firearms were used in more than half of all suicide deaths (1,031)

11%
The number of suicide deaths by drug poisoning increased

Supporting Youth-Led Prevention Efforts

Sources of Strength (SoS)

is a national wellness program for school-age children that improves emotional well-being and prevents suicide, substance misuse, bullying, and violence. The program is supported by a partnership among OhioMHAS, the Ohio Department of Education and Workforce, the Ohio Suicide Prevention Foundation, and PreventionFIRST!. Sources of Strength reached 27,886 new students across 411 Ohio school districts in SFY 2025.

> "[Sources of Strength] has given me the skills to look for struggling students and to be able to help them. Being a part of Sources has helped me to become more involved in my school's community, become a better leader, and given me the skills to make a positive impact in my future and to help others."
>
> **DAWSON**
> *Bryan High School student (Lawrence County)*

166
Elementary School Programs

2
Community-Based Programs
number of involved students not publicly reported

164
Elementary Schools
58,269 students involved

255
Middle & High School Programs

5
Community-Based Programs
number of involved students not publicly reported

21
Middle Schools

+

2
Junior High Schools
4,868 students involved

110,132
Students Impacted by Programming

4,190
Individual Peer Leaders Trained
since January 2024 (responsible for co-planning and implementing SoS activities with adult advisors to reach entire school)

227
High Schools
programming designed to reach entire student body

Youth to Youth International

hosted its Youth Leadership Training at Kalahari Resort in December 2024. One hundred fifteen youth leaders and 30 adult allies attended from 17 youth-led programs across seven counties. During the training, youth applied knowledge gained to develop action plans designed to promote positive peer pressure and a drug-free lifestyle.

Ohio Adult Allies

partnered with the Ohio Center of Excellence for Behavioral Health Prevention and Promotion to host a dynamic Project ECHO training series for professionals working with youth in youth-led prevention. The series included monthly virtual sessions between March and June. Participants learned best practices from subject matter experts on a variety of topics, including youth empowerment and trauma-informed youth work.

OhioMHAS Director LeeAnne Cornyn addressing youth at the 2025 We Are Change Rally.

The Ohio Youth-Led Prevention Network

Youth Council hosted its annual We Are Change Rally on May 2, 2025, to uplift and celebrate the voices of youth who are working across the state to promote healthy choices and decrease stigma. Nearly 1,000 young people attended the event and marched to the Ohio Statehouse where they were addressed and recognized for their leadership by Director Cornyn.

*Following the Hope in Ohio: Summit County Suicide Prevention Community Conversation in April, OhioMHAS and the **Ohio Suicide Prevention Foundation** visited **County of Summit ADM Board** and Summit County Suicide Prevention Coalition to share tailored suicide prevention recommendations for the county and discuss opportunities for collaboration and implementation.*

Growing and Strengthening Prevention Coalitions

OhioMHAS continues to invest in growing the number and strength of coalitions across the state. To date, there are nearly 60 Drug-Free Community Coalitions, at work in the state, and more than 70 Suicide Prevention Coalitions, representing 84 of Ohio's 88 counties. There are nearly a dozen others focused on broader mental health needs.

Community coalitions are one of the most effective means of promoting grassroots alcohol, tobacco, and other drug prevention across disciplines at the local level. Effective coalitions involve all segments of a community working together to establish and build on existing efforts focused on community behavioral health needs (alcohol and other drug abuse, mental health, suicide, gambling, etc.) to mobilize and promote health and wellness through the utilization of the public health model.

Community Conversations Instill Hope

OhioMHAS, along with ADAMH boards and community coalitions, launched a series of community conversations throughout SFY 2025 to discuss the impact of suicide and gather input on what communities need to successfully implement suicide prevention strategies. The events, titled "Hope in Ohio: Community Conversations," were free, open to the public, and featured local officials and community leaders.

Each conversation convened local leaders, partners, and community members to discuss suicide prevention, decrease stigma, and increase awareness of resources. Following each conversation, residents in each county were invited to share their input on suicide prevention priorities through completing an online suicide prevention assessment. OhioMHAS collected, analyzed, and provided the local data to each suicide prevention coalition. The coalitions used the findings to complete a gap analysis. Based on each gap analysis, OhioMHAS provided each community with tailored suicide prevention recommendations.

Chief Advisor Tia Marcel Moretti and Prevention Specialist Michelle Vargas pose with Tony Coder of the Suicide Prevention Foundation and representatives with the Butler County Mental Health and Addiction Recovery Services Board after a Community Conversation in that county.

Director Cornyn addresses the crowd at a Community Conversation in Mahoning County.

Program Gambling Services Continue to Grow

Calls to the Ohio Problem Gambling Helpline have increased since gambling was legalized in 2023. This data suggests that Ohio is experiencing the early impacts of the legalization of sports gaming that went into effect in January 2023. Based on other states' histories, it takes one to three years for legal sports gaming growth to result in serious consequences for some participants.

Ohio's First Sports Betting Survey Under Development

OhioMHAS and the Ohio for Responsible Gambling partners have worked since 2013 to ensure the highest quality problem gambling services system of care for individuals and families. An important part of this process is understanding how Ohioans view and engage in gambling through five-year Ohio Gambling Surveys. This sports betting survey will allow the state to better understand and assess prevalence rates since the 2023 introduction to Ohio's regulated market. The survey will be in the field by mid-summer with results expected by November 2025.

Calls to Ohio's Problem Gambling Helpline

2022
6,835
before legalized sports gambling

2023
10,637
+56% change from 2022

2024
9,808
+44% change from 2022

2025
4,450 Jan-June
+41% change from Jan-June 2022

Addressing Youth Gambling Behaviors

Ohio for Responsible Gambling and the Ohio High School Athletic Association (OHSAA) partnered through the *Change the Game* Ohio campaign to educate youth, parents, and educators about the risks and warning signs of youth gambling. This campaign brings educational resources and prevention tools to OHSAA sporting events and in schools to equip viewers with the knowledge to recognize and address gambling behaviors before they start. This outreach was amplified through multiple channels, including the OHSAA website, social media, newsletters, and broadcasts of OHSAA events. Additionally, a small pilot study was conducted in partnership with OHSAA to help assess youth behaviors related to gaming and gambling.

38%
of Ohio's Teenagers Have Spent Money on In-Game Gambling

Community Toolkits Drive Local Engagement

During SFY 2025, there were 1,629 visits to the problem gambling prevention community toolkits for local resources. Education materials for families, schools, and organizations are available and localizable to bring prevention and awareness messages where they are most needed.

If you are concerned about your gambling or betting habits, or those of someone in your life, do not hesitate to call Ohio's Problem Gambling Helpline at 1-800-589-9966. Calls are answered 24/7 by trained specialists who can offer free, non-judgmental, and confidential support.

Click here for the Pause Before You Play Community Toolkits.

OUR GAME PLAN? KEEP BETTING FUN.

SET LIMITS
RECOGNIZE THE RISKS
KNOW WHEN TO STOP

GET GAME READY

OhioMHAS Director LeeAnne Cornyn helps to cut the ribbon at the opening of the resiliency center.

East Palestine Resiliency Center Opens Its Doors

The East Palestine Resiliency Center opened in July 2024 as a centralized location for support and resiliency services for the community and first responders affected by the 2023 Norfolk Southern train derailment.

Since it opened, the 3,300-square foot facility has served 1,618 individuals. In the wake of the February 2023 disaster, OhioMHAS applied for two emergency response grants totaling more than $1 million from the federal Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration (SAMHSA). The first grant ($209,402) provided immediate mental health support, while the second grant ($879,509) was dedicated to establishing long-term services, including mental health and substance use treatment, counseling, and other therapeutic approaches.

Norfolk Southern provided funds to the Columbiana County Mental Health and Recovery Services Board (CCMHRSB) to purchase and renovate a former doctor's office located in Unity Township into the new Resiliency Center. Renovation work began in late fall 2023 and included the addition of a new roof and extensive interior work. The total cost of the building and renovation project exceeded $600,000. In addition, furnishings and equipment for the center were included in the SAMHSA grant funding secured by OhioMHAS.

Treatment Services

Program Makes Wellness More Accessible

Access to Wellness (ATW) works to meet the needs of adults with severe and persistent mental illness who are involved in multiple systems [e.g., aging (over 65), criminal justice, developmental disabilities, homelessness, and/or veterans]. Its goal is to enhance access to essential recovery resources and foster stability and recovery outside of institutional settings.

The Top 3 Recovery Supports

Housing	94%
Emergency Basic Need Items	83%
Transportation	62%

Data show helping support individuals' basic needs promotes stability and recovery outside of institutions.

Of those served by Access to Wellness between July 1, 2024, and December 31, 2024:

82% did not experience another inpatient psychiatric hospitalization

90% did not experience incarceration

96% did not experience a crisis stabilization unit stay

SFY 2025
The First 6 Months

1,500+
Individuals Served

827 Homeless

621 Criminal Justice

827 Jail Incarceration

86 Developmental Disabilities

50 Aging (over 65)

23 Veterans

23 Outpatient Competency Restoration

Coordinated Specialty Care Improves Outcomes

With appropriate treatment and support, individuals affected by psychosis can and do recover, and the likelihood of doing so is significantly increased if they receive Coordinated Specialty Care for First Episode Psychosis (CSC for FEP) as soon as their symptoms emerge.

Ohio CSC for FEP teams are able to engage with individuals ages 15-40 and provide this service, often referred to as the gold standard treatment for first-episode psychosis. In doing so, these individuals experience reduced mental health symptoms, increased participation in work and school, and an overall better quality of life when compared to individuals who participate in traditional mental health services for psychotic disorders.

The first CSC for FEP program in Ohio began in 2009 at Child Guidance & Family Solutions in Akron. Today, there are 21 community mental health center and university-based CSC for FEP programs serving 42 of Ohio's 88 counties. As of May 2025, 750 clients were enrolled in the programs.

Photo credit: Spectrum News. Aerial photo of tornado damage in the village of Lakeview, Ohio.

PROVIDER TESTIMONIAL

"Client has been linked with our FIRST program since 2017. He initially started out in TBS and psychiatry, experiencing a significant amount of psychosis. Over time, client stabilized on an injection, (and) participated in our CET program. After linking with Supported Employment, he began working. He is no longer receiving Social Security and is working almost full time. In the last few months, he has moved into his own apartment and is taking driving courses to eventually obtain his driver's license! Client's success has been gradual over time, but he continues to thrive! He is very proud of his accomplishments and has succeeded with the support of the team!"
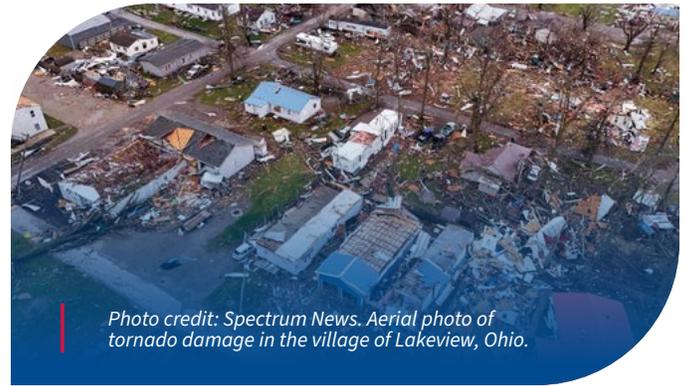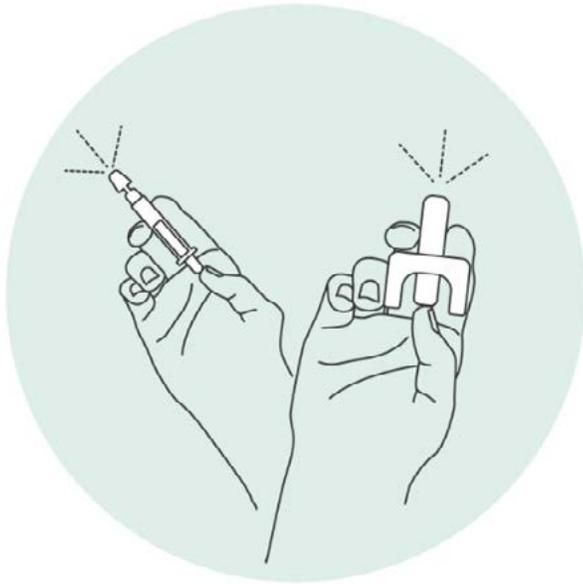
Funding Helps Communities Prepare, Respond Amid Disaster

OhioMHAS awarded $1.6 million to 31 county ADAMH boards as part of the Bipartisan Safer Communities Act (BSCA) initiative. The BSCA provides supplemental funding through the Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration (SAMHSA) to support state behavioral health systems in examining what is needed to address the mental health needs in the aftermath of traumatic events and natural disasters within our communities. This funding provides a unique opportunity to develop improved and sustainable public behavioral health systems that are more adept at meeting the needs of vulnerable people, including those with more complex presentations. This opportunity provides funding to assist Ohio's ADAMH boards in their stages of developing comprehensive behavioral health disaster preparedness plans that enhance existing local emergency response systems.

Funding is being used in the following ways:

- Reinforce collaboration between behavioral health, emergency responders, and public health stakeholders.
- Conducting community needs assessments specific to behavioral health disaster preparedness.
- Developing policies and procedures that promote behavioral health disaster preparedness.
- Using evidence-based and evidence-informed models to develop readiness to respond to incidents of mass violence.
- Providing disaster preparedness and response trainings to Ohio's behavioral health providers.
- Conducting community education opportunities to expand knowledge of behavioral health services in the event of a disaster.
- Developing community-specific behavioral health disaster preparedness plans.

OhioMHAS State Opioid Treatment Authority Jordan Knipper poses with fentanyl test strips.

Harm Reduction Practices Prevent Overdoses

OhioMHAS continues its support of harm reduction practices throughout the state by investing State Opioid & Stimulant Response (SOS) Grant dollars in making naloxone available to those at risk of overdose.

Through Naloxone.Ohio.Gov, Ohioans can receive free naloxone and fentanyl test strips and learn how to administer naloxone. Naloxone (Narcan) is a medication that can reverse an overdose caused by an opioid drug. It is safe to use and has no effect on someone who does not have opioids in their system.

In SFY 2025

348,462

Naloxone Boxes Distributed

139,886

People Trained

16,464

Known Overdose Reversals

NaloxoneOhio

For more information on naloxone and how to get naloxone, visit: **Naloxone.Ohio.Gov.**

Project DAWN (Deaths Avoided With Naloxone) is Ohio's largest community distribution program. The network, which now consists of more than 350 registered programs, is dedicated to the memory of Leslie Dawn Cooper, who battled substance use disorder for many years before her death in 2009.
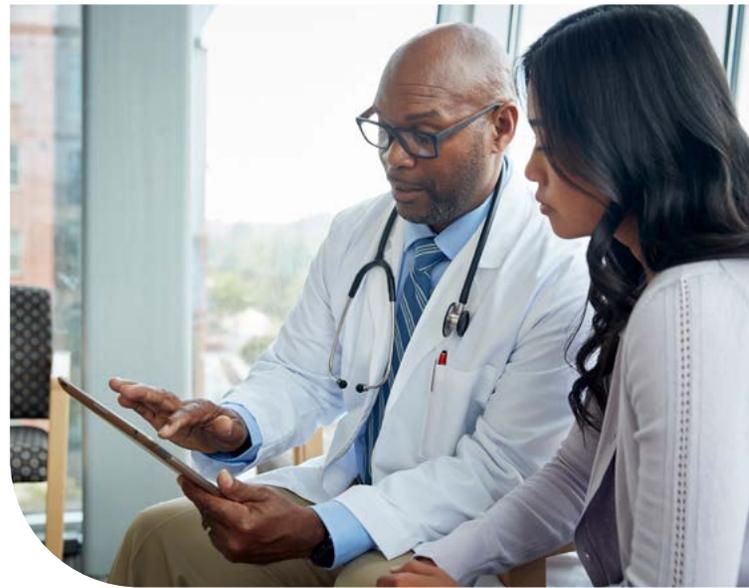
A New Way to Treat Opioid Addiction

OhioMHAS awarded a $1.7 million grant through State Opioid & Stimulant Response 4.0 Grant funds for the startup and operation of two Opioid Treatment Program (OTP) mobile medication units. These units will operate in identified rural and underserved areas of southeast Ohio and are expected to begin providing services in late 2025. These units will be the first of their kind in the state and will be able to dispense methadone and buprenorphine products directly from the vehicles in areas with limited access to these lifesaving medications.

Photos of the interior and exterior of one of the mobile OTP units.

Hospital & Forensic Services

An Epic First for Ohio

OhioMHAS' six regional psychiatric hospitals became the first state-run hospital system in the U.S. to implement the Epic Electronic Health Record (EHR).

> "This state-of-the-art system will allow our staff to work more efficiently and communicate more effectively, so we can achieve our ultimate goal of putting our patients at the center of care."
>
> **LEEANNE CORNYN**
> *OhioMHAS Director*

Many Ohioans may already be familiar with Epic's product, MyChart, which is used by other hospital systems across the state and nation. Epic supports long-term health management by creating a single, secure patient record that can be shared between health systems. For OhioMHAS clinicians, this means a more comprehensive view of treatment history, improved patient safety, and better coordination of care after discharge by ensuring patients are referred to and connected with ongoing services.

Discharged patients, including those linked to a community support network (CSN), have secure, 24/7 access to their records through MyChart. They can view their health information, manage appointments, receive test results, request prescription refills, and communicate with their care team.

Since go-live in October 2024, OhioMHAS clinicians have reported an increase in the time they can spend interacting directly with patients, rather than completing administrative tasks in a health record.

In spring 2025, OhioMHAS was recognized by Epic Systems with the Good Install Award for exceptional success in implementing and utilizing Epic's EHR system. Receiving this award shows strong collaboration across bureaus and a commitment to continuous improvement.

Chief Medical Officer Dr. John Kennedy and staff with the Office of Hospital Services pose for a photo with the Good Install Award.

Miami Valley Targeted as Future Home of Ohio's Seventh Regional Behavioral Healthcare Hospital

The SFY 2025–2026 capital budget includes $133.5 million to continue the DeWine Administration's efforts to build a statewide network of quality care that reaches every Ohioan. This funding includes $10 million for the design and planning of a new, state-of-the-art behavioral healthcare hospital in the Miami Valley.

The proposed Dayton-area hospital has a total estimated cost of $273 million, including land purchase, design, and construction. The $10 million allocation will support land acquisition and initial design work. Funding for full architectural design and construction will be addressed in future capital budget negotiations.

The new hospital is projected to add more than 200 patient beds, expanding access to inpatient behavioral health services and easing the burden on hospitals in other parts of the state.

Direct Patient Care Providers Recognized with DAISY and ROSE Awards

Since 2022, OhioMHAS has partnered with The DAISY (Diseases Attacking the Immune System) Foundation to honor the vital contributions of nurses in Ohio's six regional psychiatric hospitals. In January 2024, OhioMHAS expanded its biannual Outstanding Service Ceremony to also recognize therapeutic program workers (TPWs) through the new Recognition of Service Excellence (ROSE) Award. TPWs provide direct care and help patients function independently by building daily living skills.

For the October 2024 and April 2025 ceremonies, 768 nominations were submitted by families, patients, and peers who were touched by the work of these extraordinary staff members. From those submissions, one DAISY and one ROSE honoree were selected from each of Ohio's six regional hospitals. Nominees and honorees exemplified OhioMHAS' core values of collaboration, quality, accountability, and compassion.

"She is hardworking, honest, and dependable. She has made me feel like my mistake does not define me, and that means a lot to me."

COBH PATIENT NOMINATING DAISY HONOREE ERICA PARKS, MSN, PMHNP

Honorees embrace, pose for photos at an awards ceremony.

Governer Mike DeWine addresses members of the Work Group.

State Hospital System Provides High-Quality Care

Statewide, OhioMHAS currently operates six regional behavioral healthcare hospitals with a total of 1,085 beds. These hospitals serve as a safety net for Ohioans living with severe and persistent mental illness and provide short-term, intensive treatment to patients in both inpatient and community-supported environments. They also deliver comprehensive care to patients committed by criminal courts. Once built, the Miami Valley facility will serve as another example of Ohio's commitment to building a world-class system of care for those facing mental health challenges.

SFY 2025 Total Patients Served

Appalachian Behavioral Healthcare	251
Central Ohio Behavioral Healthcare- KOSAR	937
Central Ohio Behavioral Healthcare - MORITZ	103
Heartland Behavioral Healthcare	583
Northcoast Behavioral Healthcare	613
Northwest Ohio Behavioral Healthcare	357
Summit Behavioral Healthcare	557
Total Hospital System	**3,401**

Implementing Recommendations from the Governor's Work Group on Competency Restoration and Diversion

Under the leadership of Governor Mike DeWine, Ohio continues to take bold steps to ensure all individuals facing mental health challenges can access care in the most appropriate setting for their needs.

In November 2024, Governor DeWine and OhioMHAS released the final recommendations of the Governor's Work Group on Competency Restoration and Diversion. The group's goals were to free up more hospital beds and expand local options for mental health treatment and support. At the time the Work Group was formed, the state-run hospitals were operating at 96% capacity, and their populations consisted almost exclusively of individuals involved in the criminal justice system, including those transferred from jails, ordered to receive restoration to competency to stand trial, or committed for treatment after a not guilty by reason of insanity (NGRI) acquittal.

The Work Group brought together professionals from behavioral health, criminal justice, and psychology, along with leaders from state agencies, community organizations, and other local partners. They met regularly to examine the current competency restoration and diversion landscape, identify challenges and opportunities, and hear from experts on best practices and innovations. Regional listening sessions were also held in each of Ohio's six regional hospital catchment areas to gain further insights from local community members and leaders about their unique challenges. Additionally, a large convening of current and former criminal justice-involved psychiatric hospital patients was held to capture the voices of individuals with lived experience.

Since the release of the report, the Bureau of Forensic Services has been working to implement several of the recommendations:

Pre-Trial Diversion: Reviewing national models and planning for the development of a pre-trial diversion pilot.

Local Judicial System Trainings on the Forensic Mental Health System: These trainings, provided by OhioMHAS personnel in collaboration with local forensic mental health system personnel to support cross system understanding and opportunities for collaboration.

Developing Competency and Sanity Resources for Courts: OhioMHAS, along with members from the Ohio Supreme Court (OSC), judges, and forensic system representatives are working to develop and publish bench cards to inform local court partners and support judicial understanding and decision making.

Development of Forensic Mental Health Navigator (FMHN) Workforce: OhioMHAS has developed six new forensic mental health navigator (FMHN) positions to serve the catchment area of each regional psychiatric hospital (RPH). FMHNs assist individuals who have been ordered to an RPH for evaluation, competency restoration, or criminal court commitment and are awaiting admission, either in jail or in a community setting.

These FMHNs leverage their knowledge and experience of the forensic mental health system not only to inform, but to transform how individuals are served across multiple systems, removing barriers and filling gaps as individuals navigate between courts, jails, communities, and RPHs.

FMHN services began in March 2025. Since that time, 24 jails have been engaged, with services launched in five.

Director LeeAnne Cornyn addresses members of the work group.

Forensic Mental Health Navigator Workforce
EARLY IMPACT DATA

52
DEFENDANTS SERVED

6 Misdemeanors

46 Felony Charges

147 CONTACTS WITH NOTABLE OUTCOMES

1 defendant found competent after completing competency restoration and re-evaluation without inpatient hospitalization.

5 defendants were able to complete competency maintenance with FMNH until case resolution. No additional rehospitalizations were needed.

6 defendants were found competent during inpatient hospitalization, charges were dismissed as case resolution. No additional hospitalizations were needed.

2 defendants found competent during inpatient hospitalization, able to receive bond until case resolution. No additional hospitalizations were needed.

1 defendant found competent during inpatient hospitalization, able to receive conditional release.

12 days average duration of FMNH contact from court order to inpatient hospitalization or case disposition.

Jail-Based Competency Restoration Pilot Project Takes Shape

The Southeast Ohio Forensic Evaluation Center (SOFEC), in collaboration with the Hamilton County Jail and with funding support from OhioMHAS, launched a jail-based competency restoration (JBCR) pilot program in August 2024. The program is designed to serve individuals who have been court-ordered to a regional psychiatric hospital (RPH) for competency restoration but are waiting for admission while in jail.

Similar to the forensic mental health navigator (FMHN) program, JBCR allows individuals to begin receiving services while they wait—connecting them to needed supports and initiating the restoration process. This approach often reduces the length of stay required in the RPH and, in some cases, diverts the admission entirely, freeing up beds for others in need

To date, the program has served more than 50 individuals.

51

CASES CLOSED THROUGH JBCR

NOTABLE OUTCOMES

17

defendants able to be reevaluated without inpatient hospitalization; *15 found competent and removed from Summit Behavioral Healthcare waitlist*

62 days average program duration

27

defendants completed competency restoration process during inpatient hospitalization; *11 found competent*

95 days average inpatient length of stay

Facilitating Comprehensive Forensic Services

The Bureau of Forensic Services provides funding, certification, and support for 10 forensic evaluation centers that deliver comprehensive forensic evaluation services for Ohio's criminal court system. These centers conduct high-quality, court-ordered evaluations to protect the rights and address the needs of individuals with mental illness or intellectual disabilities who become involved in the criminal justice system. Each center serves designated counties within its region.

Forensic center staff also provide consultation and training services to local criminal justice systems, county boards, and community mental health agencies, as well as expert testimony for local courts. By delivering timely, comprehensive, and professional evaluations at the local level, these centers help reduce the stigma of inpatient hospitalization and avoid unnecessary costs.

In SFY 2025

6,486 evaluations were completed

3,397 evaluations were supported by OhioMHAS

23 different types of evaluations administered

Expanding Access to Outpatient Competency Restoration

OhioMHAS provides funding for the operation of outpatient competency restoration (OCR) programs, working with county Alcohol, Drug, Addiction & Mental Health (ADAMH) boards and local providers to provide services to individuals found incompetent to stand trial and ordered to outpatient competency restoration services. These programs serve several counties and services may be provided in a variety of ways, including in-person, virtual, individually, or in a group setting. Forty-eight counties referred clients to OCR, up from 34 counties in SFY 2024. Since the program's inception, they have reported 701 closed cases to date.

Community Forensic Monitoring Serves as Bridge Between Systems

OhioMHAS works with county Alcohol, Drug, Addiction & Mental Health (ADAMH) boards and Community Mental Health (CMH) boards to oversee the Community Forensic Monitoring Program. Forensic monitors follow treatment compliance, and the progress of people found not guilty by reason of insanity and defendants found to be incompetent to stand trial-unrestorable-criminal court jurisdiction who are on conditional release commitment. Monitors serve as a liaison between the individual, the court, the community, and the OhioMHAS regional psychiatric hospitals.

Forensic monitors ensure people with mental illness have a successful transition from the hospital to the community. They also ensure that effective risk management procedures are implemented by community providers and that prompt rehospitalization, reinstitutionalization, or detention occurs when public safety necessitates this level of care.

In SFY 2025 Ohio's forensic monitors actively monitor 496 individuals on conditional release, an increase of 1.5 % from SFY 2024. The annual recidivism rate has remained under 2% over the past three years.

SFY 2022
75
closed cases reported

SFY 2023
172
closed cases reported

SFY 2024
186
closed cases reported

SFY 2025
268
closed cases reported

Criminal Justice & Recovery Services

Expanding Crisis Intervention Teams

OhioMHAS partners with the Criminal Justice Coordinating Center of Excellence (CJ CCoE) at Northeast Ohio Medical University (NEOMED) for Ohio Crisis Intervention Team (CIT) support and expansion programming.

In SFY 2025, OhioMHAS invested $250,000 to further CIT expansion. The project provides a variety of activities and training opportunities related to CIT program development, including but not limited to law enforcement agency scholarships, CIT training mini grants, CIT program development awards to Ohio county and multi-county CIT programs, regional or statewide training opportunities for partner groups, and updated statewide strategic planning.

CRIMINAL JUSTICE COORDINATING CENTER *of* **EXCELLENCE**
A NEOMED CCoE

Sustaining Specialized Docket Support

The Specialized Docket Subsidy Program provides funding to specialty dockets to more effectively manage high-risk, high-need adult and juvenile offenders in the community, thereby reducing commitments to the state prison system.

The SFY 2024–2025 OhioMHAS budget includes approximately $22 million ($11 million per fiscal year) to support 222 specialized dockets in 64 counties:

102
Drug Courts

42
Mental Health Courts

30
Family Drug Courts

24
Veteran Courts

24
Human Trafficking, OVI, Reentry, and Domestic Violence Courts

Addiction Treatment Program Supports Court-Involved Individuals in Recovery

The Addiction Treatment Program (ATP) is a specialized docket for individuals with a substance use disorder. ATP is proven to reduce recidivism, increase public safety, and minimize harm to those who encounter law enforcement by providing necessary treatment and recovery supports. OhioMHAS allocates $5 million to county boards to provide treatment and recovery supports—including medication-assisted treatment, withdrawal management, and detoxification services—for individuals who are participating in a certified drug and/or family dependency court. Participants also receive assistance with housing, transportation, childcare, job training, and other vital recovery support services.

Program Provides Linkage to Community Supports

Jail-based programs forge collaborative relationships between the behavioral health and criminal justice systems so individuals with mental illness and/or substance use disorders receive the care they need. This, in turn, helps to reduce recidivism, increase public safety, and minimize harm to those who encounter law enforcement. In SFY 2025, OhioMHAS invested $3.8 million to support 34 criminal justice and behavioral health linkage programs across 57 counties. These programs identify individuals with mental health needs, connect them to appropriate treatment, and link them to vital community resources. Collectively, they served approximately 15,000 people throughout the year.

Improving Behavioral Health Access in Correctional Settings

Ohio Rev. Code § 5119.19 established the Behavioral Health Drug Reimbursement Program, which provides reimbursement to counties for the cost of certain drugs—including medication -assisted treatment, and psychotropic medications—dispensed to inmates of county jails and Community Based Correctional Facilities (CBCF) in Ohio. In SFY 2024, 73 Jails and 17 CBCFs applied for funding.

In SFY 2025, OhioMHAS supported this program with $5 million. Because this is a reimbursement-based program, data on the number of participating institutions is not yet available.

Linking Reentry to Recovery and Stability

OhioMHAS employs community linkage social worker (CLSW) staff who work with adult offenders in Ohio Department of Rehabilitation and Correction (ODRC) prisons and juvenile offenders at Ohio Department of Youth Services (ODYS) facilities. Staff provide qualifying offenders with appointments and referrals to support services that promote successful reintegration into the community after discharge, such as housing and health care services. While year-end reports from ADAMH boards are not currently available, estimates show 3,500 people were served in SFY 2025.

Transition Program Supports Community Reentry

The Community Transition Program (CTP) provides critical support to individuals with substance use disorders and/ or severe mental health conditions who are reentering the community from Ohio prisons. Through CTP, OhioMHAS linkage staff identify eligible individuals and connect them to local providers for continued treatment and recovery support. Services include mental health and substance use counseling, peer support, vocational services, transportation, and access to housing resources such as permanent supportive housing, rapid rehousing, and recovery housing. In SFY 2025, OhioMHAS invested $5 million to support this important work.

CTP was featured in the documentary "Returning Home: Prison, Homeless, or Housing? The Choice That Changes Everything," which premiered on YouTube on May 21. The film — a collaboration between the Corporation for Supportive Housing (CSH) and Invisible People — explores innovative reentry programs in Ohio and highlights the transformative role of supportive housing in reducing recidivism and promoting stability.

*A screenshot from the documentary available on **YouTube***

Peer Recovery Coaches Support Incarcerated Individuals

In partnership with the Ohio Department of Rehabilitation and Correction (ODRC), the OhioMHAS Bureau of Correctional Recovery Services provides peer recovery support services to incarcerated individuals with substance use disorders. These services promote recovery, self-determination, and independence through peer-led support.

Recovery coaches, incarcerated individuals with lived experience, receive 16 hours of online training, 40 hours of in-person instruction, and ongoing supervision by trained OhioMHAS clinicians. In SFY 2025, due to a change in the interpretation of law, incarcerated individuals became eligible for certification prior to release. Previously, they were not eligible to obtain certification until post release. Currently, 151 active recovery coaches serve in 21 prison facilities, offering support in both general population and specialized housing units across Ohio.

To assess the impact of peer recovery support (PRS) training in prisons, the OhioMHAS Office of Quality, Planning and Research conducted a two-year evaluation that concluded in SFY 2025. During that time, recovery coaches delivered more than 12,000 individualized support sessions to nearly 1,400 incarcerated individuals.

Findings Include:

11%
increase in peers who felt they had the resources to achieve recovery

70%
reduction in average rule violations after one year in the program

22%
increase in perceived positive social support among peers with multiple incarcerations

Therapeutic Communities Strengthen Paths to Rehabilitation

The objective of therapeutic communities is to address anti-social behaviors by creating a client community that is a small-scale version of the larger community outside of the correctional setting. The therapeutic community has a very structured day that includes clinician involvement, Cognitive Behavioral Therapy, and group meetings.

OhioMHAS Recovery Services Therapeutic Community (TC) Program Total Participants

(July 1, 2024-May 31, 2025)

THERAPEUTIC COMMUNITY (TC)	TOTAL PROGRAM PARTICIPANTS
Chillicothe Correctional Institution	165
Grafton Correctional Institution	129
Madison Correctional Institution	173
Noble Correctional Institution	219
Ohio Reformatory for Women	166
Pickaway Correctional Institution	172
Total	**1,024**

Recovery coaches at Noble Correctional Institution participate in a Recovery Month activity.

Promoting Recovery in Ohio's Prisons

This partnership between OhioMHAS and the Ohio Department of Rehabilitation and Correction (ODRC) leverages the combined expertise of each agency to provide increased treatment within Ohio's prisons to ensure a better connection to clinical, and recovery supports for incarcerated persons upon release.

OhioMHAS is committed to providing a comprehensive continuum of substance use disorder treatment services. Incarcerated persons' participation in these programs is strictly voluntary.

OhioMHAS Recovery Services Program Totals SFY 2025

Treatment Readiness	2,143
Intensive Outpatient	1,124
Recovery Maintenance	824
Level 4 SUD Treatment	232
Tobacco Cessation	97
Substance Abuse/Mentally Ill	365
Treatment Transfer Program	225
Brief Intervention Program	1,766
BIP-SAMI (Brief Intervention Program – Substance Abuse Mental Illness)	105
Virtual Reality	41
Starting Point Group	5,739
Recovery Dorm	2,017
Total	**14,768**

* SFY2025 Fusion RS 106 Admission Report

** Tobacco Cessation, Treatment Transfer Program, Virtual Reality, and Recovery Dorm totals are through May 31,2025.

*** Virtual Reality was a pilot program that has since ceased

Public Awareness & Education

Mental Health Awareness Month

OhioMHAS, together with the RecoveryOhio initiative, recognized May as Mental Health Awareness Month.

Aligned with the national recognition, Governor Mike DeWine and Lt. Governor Jim Tressel issued a proclamation designating May as Mental Health Awareness Month in Ohio.

"While the recognition is observed in May, under Governor DeWine's leadership, mental health is prioritized every day in this state. At OhioMHAS we have worked hard to make services more visible, accessible, and effective, and in doing so, treating individuals and families with the dignity, respect, and understanding they deserve."

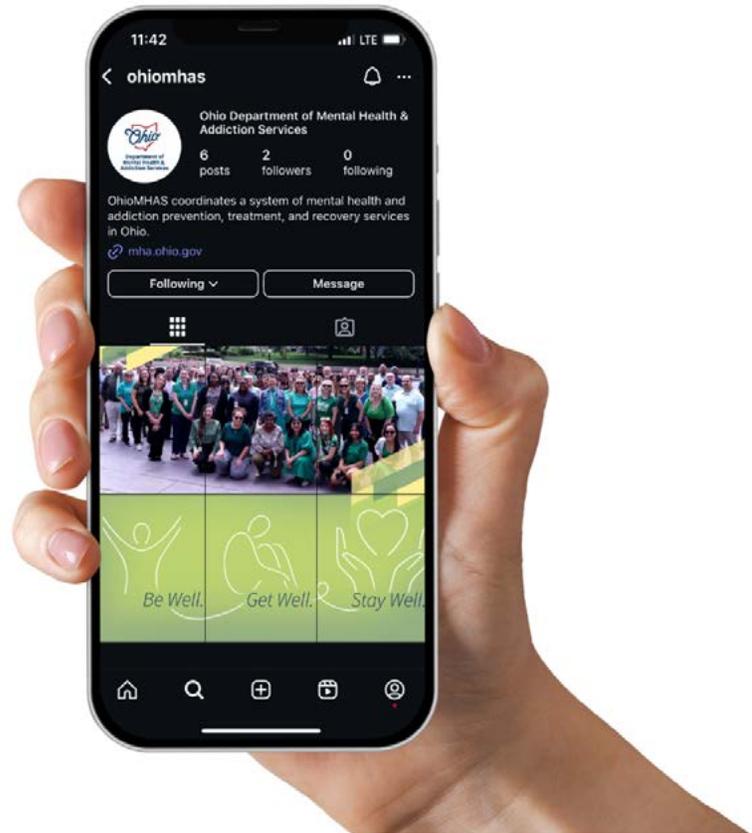**LEEANNE CORNYN**
OhioMHAS Director

As part of the annual observance, OhioMHAS and RecoveryOhio partnered to develop a free digital toolkit for communities to use to help create conversations about mental health. The toolkit includes social media, newsletter and website messaging, and images, available to download **here.**

OhioMHAS Launches Instagram Account

As part of Mental Health Awareness Month, OhioMHAS launched its new Instagram page, @ohiomhas. The account shares mental health tips and highlights the work of the agency and partners to help Ohioans be well, get well, and stay well.

As a way to generate excitement and increase awareness of the new page, OhioMHAS staff held pop-up events in two state office buildings. The pop-up events were another way to connect state employees to the work of the agency and encourage them to prioritize their mental health.

Mental Health Day at the Ohio State Fair

To help make prevention, treatment, and recovery supports more visible and accessible to all Ohioans, OhioMHAS joined with colleagues from Ohio Governor Mike DeWine's *RecoveryOhio* initiative and the Ohio Department of Insurance (ODI) to co-host Mental Health Day at the Ohio State Fair on Friday, July 26, 2024.
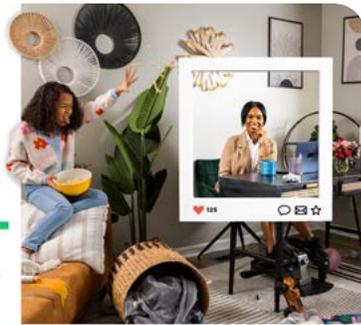
Directors and staff from all three agencies greeted fairgoers and distributed 5,000 string bags filled with educational resources and promotional items to help raise awareness of the wide range of behavioral health services and supports available to Ohioans.

Fairgoers who visited the Bricker Marketplace Building were able to access behavioral health resources and information at the OhioMHAS, ODI, and "**Beat the Stigma**" booths. Staff answered questions about services and benefits, distributed literature, and provided guidance on how to connect with community resources throughout Ohio. At the "Beat the Stigma" booth, fair patrons were invited to step into a replica of the gameshow booth featured in campaign PSAs to challenge their knowledge of mental illness, addiction, and stigma. The OhioMHAS booth featured information about *Ohio's 988 Suicide & Crisis Lifeline* and included an interactive 988 myths vs. facts quiz for visitors to test their knowledge of the lifesaving resource.

Campaign Encourages Ohioans to "Check In On Yourself"

Everyone has stress, and your stress level can vary from day-to-day. Whether it's getting ready for back-to school, the stress of the holiday season, or feeling like your life doesn't compare to what you see on social media, it's important to remember to take a step back and check in on yourself when you're feeling overwhelmed. OhioMHAS, in partnership with the Ohio Department of Health, created tips for stress management, as well as three rounds of public service messages urging Ohioans to "Check In On Yourself." The campaign, which includes digital ads, social media messages and billboards, helps Ohioans assess their stress level and offers tips to manage it in a healthy way. For more tips for dealing with stress, visit *mha.ohio.gov/CheckIn.*

Overdose Awareness Day

OhioMHAS joined Gov. Mike DeWine and RecoveryOhio in observing Ohio's fourth annual Overdose Awareness Day on Aug. 31, 2024. Established in 2021, the annual observance aims to raise public awareness and remember the lives lost to the ongoing national opioid epidemic. It also helped usher in September as Recovery Month.

Communities throughout Ohio hosted local awareness events commemorating Overdose Awareness Day. OhioMHAS provided mini grants totaling nearly $670,000 to fund events in 44 Ohio counties. The Ohio Department of Health (ODH) also provided stipends to support awareness celebrations, contributing $80,000 to 32 Project DAWN (Deaths Avoided With Naloxone) sites. Additionally, ODH supplied about 30,000 units of naloxone specifically for Overdose Awareness Day events.

To help local communities promote Overdose Awareness Day, leaders from RecoveryOhio, ODH, and OhioMHAS created an *Ohio Overdose Awareness Day Toolkit*. The toolkit included social media graphics and posts, videos, posters, and digital ads to be used by local communities and organizations to raise awareness. The toolkit also aims to educate Ohioans on what to do in an overdose situation and how to get help for someone struggling with addiction.

Celebrating Recovery

Since 1989, National Recovery Month has been observed in September. Throughout the month, OhioMHAS and RecoveryOhio celebrated those in recovery and encouraged others to begin their own recovery journey. In support of this mission, OhioMHAS and RecoveryOhio partnered to provide a free digital toolkit for communities to increase public awareness of recovery, dismantle the stigma around mental health and addiction, and provide resources to those in recovery.

Highlighting the Wellness Workforce

In SFY 2025, the Office of Communications & Marketing partnered with the Office of Workforce Sustainability to increase awareness of the various incentives available to students pursuing a career in behavioral health, as well as behavioral health professionals who left the field. OhioMHAS developed a marketing campaign to promote the availability of Recruitment and Retention Bonuses. The bonuses provide up to $10,000 to individuals who work at least one year in community behavioral health care upon graduation.
A subsequent media campaign was launched to promote the Welcome Back program, which provides financial incentives to behavioral health professionals to return to a direct care role in the community. Both efforts were successful in increasing participation in the programs.

Additionally, a more holistic campaign was developed to bring awareness to the growing demand for behavioral health services and the lagging increase in the workforce.
The campaign features real-life community behavioral health professionals sharing why they were drawn to the field and why others should make a career out of caring for their neighbors.

Data & Innovation

Deputy Director of Innovation Nikki Reiss participates in a ribbon cutting ceremony to celebrate the arrival of the SOAR Study in Jackson County.

HONE Connects Data to Action in First Episode Psychosis Care

OhioMHAS partnered with Yale University, The Ohio State University, and Northeast Ohio Medical University to develop HONE—an electronic health record system tailored to the needs of First Episode Psychosis (FEP) providers and clients in Ohio. HONE standardizes data collection across all FEP programs, enabling the department to track progress over time at the patient, provider, and agency levels.

Ohio is the first state in the nation to gather FEP data in this way. HONE supports benchmarking against EPINET, the NIH-funded national FEP outcomes repository, and offers a secure dashboard to monitor and strengthen fidelity to the Coordinated Specialty Care model as Ohio's provider network expands.

HONE also enables OhioMHAS to conduct hybrid fidelity reviews and drive continuous quality improvement—making it a powerful tool for advancing FEP care across the state.

SOAR Study Engages Thousands to Uncover Root Causes of Mental Distress and Addiction

Through a $20 million investment in the SFY 2024-2025 budget, OhioMHAS launched the SOAR Study in partnership with The Ohio State University Wexner Medical Center and College of Medicine, in collaboration with universities across Ohio. This multi-generational research effort aims to uncover the root causes of persistent emotional distress, suicide, and drug overdose in Ohio.

Since launching in January 2024, the study has engaged more than 16,000 Ohioans across all 88 counties, including over 1,400 families. More than 3,600 participants have completed brain health phenotyping, leading to early detection of serious conditions and lifesaving referrals: over 300 individuals have been connected to behavioral health treatment, and more than 50 have received follow-up care for medical concerns revealed through scans.

Early findings point to key risk factors—such as sleep problems, childhood neglect, and poor coping skills—offering insight into prevention and intervention strategies.

> "I identify as a person in long-term recovery from a dual diagnosis. I am extremely excited to hear about the efforts being made to better understand the etiology of addiction and mental illness."
>
> **STUDY RESPONDENT**

Photo of mobile MRI unit on site.

SOAR Network Drives Innovation to Strengthen Behavioral Health in Ohio

The State of Ohio Action for Resiliency (SOAR) Network is a statewide collaborative working to improve behavioral health outcomes through innovation and applied research. With behavioral health challenges on the rise, SOAR aims to make Ohio a national model—helping more people thrive, achieve economic stability, support their families, and contribute to their communities.

The SOAR Network advances its mission in three key ways:

Setting a Strategic Research Agenda: The network identified priority research gaps and practice questions focused on early identification, medication use, the impact of multiple diagnoses in children, and behavioral health trends among vulnerable populations, such as rural farmers.

Investing in Innovation: Using a structured assessment tool, the network reviewed and selected promising ideas to expand access and improve quality. Since launch, 23 proposals totaling over $60 million have been submitted; 11 have received funding. In May 2025, awardees gathered to showcase their projects and build cross-sector connections.

Supporting the SOAR Study: A long-term, statewide research initiative exploring the root causes of emotional distress, suicide, and addiction—laying the groundwork for a more resilient Ohio.

Recipients of SOAR Innovation Grants coming together to share their work with members of the OhioMHAS Innovation Work Group and other award recipients.

Recovery Supports

Community members celebrate recovery during an O.U.R. Place outreach event.

Ohio's Peer Network Continues to Expand

A certified peer recovery supporter is someone with direct or indirect lived experience with behavioral health challenges. Certified peer supporters have been trained to help others affected by mental illness or substance use disorders. OhioMHAS partners with state and local organizations to offer continuing education trainings for peer supporter certification renewal and peer supporter supervisors.

In partnership with OhioMHAS Bureau of Recovery Supports, 11 trainings were held in SFY 2025, preparing 150 incarcerated individuals to serve as peer supporters.

Beginning in SFY 2025, those who complete the training are eligible to obtain certification up to 90 days before their release, a welcomed change from the previous policy, which required individuals to wait until after release.

"Stigma sadly often remains when it comes to hiring someone with a serious mental illness or someone once addicted to fentanyl. These Ohioans can work, and they can contribute. Someone who has been in recovery for many years from drug addiction is often the best person to help others trying to get into recovery."

GOV. MIKE DEWINE
State of the State address 3.12.25

Peer Services Ecosystem in Ohio

88
community-based peer support trainings in SFY 2025

3,391
certified adult peer recovery supporters (currently active)

38
youth peer supporters

220
family peer supporters

Connecting More Ohioans to Housing, Treatment, and Hope

OhioMHAS currently supports 11 PATH (Projects for Assistance in Transition from Homelessness) outreach teams across 13 counties, eight rural outreach teams in eight counties, and 13 SUD outreach teams in 13 counties.

PATH

5,052
Individuals Contacted

1,391
were connected to mental health services

2,913
enrolled meeting the 57% target set by SAMHSA

619
transitioned to permanent housing settings

Rural Outreach

In SFY25, two rural outreach programs were added for a total of eight programs.

606 individuals contacted

149 connected to mental health services

38 exited to permanent housing settings

SUD Outreach

In SFY25, 18 outreach programs operated around Ohio.

635 individuals contacted

145 connected to SUD treatment

93 exited to permanent housing settings

Finding Stability Through Housing

In addition to supporting outreach efforts, OhioMHAS helps sustain permanent supportive housing (PSH) for individuals experiencing homelessness. Through a collaboration with the Ohio Department of Development's Supported Housing Program Grant, OhioMHAS assists PSH providers serving individuals with behavioral health conditions by helping meet the 1:2 match requirement for operating expenses.

In SFY 2025, OhioMHAS provided $774,880.22 in funding to 24 providers, supporting 2,110 individuals across the state. This investment leveraged more than $24.7 million in total project funding, critical support that helps PSH providers maintain essential services.

Accessing affordable rental housing remains a significant challenge in Ohio, especially for individuals living with mental illness, substance use disorder, or co-occurring conditions, many of whom face extremely low incomes, poor rental histories, and criminal records. These barriers make it difficult for many Ohioans to secure safe, stable, and affordable housing.

Ensuring Safe, High Quality Recovery Housing

To improve the quality and safety of recovery housing, Ohio's SFY 2024-2025 operating budget included new requirements for all recovery residences. Effective January 1, 2025, all recovery housing residences in Ohio must:

- Be certified by either Ohio Recovery Housing (ORH) or accredited by Oxford House, Inc.
- Be registered with OhioMHAS

Certification is required for operators to advertise as recovery housing or receive referrals from mental health and addiction services. These measures are designed to strengthen protections for residents and ensure access to high-quality, safe environments for individuals in recovery.

OhioMHAS was also responsible for establishing a complaint and investigation procedure for recovery housing residences. To fulfill this responsibility, the department contracted with ORH to investigate complaints and enforce standards.

As of June 2025, Ohio Recovery Housing has 1,020 certified homes with 9,464 beds. This is double the bed capacity from last year (May 2024) when they had 598 certified homes with 4,541 beds.

Oxford House Inc. received funding to expand the number of Oxford Homes in Ohio. As of June 2025, Oxford House has 56 homes in Ohio. This is a 273% increase from the 15 homes open in April of 2024.

A searchable statewide registry of certified recovery homes is available at: **rhsearch.mha.ohio.gov**

Mini Grants Improve Quality of Life in Residential Facilities

In SFY 2025, OhioMHAS awarded three types of Enhancing Quality Grant (EQG) mini grants to eligible class 2 (RF2) and class 3 (RF3) residential facilities to improve quality of life for individuals living with severe mental illness. These grants helped cover operating expenses in key areas:

- **Staffing and Retention**: 131 operators received $3,000 each to support workforce stability.
- **Minor Repairs:** 147 operators received funding ranging from $650 to $3,250, based on bed count, to address physical improvements in their facilities.
- **Resident Support:** 182 operators received $2,000 each to enhance services and supports directly benefiting residents.

These investments help ensure Ohio's residential facilities remain safe, stable, and supportive environments for individuals with complex behavioral health needs.

PASRR Ensures Appropriate Nursing Facility Placement and Support

PASRR (Pre-Admission Screening and Resident Review) is a federally mandated process that ensures individuals with serious mental illness (SMI) and/or developmental disabilities (DD) are appropriately assessed before admission to a Medicaid-certified nursing facility (NF)—regardless of how their stay is funded. The goal is to ensure individuals are placed in the least restrictive setting and have access to the behavioral health or developmental supports they need.

PASRR is administered by OhioMHAS in partnership with the state's Medicaid and developmental disabilities agencies.

In SFY 2025, OhioMHAS issued more than 9,100 PASRR determinations, evaluating whether nursing facility placement was appropriate and recommending additional person-centered services and supports when needed.

Throughout the year, the PASRR bureau provided technical assistance to applicants, caregivers, hospitals, and NF staff. It also:

- Updated the Community Integration Resource Packet to better connect individuals with services that support transitions back to the community
- Added information about the 988 Suicide & Crisis Lifeline to determination letters
- Published a PASRR Connection newsletter, featuring FAQs, a video training series, and a special highlight on the 25th anniversary of the Olmstead Decision
- More information and resources are available at: ***https://mha.ohio.gov/rules-and-regulations/pasrr***

Workforce Sustainability

Great Minds Fellowship Supports Workforce Growth

In partnership with the Ohio Department of Higher Education and the Ohio Department of Medicaid, OhioMHAS supported the Great Minds Fellowship (GMF). The fellowship provided up to $15,000 in scholarships to students within two years of graduating with degrees or certificates in social work, marriage and family therapy, mental health counseling, psychiatric/mental health nursing, or substance use counseling.

Through the end of fall Semester 2024, the Great Minds Fellowship supported approximately 1,900 unique students through financial assistance provided via participating educational institutions.

Additionally, graduates who secure direct service positions at OhioMHAS-certified Community Behavioral Health Centers (CBHCs) are eligible to receive up to an additional $10,000 in recruitment and retention bonuses.

In September 2024, Governor Mike DeWine announced the Great Minds Fellowship Workforce Commitment Incentive Program to help recent graduates offset the cost of their education. In SFY 2025, nearly 600 graduates received financial assistance through this program. Each recipient committed to at least one year of employment at an OhioMHAS-certified CBHC in exchange for the support.
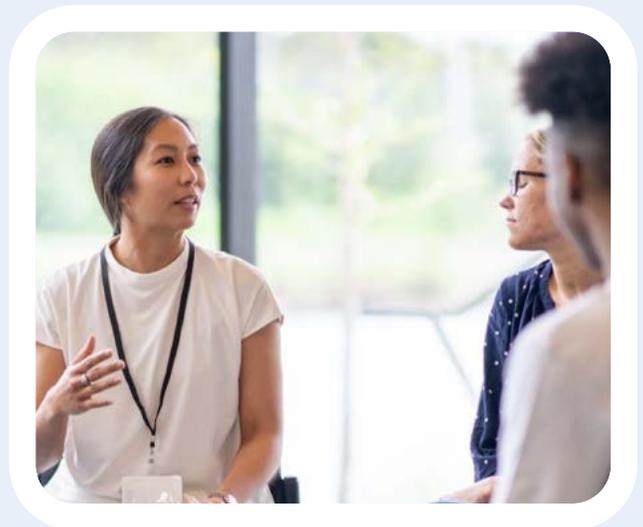

Welcome Back Campaign Brings Hundreds Back to Behavioral Health

OhioMHAS is committed to incentivizing seasoned professionals to return to the behavioral health field. Through dedicated funding, OhioMHAS is supporting CBHCs in spearheading recruitment initiatives and offering hiring incentives through the Welcome Back campaign. These funds continue to directly benefit returning behavioral health professionals, ensuring their valued presence in our wellness workforce. In 2025 there were over 440 new hires into direct service positions via the ongoing campaign.

Department of Mental Health & Addiction Services

The Ohio Wellness Workforce

Collaborating to Grow the Workforce

OhioMHAS launched new behavioral health workforce expansion initiatives by fostering collaborative relationships across the state. To support this effort, OhioMHAS partnered with four regional workforce development boards that demonstrated both the capacity and commitment to strengthening the behavioral health workforce in their areas. These projects focused on key priorities such as hiring, workforce retention, care delivery improvement, service integration, educational opportunities, and the continuous advancement of Ohio's community-based behavioral health system.

The collaboration included both new initiatives and the expansion of existing partnerships with the Richland-Crawford Workforce Development Board, Aspyr Workforce Innovation (Franklin County), Area 14 Workforce Development Board (Athens, Meigs, Perry), and the Workforce Council of Southwest Ohio (Hamilton County).

OhioMHAS released two separate Expressions of Interest (EOI) to support the behavioral health workforce through both direct and indirect efforts. These EOIs aimed to expand the workforce, improve retention, enhance quality, increase educational opportunities, and promote collaboration between behavioral health and workforce development systems. As a result, 13 new initiatives were launched to enhance and expand the behavioral health workforce throughout Ohio. Projects range from the development of partnerships to highlight and promote careers in behavioral health to new prospective professionals, and the implementation of various workforce training and upskilling programs, to strategies pairing transitional housing with job training and the integration of workforce development within the provision of prevention and recovery support services.

To learn more about Ohio's workforce priorities visit *mha ohio.gov/WellnessWorkforce*

Department of Mental Health & Addiction Services