



RecoveryOhio 

Recovery is Possible.

2023 Annual Review



**MIKE DEWINE**  
GOVERNOR OF OHIO

[www.RecoveryOhio.gov](http://www.RecoveryOhio.gov)

*"My administration, RecoveryOhio, and the RecoveryOhio Advisory Council are committed to addressing the behavioral health needs in this state so that every Ohioan can live up to their God-given potential."*

*- Mike DeWine, Governor of Ohio*





## Letter from Governor Mike DeWine



### Dear Fellow Ohioans:

I am pleased to present the 2023 RecoveryOhio Annual Review, which captures our collective efforts in combating substance abuse and promoting recovery across Ohio.

As we navigate the complex landscape of addiction and recovery, we must remain steadfast in our commitment to support and uplift those affected by substance use disorders and their families. This annual review serves as a testament to the tireless dedication of our community partners and advocates, who have joined forces to address these critical issues.

Throughout the past year, RecoveryOhio has continued to spearhead innovative initiatives aimed at expanding access to treatment, enhancing recovery support services, and fostering greater awareness and understanding surrounding addiction. From implementing evidence-based prevention programs to bolstering our comprehensive harm reduction strategies, we continue our work to create a healthier and more resilient Ohio.

As we review the progress made over the past year, we must remain vigilant in our pursuit of meaningful change. While we celebrate our successes, we must also acknowledge the challenges that lie ahead and redouble our efforts to build a future where every Ohioan can live free from the grip of addiction.

I extend my gratitude to all who have contributed to the success of our fight against substance use disorder and mental illness. Together, we will continue our efforts to promote recovery and healing.

Very respectfully yours,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Mike DeWine".

Mike DeWine,  
Governor of Ohio

# Table of Contents

<b>Stigma and Education.....</b>	<b>5</b>	<b>Workforce Development .....</b>	<b>28</b>
Beat the Stigma.....	6	Peer Support .....	29
Mental Health Day at the Fair .....	6	SUDLRP .....	29
Reporting without Stigma.....	7	Opportunities for Ohioans with Disabilities Jobs for Recovery .....	30
enCompass.....	8	Substance Use Recovery & Workplace Safety .....	30
Mental Health Awareness Month .....	9		
Overdose Awareness Day .....	9	<b>Criminal Justice and Public Safety .....</b>	<b>31</b>
Cincinnati Reds Partnership .....	9	MAT.....	32
		Specialized Dockets.....	32
<b>Parity.....</b>	<b>10</b>	Stepping Up.....	32
Ohio Department of Insurance Initiatives.....	11	Drug Task Forces .....	32
		ONIC .....	33
<b>Prevention .....</b>	<b>12</b>	BRIDGE.....	35
988.....	13	ODRC.....	36
Suicide Prevention .....	14	Treatment and Programs.....	36
Community Coalitions.....	14	Therapeutic Communities.....	37
Student Wellness and Success Fund .....	14	New Mental Health Treatment Center at Ohio Reformatory for Women .....	38
Ohio Department of Mental Health and Addiction Services Toll-free Bridge .....	15	Diversion/Deflection Teams.....	38
Bold Beginning.....	16	Ohio State Highway Patrol .....	39
OhioRISE.....	16	Ohio Office of Criminal Justice System Funding.....	39
Drug Take-Back Days .....	16		
Trauma-Informed Care.....	17	<b>Data and Technology .....</b>	<b>40</b>
Problem Gambling.....	17	HEALing Communities.....	41
		Ohio Department of Health Syndromic Surveillance.....	41
<b>Harm Reduction .....</b>	<b>18</b>	Board of Pharmacy .....	42
Naloxone.....	19	OSAM.....	42
NaloxBoxes .....	19		
Project DAWN .....	21	<b>Treatment and Recovery Supports .....</b>	<b>24</b>
FTS .....	21	Crisis Access .....	25
OH Against OD.....	22	Ohio START .....	25
Handle with Care.....	22	Emergency Department Comprehensive Care.....	26
Counterfeit Pill Resources.....	23	Access to Wellness .....	26
Ohio Overdose Prevention Network.....	24	Telemedicine.....	26
		OTPs.....	27
		Clubhouses.....	27
		Recovery Housing .....	27

# Stigma & Education

*For individuals facing mental health and substance use challenges, recovery is most achievable with the support of compassionate and understanding communities.*

Unfortunately, cultural stigmas against people seeking help can create barriers to recovery. As part of our ongoing efforts to support a culture of recovery in Ohio, the significance of reducing stigma cannot be overstated.

We have made great strides over the past year, but the battle to end stigma continues. This annual review highlights the numerous efforts undertaken by RecoveryOhio to lead this effort by challenging stereotypes, dispelling myths, and cultivating a culture of acceptance.

## Beat The Stigma

# BEAT THE STIGMA

Beat the Stigma is a statewide public awareness campaign to challenge what Ohioans know about mental health and addiction. The campaign was created in November 2021 as a collaboration between Governor DeWine, RecoveryOhio, and the Ohio Opioid Alliance.

In May 2023, Beat the Stigma launched a new round of multimedia advertisements – appearing on broadcast television, streaming services, radio, outdoor advertising, and digital and social media. Set in the fictional gameshow, *Beat the Stigma*, the campaign challenges its audience to test its knowledge about mental health and addiction through trivia and other tests that challenge their preconceptions.

### In 2023:

- 96% of Ohioans had heard of Beat the Stigma.
- 89% of people who started the Beat the Stigma online quiz game finished it; 40% played the game again.
  - This is encouraging, as it shows people aren't getting all the answers right and are eager to learn the correct answers.
- 81% of Ohioans want to learn more about mental health and substance misuse.
- 62% of Ohioans knew about mental health resources from employees at their work.

### At the Ohio State Fair,

**5,161**  
people visited the Beat the Stigma Booth

**4,000+**  
played the Beat the Stigma game

Data From Ohio Opioid Alliance

## Mental Health Day at the Ohio State Fair

On Friday, July 28, 2023, the Ohio State Fair celebrated RecoveryOhio's Mental Health Day. Volunteers from RecoveryOhio, the Ohio Department of Mental Health and Addiction Services, Ohio Department of Insurance, Ohio Department of Commerce, and Opportunities for Ohioans with Disabilities took over the Ohio State Fair's Cardinal Gate and connected with over 50,000 fairgoers, giving out "Mental Health Day" drawstring bags loaded with handouts promoting the state's mental health resources.

Visitors also enjoyed a performance by the All-Ohio State Fair Youth Choir at the Natural Resources Park Amphitheater. The choir specifically chose to perform on RecoveryOhio Mental Health Day and curated their songs to raise awareness about mental health.



Pictured (from L to R): Judith French, Director, Ohio Department of Insurance; Aimee Shadwick, Director RecoveryOhio; Lori Criss, Director (former), Ohio Department of Mental Health and Addiction Services



### RecoveryOhio at the 2023 Ohio State Fair

- RecoveryOhio's Mental Health Day was recognized on the "Special Days" page on the Ohio State Fair website. From July 1 - August 27, there were **45,175** views on this website page.
- The RecoveryOhio logo appeared on the Ohio State Fair mobile app, which had **7,598** downloads between July 16 - August 15.
- RecoveryOhio provided a photo frame/filter to be utilized in the Ohio State Fair mobile app. The photo filter page was viewed **19,664** times from July 1 - August 11.
- The RecoveryOhio logo was featured on the front page of the Daily Map and Schedule on July 28. A total of **11,000** Daily Map and Schedules were printed and distributed to fairgoers on this day. In addition, the RecoveryOhio business card size advertisement was included on the Daily Schedule from July 26 -28.
- RecoveryOhio was recognized on the Sponsor Logo Sign, located in Central Park on the south side of the Ag-Pro Companies Taft Coliseum for the full run of the Fair.
- RecoveryOhio was recognized as a sponsor on the Ohio State Fair's website, ohiostatefair.com, with a link to the RecoveryOhio website. The Ohio State Fair website receives approximately **1.2 million** views during the Fair and approximately **2.3 million** views leading up to the Fair.
- RecoveryOhio provided public address commercial announcements, which aired four times across the grounds on RecoveryOhio Mental Health Day.

■ RecoveryOhio was recognized on the Ohio State Fair Facebook and Instagram page on RecoveryOhio Mental Health Day. The Facebook post reached **8,538** people, had **9,029** impressions, 37 likes, 10 comments, and eight shares.. On Instagram, 191 liked the post.

■ The Ohio State Fair sent out a daily email blast to more than **111,000** subscribers. The email included events, as well as information promoting RecoveryOhio's partnership with the Fair.

Data from Ohio Dept of Insurance – Parity Report



*"As author and civil rights activist James Baldwin once said, 'Not everything that is faced can be changed, but nothing can be changed unless it is faced.' And so, we must face the fact that no Ohioan will ever fully live up to their potential or be able to lead purposeful and meaningful lives if their mental illness remains in the shadows and untreated."*

– Ohio Governor Mike DeWine, 2023 State of the State Address

## Reporting Without Stigma



Ohio is working to change the way society views mental illness and substance use disorders. Governor DeWine's RecoveryOhio initiative, the Ohio Attorney General's Task Force on Criminal Justice and Mental Illness, and the Ohio Opioid Education Alliance have created "Reporting About

Substance Use and Mental Health: A Resource for Media Professionals" as a tool to help journalists, producers, and other media professionals reduce the use of potentially stigmatizing language or imagery in news and media coverage.

The influence media portrayals have on public perception make accurate and compassionate depiction of addiction and mental illness extremely important.

The guide provides an in-depth look at stigmas and how media professionals, often unknowingly, use them in their imagery and language. The resource offers alternatives that allow accurate reporting and storytelling on mental illness and addiction without stigmatizing the conditions.



“In November 2021, we launched the statewide ‘Beat the Stigma’ campaign, and this guide is yet another tool to help Ohioans view these conditions with a deeper understanding and with more empathy, thus helping more Ohioans find recovery. We are committed to reducing the stigmas that surround addiction and mental illness and also helping Ohioans find recovery resources.”

– Ohio Governor Mike DeWine, Reporting Without Stigma: Ohio Releases Resource for Journalists News Release

Results indicate that enCompass significantly increases participants addiction knowledge levels and confidence in their ability to engage someone struggling with a substance use disorder, and that it decreased stigma among participants, including stereotypes, prejudice, and discrimination intent.

### enCompass Trainings

Year	County-wide	State-wide	Individuals Trained
2021	21	6	560
2022	0	4	1,359
2023	9	1	192
<b>Total</b>	<b>30</b>	<b>11</b>	<b>2,111</b>

Source: Addiction Policy Forum

## enCompass Training

Addiction is a complicated disease, and family members are profoundly impacted when a loved one develops an addiction to alcohol or other drugs. Many are often at a loss as to how to help their loved ones who are suffering from substance use disorder and it can be daunting to navigate treatment and recovery.

Since 2021, RecoveryOhio has sponsored enCompass: A Comprehensive Training on Navigating Addiction for those who are trying to navigate the complex world of addiction and help loved ones achieve recovery. Created by the Addiction Policy Forum, the training includes in-depth information about substance use disorders, treatment options, communication strategies, and self-care tips.

#### Participants learn:

- The signs and symptoms of addiction
- How to start the conversation
- Getting an assessment and treatment options
- How to set healthy boundaries
- How to access recovery support
- Information on medications to treat addiction



## Mental Health Awareness Month

Mental Health Awareness Month is observed in May each year. During this month, various Ohio organizations, advocates, and communities come together to raise awareness about mental health issues, promote understanding and acceptance, and reduce stigma surrounding mental illnesses. The aim is to encourage conversations about mental health, provide education and resources, and support individuals who may be struggling with mental health challenges. Local activities during Mental Health Awareness Month include events, workshops, campaigns, and initiatives focused on mental health awareness, self-care, and access to mental health services.

In 2023 the Ohio Department of Mental Health and Addiction Services and the Ohio Department of Natural Resources joined forces to relaunch the Thrive Outside campaign, aimed at helping Ohioans recharge, refresh, and #ThriveOutside.



## Overdose Awareness Day

Overdose Awareness Day occurs annually on August 31. Its purpose is to increase awareness of drug overdoses, honor those who have lost their lives or endured lasting harm due to such incidents, diminish the stigma associated with

substance use disorders, and promote policies and actions geared towards overdose prevention and life-saving interventions.

In 2023, over 63 counties in Ohio incorporated events such as vigils, rallies, educational programs, and memorials to honor those affected by overdose. The day also served as a platform for promoting access to overdose prevention tools such as naloxone and encouraging individuals struggling with substance use to seek help and support.

Ohio has participated in Overdose Awareness Day since June 8, 2021, when Governor DeWine signed it into law in Senate Bill 30. In 2022, RecoveryOhio marked the occasion by unveiling the Naloxone.Ohio.Gov website. This website makes it easy for anyone to obtain free Naloxone to carry with them and potentially save a life. In 2023, the website had 67,022 page visits.

An Overdose Awareness Day toolkit was released last year, featuring social media posts, flyers, and digital ads that can be downloaded and shared. In 2023, there were 1,249 unique visits to Overdose Awareness Day information on the RecoveryOhio website.

## Cincinnati Reds Partnership



Since 2019, the Cincinnati Reds have partnered with Governor DeWine and RecoveryOhio to spread awareness about mental health and substance use disorder to tens of thousands

of baseball fans. During the regular season, the Reds host a game in May for Mental Health Awareness Month, in August for Overdose Awareness, and September for Recovery Awareness. The games feature discount tickets, an on-field ceremony to recognize care providers, radio PSAs, the RecoveryOhio logo being displayed in the park, a description of and link to RecoveryOhio on the Reds Country Cares website, and the playing of a special video message during the game for attendees.

#### In 2023:

- The Reds Country Cares website had over **3,000** views.
- Reds Country Cares and RecoveryOhio had six, 30-second radio spots that played in May and September.
- RecoveryOhio had four concourse signs with our logo during each month.
- There were **12,337** pre-sold tickets scanned at the door for the May 10 game.
- There were **25,410** pre-sold tickets scanned at the door for the August 15 game.

# Parity

*The pursuit of parity brings attention to a fundamental principle that forms the basis of our dedication to fairness in healthcare.*

Achieving parity is not merely a goal; it is a steadfast commitment to dismantling barriers that have historically compromised access to mental health and substance use disorder services.

What follows is an examination of our progress, challenges, and aspirations in ensuring that mental health and physical health are treated with the same urgency, importance, and accessibility.

*Parity, in its essence, signifies the equitable treatment of mental and physical health conditions, recognizing that both are integral components of overall well-being. It reflects our dedication to eradicating discrimination and disparities in coverage, access, and treatment options that have too often marginalized those seeking mental healthcare.*

As we navigate through the data and initiatives outlined in this report, we invite you to join us in reflecting on the strides we've made toward achieving parity and the persistent work required to bridge the gaps that remain.

This annual review is not just a documentation of statistics and achievements; it is a testament to our commitment to breaking down the barriers that have historically separated mental and physical health.

## Ohio Department of Insurance (ODI) Initiatives

### Mental Health Insurance Assistance Office

In January 2023, Governor Mike DeWine officially created the Mental Health Insurance Assistance Office (MHIA) at the Ohio Department of Insurance, via Executive Order 2023-04D.

The Ohio Mental Health Insurance Assistance Office is the state's official resource to help consumers, mental health advocates, behavioral health providers, employers, first responders, and others, understand and navigate mental health and substance use disorder insurance so Ohioans get access to the treatment they need.

This free service is for individuals, families, and behavioral health providers who need help understanding and accessing their mental health benefits. Whether you have health insurance through an employer, a government program, purchased it directly through an agent, or are uninsured, they can provide assistance to you.

### The Executive Order directs the Ohio Department of Insurance (ODI) to:

- Help Ohioans identify and utilize their mental health and addiction insurance benefits.
- Provide consumer protection through education and vigilant regulation of insurers' compliance and mental health and addiction parity insurance laws.
- Work collaboratively with employers, insurers, healthcare providers, and patient advocates to develop best practice standards for providing mental health and addiction insurance benefits.



*"We must help those struggling with mental illness or substance use disorders by giving them a system that provides quality treatment on demand. We must build recovery-friendly communities that support and promote health and wellness to ensure all Ohioans can live long, productive lives."*

— Ohio Governor Mike DeWine, From the RecoveryOhio Advisory Council Initial Report, March 2019.

## Outreach

In coordination with RecoveryOhio, ODI reached out to groups throughout Ohio that could benefit from MHIA's resources. Highlights include:

- Coordination with the State Highway Patrol to provide 20,000 pieces of literature about the MHIA office for packets for distribution to DUI arrestees. Continued participation in Parity Coalition meetings.
- Membership on the OhioMHAS First Responder's Subcommittee and the Problem Gambling Advisory Board.
- Attending the Mental Health & Addiction Advocacy Coalition's Public Officials Breakfast.
- Ongoing conversations with providers, billing staff, and utilization review teams to better understand the provider's experience with private insurance plans.
- In August, ODI put together an informal working group to explore possible changes in the mental health insurance space, focused specifically on access to care and insurance coverage. The working group includes representatives from state agencies, provider groups, health plans, and consumer advocates.



## Communications

In 2023, ODI maintained a strong presence in mental health communication on various social media platforms, using the hashtags, "MentalHealthMonday" and "GetMHIA."

During the #MentalHealthMonday campaign, the department urged Ohioans to contact ODI if they had questions about mental health insurance and shared resources such as our "Employer Toolkit," "Helpful Tips for Consumers," and "Questions to Ask Your Health Insurance Provider".

In 2023, the department posted about mental health insurance more than **150** times, resulting in **32,500** impressions and approximately **420** engagements across all social media channels.

# Prevention

*Our record on prevention is a testament to the Governor's steadfast commitment to fostering resilient communities and empowering individuals on their journey toward health and well-being.*

In the landscape of public health, prevention emerges as a powerful force, acting as a foundational cornerstone in the broader tapestry of recovery. This section of the report invites you to explore the dynamic interplay between prevention strategies and the transformative narratives of those navigating the path to recovery.

Whether it be substance use disorders, mental health challenges, or other complex issues, prevention acts as a catalyst for change, steering individuals away from harm and providing the tools necessary for sustained well-being.

Within this section, you will find an account of our efforts to implement prevention programs, forge community partnerships, and promote education and awareness. By examining the successes and collaborative initiatives outlined in this report, we invite you to join us in the journey toward building resilient communities, where prevention is not just a strategy, but a shared commitment to fostering environments that support the holistic health of all.



*"As we look toward how we continue to address the mental health and addiction challenges of our citizens and families, I am reminded of something Desmond Tutu once said. He said that 'there comes a point where we need to stop just pulling people out of the river. We need to go upstream and find out why they're falling in.'"*

— Ohio Governor Mike DeWine, 2023 State of the State Address

## 988 Suicide & Crisis Lifeline

### Providing Real-Time Connection to Expert Help



The 988 Suicide & Crisis Lifeline launched in Ohio and nationwide on July 16, 2022, making help just three digits away for those struggling with thoughts of suicide, mental health, or addiction-related crisis.

Ohioans experiencing a crisis and their loved ones, can call, text, or chat 988 to reach a trained specialist 24/7 and receive free, confidential support and connections to local resources.

Numerous studies have shown that most 988 callers are significantly more likely to feel less depressed, less suicidal, less overwhelmed, and more hopeful after speaking to a 988 Lifeline crisis specialist.

Ohio has 19 call centers – the most of any state in the nation – ensuring that people in all 88 counties have access to coverage and support.

On average, over 11,000 Ohioans per month who are experiencing or affected by suicidal, mental health, and/or substance use crises have used the 988 Suicide & Crisis Lifeline.

## 988 By the Numbers

### 2023 Year in Review

The 988 Suicide and 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.

**9,115**

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

**1%**

average percentage of calls rolled over to a national back-up call center.

**25 seconds**

average speed to answer rate in Ohio, compared to 34 seconds nationally.

**2,610**

average number of texts received per month from Ohio area codes.

**1,680**

average number of chats received per month from Ohio area codes.

**13,405**

average number of 988 contacts per month.

**162,800**

total 988 contacts (calls, chats, and texts) in 2023.



## Suicide Prevention

The suicide rate in Ohio has increased over the past decade, and on average, five Ohioans die by suicide each day. In response, and in collaboration with RecoveryOhio, The Ohio Suicide Prevention Foundation (OSPF) released The Suicide Prevention Plan for Ohio for 2020-2022.

The Suicide Prevention Plan for Ohio is a roadmap for suicide prevention efforts that are both community-driven and applicable. Anyone can take away valuable information and practical solutions to help those in their neighborhoods, workplaces, faith-based organizations, schools, and more, all with one goal in mind: to save lives.

The Ohio Suicide Prevention Foundation is a non-profit organization that works tirelessly to prevent one of our most preventable causes of death: suicide. Their work includes reducing the stigma of suicide, promoting prevention strategies, and raising awareness about suicide's relationship to mental illness, alcohol, drug abuse, and other issues.



## Community Coalitions

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 address a community's behavioral health needs.

**Ohio has 60 drug-free community coalitions and 68 suicide prevention coalitions that bring together a cross-section of the community to create positive behavioral health change.**

RecoveryOhio recognizes the importance of community engagement and held presentations and conversations in all 88 counties. The conversations highlighted information from the Beat the Stigma campaign, shared the Bureau of Workers Compensation videos for employers and the media toolkit, and training dates for upcoming enCompass trainings.



## Student Wellness and Success Fund

**Each Child, Our Future**, Ohio's strategic plan for education, seeks to ensure each student is challenged, prepared, and empowered for his or her future by way of an excellent preK-12 education. Ohio's schools can succeed by meeting the needs of the "Whole Child" – the physical, social, emotional, and intellectual aspects of the child's well-being.

Many schools and districts across Ohio found innovative and effective ways to provide whole child supports, including mental and behavioral healthcare services, to children using Student Wellness and Success Funds. Ohio House Bill 110 continues to support these services with the Disadvantaged Pupil Impact Aid and Base Cost Student Wellness and Success Component. The adoption of the new school funding formula incorporates the Student Wellness and Success funding provided in previous years into the formula, restricting a portion of the funding that schools and districts will receive for this critical work. Ohio law directs where and how this funding can be spent.

Governor DeWine established the Student Wellness and Success program, which has dedicated \$1.2 billion in funding for schools to provide mental, behavioral, and physical health programs to their students since 2019. The Student Wellness and Success program is now part of the current funding formula.

Initiative Category	Number of Initiatives	Number of districts and schools implementing services	Number of students directly impacted	Amount of state funds expended
Mental Health Services	546	451	550,458	\$181,344,439
Reading Improvement and Intervention	235	228	190,554	\$147,090,910
Physical HealthCare Services	317	286	494,977	\$83,167,836
Prevention Education	216	185	276,967	\$59,623,965
Extended School Day	115	111	46,817	\$48,434,527

Source: Ohio Department of Education and Workforce



*"Providing students with the tools they need to better cope with life stressors in healthy, safe, supportive ways helps individuals build resiliency and reduces risk factors. Prevention services are part of educating the whole child, meeting their wellness, as well as their academic needs. This approach sets them up for success throughout their lives."*

– Ohio Governor Mike DeWine

### For the Student Wellness and Success funding and Disadvantaged Pupil Impact Aid in Ohio's school districts:

- Mental health services were the top expenditure category (\$181,344,439 in state funding spent).

## OhioMHAS Toll-Free Bridge

The OhioMHAS Consumer and Family Toll-Free Bridge (TFB) line provides referral and resource information for callers regarding addiction and mental health services, supports, and organizations statewide. TFB staff members are peers who often work to help callers find the resources they need, learn about the referral process to access those resources, and understand consumer rights and responsibilities. The goal of this free telephone service is to promote advocacy, independence, and recovery for Ohioans with addiction and mental health issues.

**877-275-6364 (Toll Free)**  
**614-466-7228 (Local)**  
 Or text **4HOPE** to **741-741**



## Bold Beginning

In 2023, the DeWine-Husted Administration continued to enhance the Bold Beginning Initiative to remove barriers to healthcare, ease financial burdens, and support parents.

Science has proven that a child's first years influence his or her health and success for their entire life. That's why Governor DeWine has invested more than \$1 billion to help ensure each child has the resources and support to have every opportunity for a bright future.

Rooted in research, this phase of Bold Beginning expands existing programs and invests in new, promising practices that will lead to healthy, supported families.



*"I have a vision for Ohio to be the best place in the nation to have a baby and raise a family. With Bold Beginning: Healthy, Supported Families, Ohio will provide even more options and supports that can be tailored to each family's needs, while providing assistance to mothers most at-risk for poor outcomes, to help them as they begin or add to their family."*

— Ohio Governor Mike DeWine

## Ohio Resilience through Integrated Systems and Excellence (OhioRISE)



OhioRISE aims to shift the system of care and keep more kids and families together by creating new access to in-home and community-based services for children with the most complex behavioral health challenges. The OhioRISE program's child and family-centric delivery system recognizes the need to specialize in services and support for this unique group of children and families. Aetna

Better Health of Ohio (the OhioRISE plan) is partnering with Ohio Department of Medicaid (ODM), other state agencies, providers, families, and more to develop and implement new and enhanced services.

OhioRISE features a new 1915(c) Medicaid waiver that drives toward improving cross-system outcomes for its enrollees. The new home and community-based OhioRISE waiver features access to all the services in the OhioRISE program and its own unique waiver services targeted toward this population. The waiver is intended to keep families supported in the community with the goal of preventing institutionalization.

### Children and youth who may be eligible for OhioRISE:

- Are eligible for Ohio Medicaid (either managed care or fee-for-service),
- Are age 0-20, and require significant behavioral health treatment needs, measured using the Ohio Child and Adolescent Needs and Strengths (CANS) assessment.

Children and youth may also be eligible for OhioRISE due to certain urgent conditions. For example, if a child or youth is in a hospital for behavioral health reasons.



### National Drug Take Back Days

In 2023, Ohio ranked number four in the nation for drugs collected during two Drug Take Back Days.

Proper medication disposal is key to preventing unused medications from falling into the wrong hands. Many studies indicate that individuals who abuse prescription medications often start by obtaining unused medications from the homes of family and friends. Drug take back days occur in communities across Ohio every April and October. Around 300 law enforcement agencies participated in the collection (313 in April and 278 in October) and collected 85,722 pounds of unneeded medications.

April 2023

285 participating law enforcement agencies  
313 collection sites  
42,302 pounds collected

October 2023

294 participating law enforcement agencies  
278 collection sites  
43,420 pounds collected

Ohio ranked **4th** in the nation

for the number of pounds collected during both the April and October events.

Since Drug Take Back Day started in 2018, Ohio has collected 880,226 pounds of unneeded medications.



## Trauma-Informed Care

Trauma-informed care is an approach to providing services and support that recognizes and responds to the impact of trauma on an individual's life. This approach emphasizes understanding the prevalence and impact of trauma, recognizing the signs and symptoms of trauma in individuals, and integrating this knowledge into all aspects of service delivery.

Ohio has made significant strides in promoting trauma-informed care across various sectors, including healthcare, mental health services, education, social services, and criminal justice. The state recognizes the importance of understanding and addressing trauma as a critical component of providing effective services and support to individuals and communities.

## Problem Gambling

Ohio's approach to problem gambling involves a combination of prevention, treatment, and support services, along with regulatory measures to promote responsible gambling practices. The Ohio Department of Mental Health and Addiction Services (OhioMHAS) oversees problem gambling prevention and treatment initiatives.



# Harm Reduction

*As part of Ohio's harm reduction strategy, RecoveryOhio has partnered with multiple state agencies to increase naloxone and fentanyl test strip distribution throughout the state.*

We have worked with traditional partners such as the Project DAWN (Deaths Avoided With Naloxone) network to increase distribution in addition to nontraditional partners such as the Turnpike Commission, colleges and universities, and the Ohio Department of Transportation.

Through a coordinated approach, RecoveryOhio has assisted state agencies with braiding and blending resources to ensure that all Ohioans have access to lifesaving overdose prevention resources. The activities below highlight some of the key naloxone and test strip distribution strategies.

## Naloxone

Naloxone (commonly known as Narcan) is a medication that can reverse an overdose caused by an opioid drug (heroin, fentanyl, or prescription pain medications). When administered during an overdose, naloxone blocks the effects of opioids on the brain and quickly restores breathing. Naloxone has been used safely by emergency medical professionals for more than 40 years and has only one critical function: to reverse the effects of opioids to prevent overdose death. Naloxone has no potential for abuse. If naloxone is given to a person who is not experiencing an opioid overdose, it is harmless. If naloxone is administered to a person who is dependent on opioids, it will produce withdrawal symptoms. Withdrawal, although uncomfortable, is not life-threatening. The Naloxone.Ohio.Gov website provides information about how to administer the life-saving medication naloxone, as well as how to order it for free.

## NaloxBoxes

RecoveryOhio, the Ohio Department of Higher Education (ODHE), the Ohio Department of Health, the Ohio Turnpike, and the Ohio Department of Transportation (ODOT), collaborated to provide emergency naloxone access cabinets for installation on public and private college and university campuses, in rest areas, and in service plazas on the Turnpike. The wall-mounted emergency access cabinet, like an AED machine, is an effective and easy way to provide access to life-saving naloxone.

## Rest Areas

In September 2023, RecoveryOhio partnered with ODOT to install NaloxBoxes in rest areas across the state. More than 130 boxes with naloxone were installed at 65 rest areas.

## Ohio Turnpike

In May 2023, RecoveryOhio partnered with the Ohio Turnpike and installed NaloxBoxes at all 14 service plazas across the 241-mile toll road. Shortly after being installed, the NaloxBox inside the Ohio Turnpike's Service Plaza in Portage County was accessed to save the life of a 58-year-old person who accidentally took too much pain medicine.



## Naloxone Statistics Jan. 2023 – Dec. 2023

- **286,535**  
Total number naloxone units distributed
- **20,166**  
Total number reported overdose reversals
- **130,920**  
Total number people trained on overdose response
- **67,022**  
Page visits to Naloxone.Ohio.Gov website

Source: Ohio Department of Mental Health and Addiction Services and the Ohio Department of Health



### NaloxBoxes installed:

- **130**  
Number of boxes installed at 65 rest areas
- **205**  
Number of boxes installed at 49 public colleges and universities
- **14**  
Number of boxes installed at Ohio Turnpike service plazas

Source: Ohio Department of Mental Health and Addiction Services and the Ohio Department of Health

### Higher Education

In February, RecoveryOhio partnered with the Ohio Department of Health, and the Ohio Department of Higher Education to offer NaloxBoxes to public colleges and universities. In October, the program was expanded to include private colleges and universities and included the ability to order free fentanyl test strips.



“Through this new partnership with the higher education community, we are taking another step forward in reducing the stigma associated with addiction and mental illness while ensuring that help is available when needed.”

– Ohio Governor Mike DeWine

### Project DAWN

Project DAWN (Deaths Avoided With Naloxone) is a public health initiative aimed at reducing opioid overdose deaths by distributing naloxone, an opioid overdose reversal medication, and providing education and training on its use. The program was launched in response to the opioid epidemic, which has significantly impacted Ohio and many other parts of the United States.



In 2023, Project DAWN had 515 naloxone distribution sites across approximately 85 of Ohio’s 88 counties, with a total of 208 registered Project DAWN programs.

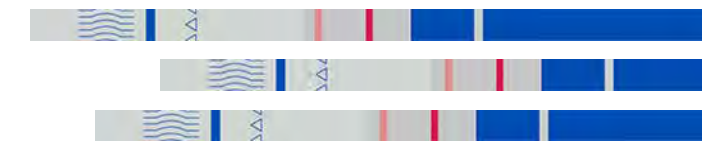
- **286,535**  
Number of kits distributed by Project Dawn in 2023
- **20,166**  
Number of overdose reversals in 2023
- **130,920**  
Number of trained on overdose response in 2023

### Fentanyl Test Strips

In response to the growing prevalence of fentanyl-related overdoses, Ohio has increasingly utilized fentanyl test strips as a harm reduction tool to help individuals detect the presence of fentanyl in drugs before use. Fentanyl is a potent synthetic opioid that is often mixed with other drugs, such as

heroin or cocaine, without the user’s knowledge, leading to a higher risk of overdose. Fentanyl test strips offer a way for individuals to check drugs for the presence of fentanyl before choosing to use.

**Governor DeWine signed Senate Bill 288 into law on January 3, 2023, decriminalizing fentanyl test strips. The law took effect in April 2023.**



**Total Fentanyl Test Strips Ordered 2023: 938,500**

- **Colleges & Universities:** Thirty-six colleges and universities ordered 12,700 fentanyl test strips. Orders are placed with the Ohio Department of Health.

### Fentanyl Test Strips by Organization 2023:

■ County Health Departments.....	<b>252,300</b>
■ First Responders.....	<b>19,200</b>
■ Harm Reduction Programs.....	<b>247,100</b>
■ Healthcare Providers.....	<b>165,300</b>
■ Ohio Board of Pharmacy.....	<b>140,200</b>
■ Ohio Department of Health.....	<b>20,700</b>
■ Prisons.....	<b>1,300</b>
■ Social Services Organizations.....	<b>92,400</b>

Data from the Ohio Department of Health



## OH Against OD

RecoveryOhio, ODH, and OhioMHAS' "Ohio Against Overdose" campaign strives to combat overdoses through informative initiatives and proactive measures. For instance, the campaign sheds light on the dangers of fentanyl, a substance often hidden within other drugs, leading to fatal consequences to the user.

Shockingly, in 2020, numerous overdose fatalities involved fentanyl combined with various substances, including:

- cocaine (985 deaths)
- psychostimulants (843 deaths)
- benzodiazepines (320 deaths)
- prescription opioids (278 deaths)
- heroin (255 deaths).

Moreover, the campaign offers a range of resources such as videos, educational materials, and outreach programs to educate Ohio residents about the perils associated with fentanyl contamination in illicit drugs.

OVER 50,000

Number of overdoses that have been reversed with naloxone (such as Narcan) in Ohio since 2014.

## Handle with Care

Ohio Handle with Care (HWC) represents a trauma-informed, cross-systems, collaborative initiative designed to ensure children exposed to adverse events receive necessary interventions and opportunities to cultivate resilience through positive relationships with educators and first responders. This program is fostered through a partnership between Hopewell Health Centers and the Ohio Department of Mental Health and Addiction Services, with nearly all of Ohio's 88 counties initiating the Handle with Care process in their respective communities. The primary objective of Ohio Handle with Care is to foster safe and supportive environments in schools, homes, and communities, safeguarding children and aiding in their healing from traumatic experiences.

A recent national survey on children's exposure to violence and trauma revealed alarming statistics, indicating that 60% of American children have encountered violence, crime, or abuse, with 40% being direct victims of multiple violent incidents. Prolonged exposure to such trauma can significantly impede children's ability to concentrate, behave appropriately, and learn, often resulting in academic setbacks, absenteeism, disciplinary actions, dropout rates, or involvement in the juvenile justice system.

HWC actively fosters partnerships between schools and communities to ensure that children facing trauma at home, school, or within their communities receive appropriate interventions, enabling them to achieve their academic potential despite their adverse circumstances. The primary aim of HWC is to support students in succeeding academically.

Counseling services are provided to children and families, at times least disruptive to the student's academic schedule. Counselors conduct assessments of the child's needs, psychological evaluations, treatment recommendations, accommodation suggestions, and provide regular updates to key school personnel with the consent of the child's parent or guardian.

## OhioHWC: Progress Map - April 2024



## Counterfeit Pill Resources

The Counterfeit Pill Campaign was created to warn middle school, high school, and college students and their families of the dangers of counterfeit pills. Counterfeit pills have become increasingly easier to access online, as well as more difficult to differentiate from real medications prescribed from a doctor.

RecoveryOhio's website, RecoveryOhio.gov, had its largest number of visitors in 2023, with 178,960 people who were

searching for information about mental health and substance use disorders. The most-visited page contained information about combating counterfeit pills and a toolkit to help behavioral health providers share information about counterfeit pills. The toolkit includes social media videos, infographics, flyers, and fact sheets for families, communities, and schools to use as resources on how to have conversations with your kids about the dangers of counterfeit pills.



In 2023, the DEA seized more than **78.4 million** fentanyl-laced fake pills and nearly **12,000 pounds** of fentanyl powder.

The 2023 DEA seizures are equivalent to more than **388.8 million** lethal doses of fentanyl.

DEA Laboratory testing indicates **7 out of every 10 pills seized** by DEA contain a lethal dose of fentanyl.

*Source: United States Drug Enforcement Administration*

# Treatment

## & Recovery Supports

*This pivotal section of our annual review is a comprehensive exploration of the heart of recovery – treatment.*

Within the pages that follow, we embark on a journey into the transformative landscapes of interventions, therapies, and the compassionate care that defines our commitment to supporting individuals on their path to recovery.

Treatment serves as the cornerstone of recovery, offering a beacon of hope to those grappling with substance use disorders and mental health challenges. This report encapsulates the multifaceted initiatives undertaken over the past year, illustrating our dedication to expanding access, improving quality, and fostering innovation in the realm of recovery-oriented treatment.

As we navigate through the narratives of resilience and healing, we delve into the various dimensions of treatment, recognizing the importance of personalized and culturally competent approaches. This report provides a comprehensive overview of our efforts to meet individuals where they are, tailoring interventions to address the unique needs and circumstances of each person seeking recovery.

As we reflect on the strides made and the work that lies ahead, let this report be a testament to the collective commitment to creating an inclusive, accessible, and effective treatment landscape that empowers individuals to reclaim their lives and embark on a journey toward sustained well-being. Together, let us continue to champion the cause of recovery-oriented treatment, ensuring that every person can access the care and support necessary for a fulfilling and enduring recovery.



Central Ohio Behavioral Healthcare in Columbus

### Crisis Access

In January 2023, Governor DeWine signed into law House Bill 45, which appropriated \$90 million in American Rescue Plan Act (ARPA) funds to support Ohio's crisis infrastructure. These funds will be used to help strengthen Ohio's statewide mental health and addiction services system, specifically pertaining to crisis services.

OhioMHAS and its partners continue to invest in building a quality crisis services system, a critical part of the overall continuum of care. Crisis services provide needed assistance to Ohioans and their families before an emergency occurs, rapidly respond to and stabilize a person while they are experiencing a crisis, and make strong connections to community-based treatment services and needed supports after a crisis occurs.

Across Ohio, people of all ages and their families are seeking care in record numbers for substance use disorders and mental health concerns.



### The Ohio Sobriety Treatment and Reducing Trauma (START)

START is a children-services-led initiative that has been shown to improve outcomes for both parents and children affected by child maltreatment and parental substance use disorders. The model is specifically designed to transform the system of care within and between child welfare agencies and substance use disorder (SUD) treatment providers and other family-serving systems and agencies. START uses a family-centered approach and services that help the child, parents, and the entire family. START recognizes that SUD/addiction is a family disease, recovery occurs in the context of families, and adult recovery should have a parent-child component.

This project creates an opportunity for a new best practice model designed to lead to better outcomes for children and families impacted by opiates and other drugs. The overall goal of this model is to stabilize families harmed by parental drug use so that both children and their parents can recover and move forward with abuse-free and addiction-free lives. Ohio START integrates community partners to ensure the seamless provision of wraparound services.

**In 2023, START was the first in the nation to receive national certification from Children and Family Futures (CFF).**

To date, the program has served:

<b>4,023</b>	<b>53</b>	<b>2,345</b>
OHIANS	COUNTIES	CHILDREN

Source: [ohiostart.org](http://ohiostart.org)

## Emergency Department Comprehensive Care

In 2023, the Ohio Department of Health (ODH) provided backing to health systems to establish a thorough care system within emergency departments for patients dealing with opioid use disorder. Six funded health systems successfully devised sustainable protocols across 31 emergency departments.

Since the launch of the EDCC Program:

■ **Over 830,000**  
patients screened

■ **Over 19,300**  
patients transitioned to care improving pathways to treatment

■ **Over 14,500**  
prescribers and staff members trained

■ **Over 8,500**  
patients received naloxone kits

■ **Over 3,700**  
physicians able to prescribe medication assisted treatment

## Access to Wellness

Introduced by Governor DeWine in his SFY 2022-2023 budget, and supported by Ohio's General Assembly, Access to Wellness works to meet the needs of adults with severe and persistent mental illness who are involved in multiple systems (i.e. Aging, Criminal Justice, Developmental Disabilities, Homelessness, and Veterans). Access to Wellness improves connections to needed recovery supports in communities and promotes stability and recovery outside of institutions. Without this coordinated support, these Ohioans can often experience repeated inpatient psychiatric hospitalizations, high rates of incarceration, homelessness, and unemployment. Through these partnerships, a tailored network of care is created so that Ohioans have access to resources and supports they need to work, live, and thrive in the communities of their choice.

communities and individuals lacking transportation, RecoveryOhio acknowledges telehealth's role in mitigating these obstacles, promoting preventative care, and facilitating access to remote specialists.

During the public rule-making process, the State Medical Board of Ohio (SMBO) engaged with various groups, including hospital systems, practice groups, community action associations, and licensee representatives. These discussions revealed two primary concerns: maintaining the quality of care in telehealth settings comparable to in-person visits and accommodating the unique needs of mental health and addiction telehealth services. In response, the board devised regulations allowing licensees to tailor treatment modalities to individual patient needs, whether via phone, video services, or face-to-face consultations, provided that the standard of care is upheld. Furthermore, the rules include provisions exempting new patients with mental health conditions from mandatory physical examinations before prescribing Schedule II-controlled substances, provided the medication is intended to treat the underlying mental health condition.

## Telemedicine

In 2022, the enactment of House Bill 122 ushered in a new era for telehealth services. This legislation codified numerous regulatory adjustments implemented during the the COVID-19 pandemic to broaden the scope of telehealth coverage and enhance its availability. Recognizing the healthcare accessibility challenges faced by rural

## Opioid Treatment Programs

Opioid treatment programs (OTPs) provide medication-assisted treatment (MAT) for patients diagnosed with opioid-use disorder. Typically, these facilities have the largest array of MAT options including methadone, buprenorphine products and naltrexone.

OTPs are licensed by various federal and state authorities and must adhere to a strict set of guidelines that cover patient care. For example, patients on methadone must report to the facility for highly supervised medication management early in their recovery, and they are granted take-home doses as they progress in their recovery. OTPs also provide enhanced counseling services, physical healthcare services, and promote recovery-oriented systems of care to all patients.



Activities at Broadway Stars Clubhouse in Youngstown

## Clubhouses

A Clubhouse is organized to support people living with mental illness. During their participation in a Clubhouse, members gain access to opportunities to rejoin the worlds of friendships, family, employment, and education, and to the services and support they may individually need to continue their recovery. A Clubhouse provides a restorative environment for people whose lives have been severely disrupted because of their mental illness, and who need the

support of others who are in recovery and who believe that mental illness is treatable.

Clubhouses are a powerful demonstration of the fact that people with mental illness can and do lead normal, productive lives. Clubhouses are local community centers that provide members with opportunities to build long-term relationships that, in turn, support them in obtaining employment, education, and housing.

Currently, seven Clubhouses exist in the following counties: Ashtabula, Geauga, Portage, Mahoning, Union, Delaware, and Hamilton. Before 2022, only three clubhouses were in Ohio. These clubhouses have formed the Clubhouse Ohio Coalition. Their website can be found at [www.clubhouseohio.org](http://www.clubhouseohio.org).

## Recovery Housing

Recovery housing is a safe and healthy living environment that promotes abstinence from alcohol and other drugs and enhances participation and retention in recovery supports, including medication-assisted recovery. Key components include but are not limited to, the social model of recovery, peer support, accountability, relapse prevention strategies, and employment skills training as residents transition to living independently and productively in the community.

OhioMHAS has distributed recovery housing funding to operators across Ohio to develop and expand recovery housing capacity. These funds are a result of working with members of the legislature to prioritize funding for recovery housing in response to a need clearly identified in communities. OhioMHAS also monitors, maintains a registry, and investigates complaints about recovery housing residences.



# Workforce Development

*In the dynamic landscape of recovery, this section of the annual review directs our focus towards a critical facet that often defines the journey to sustained well-being – workforce development.*

The transformative innovations in these pages underscore our commitment to empowering individuals on their path to recovery through meaningful employment.

As we reflect on the intersection of recovery and workforce development, we celebrate the triumphs of those who have found not only employment but also a renewed sense of purpose and self-worth. Simultaneously, we acknowledge the challenges faced by individuals seeking to re-enter the workforce after overcoming various barriers. These initiatives are testaments to our commitment to addressing these challenges, dismantling barriers, and fostering environments where every individual in recovery can thrive.



## Peer Support

The purpose of peer support is to create an environment where individuals can receive understanding, practical assistance, and connection from others who have walked a similar path. It's about fostering a sense of community and resilience to help individuals overcome challenges and improve their overall well-being.

A certified peer supporter is someone who has direct lived experience with behavioral health challenges, or someone who has navigated services on behalf of an individual with behavioral health challenges. Certified peer supporters are trained and certified in using their personal experience to help others impacted by mental illness or substance use disorders. Ohio offers three types of peer supporter certification: Adult, Family, and Youth/Young Adult.



In Ohio, certified peer supporters become certified by completing an approved 40-hour training or by having three years of verifiable work experience providing behavioral health peer services. Certified Peer Recovery Supporters (PRS) and Youth Peer Supporters (YPS) must complete 16 hours of online eBased Academy courses, which include topics of ethics, human trafficking, and trauma information care. Regardless of the pathway to certification, individuals must also pass an approved exam, sign and agree to the OhioMHAS Peer Support Services Code of Ethics, and pass their Federal Bureau of Investigation (FBI) and Bureau of Criminal Investigations (BCI) background checks. As of April 7, 2022, all certifications and renewals for peer support are processed online through the eLicense portal.

Certified peers must be supervised by an appropriate individual who has completed sixteen hours of online learning and the four-hour supervisor training. To maintain certification, certified peer supporters must obtain at least 30 continuing education credits every two years and apply for renewal of certification through the eLicense platform.

## 2023 Peer Recovery Summit



OhioPRO (Peer Recovery Organizations) hosted the 2023 Peer Recovery Summit, Ohioans Thriving in Recovery, on Aug. 16-17 at the Marriott Columbus OSU. This event served as a place where certified peer supporters gathered to network, learn, and grow

in a space dedicated to their advancement. The summit featured Paolo del Vecchio, M.S.W., Director of the Office of Recovery and the Director of the Office of Management, Technology and Operations for SAMHSA, as the keynote speaker.

## The Ohio Substance Use Disorder Professional Loan Repayment Program

The Ohio Substance Use Disorder Professional Loan Repayment Program (Ohio SUDLRP) aims to enhance access to SUD treatment in underserved communities and populations. Clinicians who participate commit to serving for two years at an eligible site in a Health Professional Shortage Area (HPSA), as well as other high-burdened SUD areas of the state. In exchange for loan repayment assistance, they must accept Medicare and Medicaid and provide services to clients regardless of their ability to pay.

As of 2023, the Ohio Department of Health had contracts with approximately 38 SUDLRP providers. Among these providers, 21 were or are currently under a full-time service obligation and are eligible to receive up to \$50,000 in loan repayment, while 17 were or are under a part-time service obligation and will or have received up to \$25,000 in loan repayment.

***In 2023, payments totaling \$562,500 were disbursed to SUDLRP providers from the State's General Revenue Fund.***

## Opportunities for Ohioans with Disabilities - Jobs for Recovery

Opportunities for Ohioans with Disabilities (OOD) remains dedicated to supporting Ohioans with disabilities who are involved with the court system in securing and maintaining employment. The Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) guarantees equal rights and opportunities for individuals with disabilities, including those struggling with alcohol addiction or in recovery from opioids and other substances.

The OOD Jobs for Recovery initiative places a vocational rehabilitation counselor (VRC) within a drug court team, where they actively engage with clients and manage a caseload. The VRC facilitates job placement services and participates in court proceedings, while also guiding individuals in assessing their strengths, abilities, and interests. They offer various services, such as assistance with resume writing and interview preparation. Moreover, the VRC coordinates comprehensive wraparound recovery support to ensure a smooth transition upon case closure.



## Substance Use Recovery and Workplace Safety

The widespread issue of substance use in the nation affects everyone, including businesses. Employers often face the dilemma of needing to fill positions while being cautious about hiring individuals with a history of drug use. Meanwhile, those in recovery from addiction are eager to rejoin the workforce but may encounter barriers. Additionally, some employees may be struggling with addiction unnoticed, posing potential risks to workplace safety.

To address these challenges, a partnership between RecoveryOhio and a Bureau of Worker's Compensation program offers funding to support employers in effectively managing substance use issues within their organizations.

### Eligible employers can participate in the program and receive reimbursement for various initiatives, including:

- Developing and legally reviewing employer policies and procedures regarding substance use matters.
- Providing training for employees to comprehend substance use and their employer's relevant policies.
- Equipping supervisors and managers with training to better support employees in recovery.
- Conducting drug testing for prospective and current employees, particularly for those companies with recovery-friendly "second chance" testing policies.
- Accessing a complimentary employee wellness incentive program called the Better You! Better Ohio! program.



### Jobs for Recovery By The Numbers for 2023

642	Applications received
455	Services provided
204	Job placements
190	Successful closures

# Criminal Justice & Public Safety

*The intersection of recovery and criminal justice is both challenging and full of potential.*

In these pages, you will find a comprehensive overview of our endeavors over the past year to promote alternatives to incarceration, expand access to treatment within correctional facilities, and support the reentry process for individuals seeking recovery.

As we navigate the intricacies of this multifaceted landscape, we acknowledge the complexities and barriers that persist. Yet, we are driven by the belief that every person deserves the chance for redemption and recovery. This report encapsulates our collaborative efforts to forge a system where justice is restorative, recovery is achievable, and public safety is enhanced through a compassionate and evidence-driven approach.

## Medication Assisted Treatment

The escalating involvement of individuals grappling with mental health or addiction issues in the criminal justice system poses a significant challenge. Collaborative efforts between law enforcement, courts, correctional facilities, and affected individuals and families aim to address this issue. The Ohio Department of Mental Health and Addiction Services (OhioMHAS) works closely with these entities to identify challenges and explore remedies. Through partnerships with county authorities, OhioMHAS facilitates access to clinical treatment and pre-release care coordination services for incarcerated individuals, increasing the likelihood of positive rehabilitation outcomes. Reimbursement processes for SFY 2023 administered by the county sheriff's office, allow eligible jails to receive funds based on their proportional contribution to the total reimbursement requested by participating facilities.

**\$42 million**  
was allotted for each fiscal  
year in SFY 2022 and 2023.



## Specialized Dockets

Specialized dockets refer to court sessions or schedules that adopt a therapeutic approach to administer court supervision and appropriate treatment to individuals. They acknowledge the unique challenges posed by offenders with mental illness, substance abuse issues, and trauma-related injuries within the criminal justice system. Each docket is established with the aim of safeguarding the community by reducing recidivism among these individuals through enhanced supervision and treatment services. Specialized dockets provide eligible individuals with the opportunity to undergo treatment within a court-monitored, community-based program as an alternative to incarceration.

Certification by the Ohio Supreme Court is required for specialized dockets. Examples of these specialized dockets include Mental Health Courts, Drug Courts, OVI/DUI Courts, Drug-Domestic Violence Courts, Drug-Re-Entry Courts, Veterans Courts, and Family Dependency Treatment Courts.

**221 dockets**  
were funded in SFY 2023,  
an increase of 83 dockets.



**7,707**  
number of clients served in 2022.



Stepping Up Initiative Franklin County: Celebrating success in inmate programming with graduates, family members, Sheriff's Office and Justice Program staff

## Stepping Up

The Stepping Up Initiative is a nationwide effort aimed at reducing the incarceration rate of individuals with mental illnesses. Without intervention, a significant number of individuals with mental health conditions, often accompanied by substance use disorders, will continue to cycle through the criminal justice system, missing out on opportunities for proper treatment. The mission of both the national and Ohio-specific Stepping Up Initiative is to facilitate access to clinical treatment and support services for criminal offenders with mental illnesses, enabling them to achieve wellness and make positive life changes.

This initiative brings together a diverse array of organizations, including those representing sheriffs, jail administrators, judges, community corrections professionals, treatment providers, individuals with mental illnesses and their families, as well as mental health and substance use program directors, among others. Stepping Up Ohio customizes its offerings to each county, providing resources, policies, and best practices tailored to their specific needs. Additionally, counties benefit from access to various technical resources.

In 2023, Stepping Up Ohio  
expanded its presence to  
**61 of Ohio's 88 counties.**

## Drug Task Forces

Over \$2.4 million in grants from Governor DeWine's RecoveryOhio Law Enforcement Fund were awarded in 2023 among 32 existing drug task forces to help them identify high-level drug traffickers, dismantle large drug trafficking organizations, interrupt the flow of money and drugs from international cartels, and prevent the sale of illegal narcotics to those suffering from substance use disorder.



"Illegal drugs harm too many Ohioans every year, and these grant funds will ensure that the state's drug task forces can continue their daily battle to push back against this scourge."

— Ohio Governor Mike DeWine

These grants complement various initiatives introduced under Governor DeWine's leadership to combat drug trafficking and substance use disorder. The RecoveryOhio Law Enforcement Fund has allocated millions to local drug task forces to intercept illegal drugs and amplify efforts in substance use awareness, prevention, and recovery.



## Ohio Narcotics Intelligence Center



The Ohio Narcotics Intelligence Center (ONIC) was established in 2019 when Ohio Governor Mike DeWine signed Executive Order 2019-20D. The ONIC operates as part of the Ohio Department of Public Safety in four locations throughout the state.

ONIC provides digital forensic and intelligence analysis support for drug task forces and law enforcement agencies in Ohio, discovers new trends and connections between targets and identify criminal networks and enterprises in drug crimes and utilizes state-of-the-art digital evidence recovery and extraction tools and powerful analytic software to provide intelligence-led support to investigations statewide.

### Scheduling Actions:

The ONIC has been a key part of Ohio's ability to detect and schedule emerging drugs before most other states and the federal government in some cases. ONIC case work, information sharing calls and external intelligence gathering facilitate early detection of emerging drugs and trends. Because of this system outlined below, the ONIC has assisted in scheduling 11 drugs as controlled substances from 2020-2023, most recently xylazine in March 2023. ONIC partners with the State of Ohio Board of Pharmacy and Governor's Office to support the drug scheduling.

### Intelligence Bulletins and Social Media:

Intelligence bulletins were an essential method through which the ONIC communicated intelligence and public safety information in 2023. The ONIC published 10 bulletins, five of which are publicly available in eight languages. Bulletin topics covered forms of fentanyl, polydrug mixtures, emerging drugs in the Ohio illicit drug supply, and cryptocurrency scams. Additionally, the ONIC partnered with DPS' communications team to create four social media videos based on the public safety bulletins, "Reel Talk With ONIC," to help reach broader audiences.

### Information Sharing:

The ONIC acts a clearinghouse for information which serves as a critical part of its early warning and detection system designed to identify new drugs and drug trends. Regular drug trends calls and the Emerging Drug and Scientific Working Group (EDSWG) continued to be vital to the ONIC's ability to rapidly share information between various groups.

**Drug Summit:**

The ONIC hosted its first in-person Drug Summit in 2023 and had over 300 attendees. The attendees represented law enforcement agencies, drug chemistry and toxicology laboratories, prosecutor's offices, corrections, and probation and parole officers from across Ohio. Individuals were able to attend a diverse range of presentations, network, and share information.

**Speaking Engagements:**

The ONIC conducted 40 presentations across a myriad of subjects in 2023 to include criminal justice and public officials, attorneys and judges, elected officials, school safety personnel, and students. The ONIC also set up booths at different events such as the 2023 Ohio State Fair and Scoring for Safety to further connect with the public and educate them about drug trends and the ONIC's mission.



**Operation BRIDGE**

The Ohio Department of Public Safety leads Operation BRIDGE (Bridging Recovery & Interdiction Data Gathering Enforcement) which combines the resources of law enforcement and substance use treatment in a coordinated effort. BRIDGE operates on the premise that an imminent interruption in drug supply is likely to precipitate dangerous drug-seeking behavior from those with substance use disorder. The program focuses on the reduction of supply and demand simultaneously, prioritizing treatment for those who qualify.

**Two Major Components of Operation BRIDGE:**

**Traffic Enforcement/Drug Interdiction:**

Federal, state, and local law enforcement combine resources for two days to aggressively enforce drug laws with a special focus on individuals supplying drugs to the community. Law enforcement will enforce traffic laws while conducting interdiction. Some examples of what could be targeted by law enforcement are individuals with felony warrants, bulk amounts of narcotics, and individuals with illegal firearms.

**Outreach:**

During the operation, law enforcement and outreach teams may encounter individuals suffering from substance use disorder. The teams can connect these individuals to the appropriate treatment resources. Outreach teams may also establish a community event to provide naloxone, administer prescription take-back events, distribute prevention and education resources, and connect individuals to treatment.

**Enforcement**

474	Traffic Stops Initiated
39	Felony Arrests (Non-Drug Related)
63	Felony Arrests (Drug Related)
26	Misdemeanor Arrests (Non-Drug Related)
15	Misdemeanor Arrests (Drug Related)
6	Search Warrants
2	Criminal Cases Initiated (Non-Drug Related)
23	Criminal Cases Initiated (Drug Related)
113	Citations Issued
8	Guns Seized
53	Warrants Served
20	Devices Submitted for Digital Forensic Exam

**Seizures**

589 grams	Cocaine
1,243.75 grams	Marijuana
329.52 grams	Fentanyl
8.43 grams	Heroin
42.64 grams	Crack
943.04 grams	Methamphetamine
71 unit doses	Counterfeit Pills
207 unit doses	Rx Pills
23 grams	Psilocybin Mushrooms
2,364 ml	Promethazine

**Outreach**

1,461	QRT Contacts
976	Naloxone Distributions
75	People Connected to Treatment
120	Outreach Referrals
5 lbs	Pill Takeback Total Weight
425	Fentanyl Test Strips Distributed



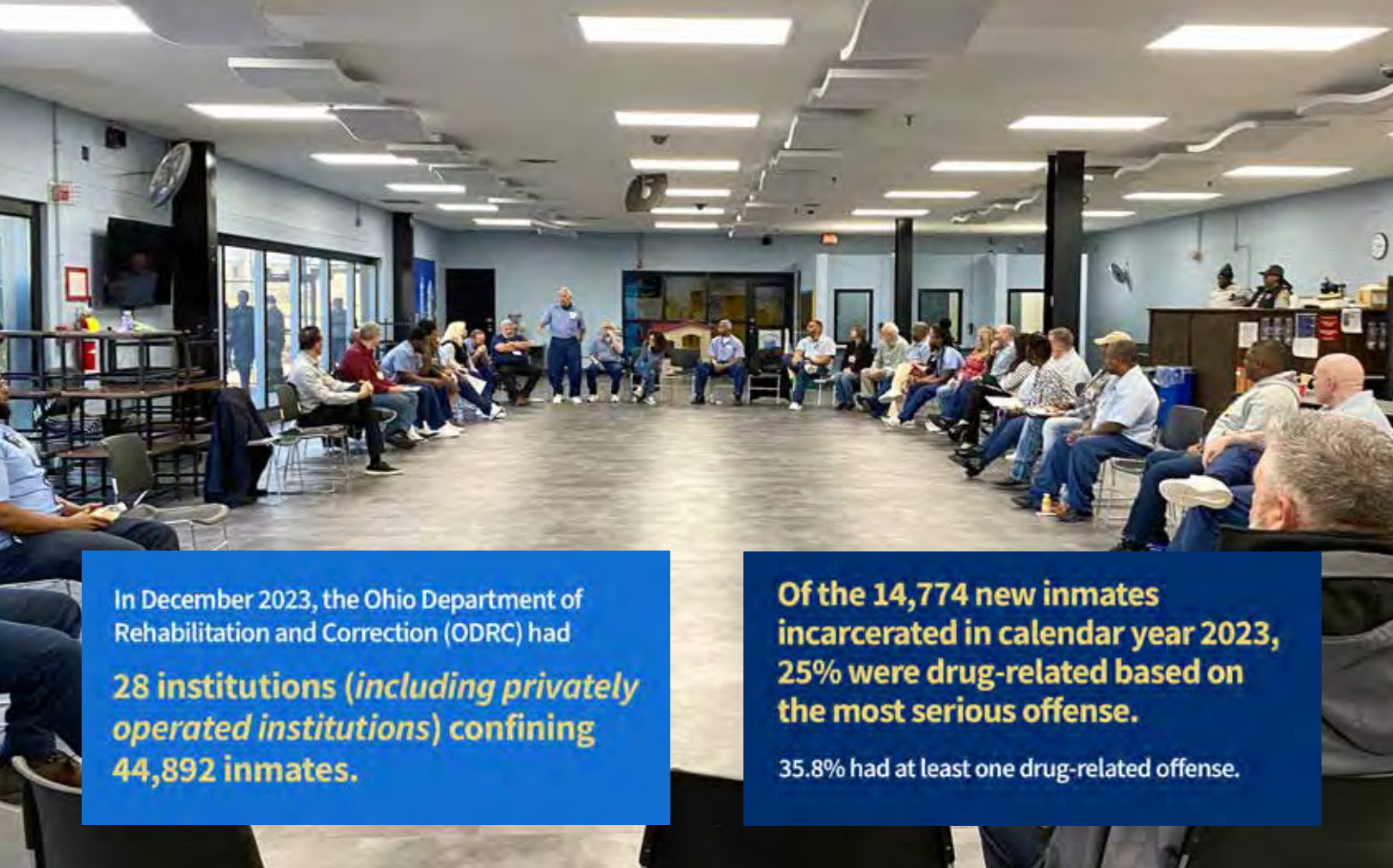
**Welcome to the 2023 ONIC Law Enforcement Drug Summit!**

**Contact Info:**

**ONIC@dps.ohio.gov**

**833-OHIO-NIC (644-6642)**

*Attendees watch presentations at the 2023 ONIC Drug Summit*



In December 2023, the Ohio Department of Rehabilitation and Correction (ODRC) had **28 institutions (including privately operated institutions) confining 44,892 inmates.**

**Of the 14,774 new inmates incarcerated in calendar year 2023, 25% were drug-related based on the most serious offense.**  
35.8% had at least one drug-related offense.

*The Pickaway Correctional Institution (PCI) became the first institution in Ohio to host the Frederick Douglass Project for Justice. The Frederick Douglass Project for Justice seeks to change the public's perception of the criminal justice system by connecting incarcerated people with volunteers for engaging and meaningful conversations.*

## The Ohio Department of Rehabilitation and Correction

The Ohio Department of Mental Health and Addiction Services (OhioMHAS) and the Ohio Department of Rehabilitation and Correction (ODRC) partner to treat offenders who need substance abuse recovery programming. Participants gain an improved sense of responsibility and the ability to become law-abiding citizens. Our licensed treatment professionals build on evidence-based research and practical knowledge to improve treatment outcomes for offenders; instill hope and opportunity for a life without substance use, and provide a seamless, holistic approach to alcohol and other drug (AOD) treatment.

The process includes screening and treatment recommendations for all inmates. Then, institutions offer a variety of AOD treatment programs. Care continues with referrals to supportive and treatment-enhancing activities throughout the inmate's incarceration.

Drug related crimes represent the most common type of offense for which individuals are incarcerated.

### Treatment and Program Options in ODRC

The broad range of services offered within ODRC institutions begins with reception center AOD screening and treatment recommendations. Parent institutions offer structured programming that includes cognitive behavioral treatment programs and therapeutic communities.

#### The services include:

- **AOD Screening:** Offenders at reception institutions are screened for AOD use history.
- **AOD Services for the Dually Diagnosed:** For offenders with co-occurring substance abuse and mental illness disorders, a holistic approach is determined by a multi-disciplinary team that includes ODRC's Bureau of Mental Health Services.
- **Intensive Outpatient Program:** A 144-hour program of services that are delivered daily for a minimum of 12 hours a week. A minimum of 10 hours must be cognitive behavioral specific.

- **Recovery-Oriented Supplemental Groups:** Alcoholics Anonymous, Narcotics Anonymous, and other self-help, peer group and fellowship opportunities are offered at all institutions to assist offenders to achieve or maintain abstinence.
- **Therapeutic Communities:** Residential programs of between 6-12 months that are operated in ODRC prisons. Therapeutic Communities are designed to provide a 24-hour recovery-oriented experience.
- **Treatment Readiness Program:** A 48-hour program delivered daily for a minimum of 12 hours a week. A minimum of 10 hours must be cognitive behavioral treatment specific. The remaining hours will consist of Recovery-Oriented Supplemental Groups.

Based on data compiled from July 2023 through the end of the year, 65% of the inmate population is eligible for substance use disorder treatment services.

5% have a minimal need | 9% have a moderate need | 56% have a considerable need

**14,065**  
Number of incarcerated men and women in SFY 2023 who participated in SUD treatment programs with a successful completion rate of 68%.

In SFY 2023, access to all forms of medication-assisted treatment (MAT) was expanded for individuals on treatment transfer or transitional control status with 348 injectable naltrexone injections prior to release and 527 naloxone kits provided at release.

Additionally, at the end of 2023, ODRC had provided 1,068 prescriptions for MAT with oral naltrexone and 256 naltrexone injections, and ODRC had 553 incarcerated persons enrolled in the opioid treatment program (methadone-241; buprenorphine-312).

### Therapeutic Communities in Prisons

Therapeutic Communities operate within Ohio's correctional facilities to treat offenders with substance abuse problems. Through a contract with Comp Drug Inc., based in Columbus, the Ohio Department of Mental Health and Addiction Services (OhioMHAS) and the Ohio Department of Rehabilitation and Correction (ODRC) operate therapeutic communities in these correctional facilities:

Ohio Reformatory for Women - **Tapestry**  
Pickaway Correctional Institution - **OASIS**  
Madison Correctional Institution - **Vista**  
Chillicothe Correctional Institution - **Conquest**  
Noble Correctional Institution - **Shield**  
Grafton Correctional Institution - **Stepping Stone**



*The offender group named the "Helping Hands" at The Chillicothe Correctional Institution. The members of the Helping Hands are about giving back and provide those in need with a fighting chance where otherwise there might not be one.*

The objective of Therapeutic Communities is to address anti-social behaviors. These behaviors include, but are not limited to, addictions and criminal behavior. This is accomplished by creating a client community that is a microcosm of the larger outside community. In this way, the community has a very structured day that includes clinician involvement, CBT (cognitive behavioral therapy) classes, and group meetings.

Every member has a job and role in the therapeutic community. Throughout treatment, the community members give each other feedback about one another's behaviors. In this microcosm, the clients can learn and practice pro-social behaviors and responses. Experiential cognitive restructuring is at the base of the therapeutic community approach. During their residential treatment, they develop and practice new behaviors, which support a substance-free, crime-free lifestyle.

## New Mental Health Treatment Center at Ohio Reformatory for Women

In July 2023, Ohio Governor Mike DeWine and Ohio Department of Rehabilitation and Correction Director Annette Chambers-Smith celebrated the opening of a new 100-bed mental health treatment center at the Ohio Reformatory for Women (ORW) that will provide comprehensive services in an environment specifically designed to support overall health and wellness.

The one-of-a-kind therapeutic facility will provide increased programming and treatment in a space that includes unique features such as specialized lighting and acoustics, enhanced technology, calming outdoor spaces, a garden, and a teaching kitchen.



*“This investment is important because our jails and prisons have become one of our state’s largest default behavioral health providers. We must do more to help ensure that those leaving our prisons are both mentally and physically healthy so that they have the best chance of success once released.”*

– Ohio Governor Mike DeWine



The Ohio Reformatory for Women houses over **2,000 women**, with nearly half receiving some type of behavioral health services.

## Diversion/Deflection Teams



In January 2023, Governor Mike DeWine announced a **\$4 million grant** for Northeast Ohio Medical University (NEOMED) to provide training and technical assistance for communities developing or implementing deflection and pre-arrest diversion programs to help those with substance use disorder get the help and treatment they need.

93 teams exist in the state as of 2023. The Ohio Department of Public Safety, OhioMHAS, and RecoveryOhio have created collaborative partnerships with Ohio’s Diversion/Deflection teams.

Comprised of trained professionals from various disciplines such as law enforcement, medical services, and rescue operations, a Diversion/Deflection Team is equipped to handle a wide range of scenarios with speed, precision, and effectiveness.

The primary objective of a Diversion/Deflection Team is to minimize the impact of emergencies and ensure the safety and security of individuals involved. Whether responding to natural disasters, accidents, terrorist threats, or other critical incidents, a Diversion/Deflection Team operates with a sense of urgency and a commitment to preserving life and property.

The initiative will support communities that have experienced an increase in violent crime. A new Substance Use Deflection Center of Excellence within NEOMED’s existing Criminal Justice Coordinating Center of Excellence will be established to undertake this work. The center will also conduct research on enhancing the effectiveness of deflection and diversion programs.



*“The technical assistance resulting from this project will be an invaluable resource to Quick Response Teams (QRTs) around the state. Ultimately, we hope that by expanding access to resources, more Ohioans will get the help and treatment they need.”*

– Ohio Governor Mike DeWine

In October 2023, Office of Criminal Justice Services (OCJS) was awarded a three-year, \$4 million grant through the U.S. Bureau of Justice Assistance (BJA) Comprehensive Opioid, Stimulant, and Substance Use Program (COSSUP). The goal of the BJA’s COSSUP program is to reduce the impact of the use and misuse of opioids, stimulants, and other substances on individuals and communities. To this end, OCJS seeks to provide resources supporting the development, expansion, or enhancement of substance use deflection and pre-arrest diversion programs in diverse Ohio communities.

## Ohio State Highway Patrol

Since 2019, the Highway Patrol has made **54,705** drug arrests on Ohio Roadways with **29,326** of the arrests being for felony violations.



That is almost 30 drug violations every day over the five-years (2019-2023). These drug violations have resulted in the removal of more than 42,000 pounds of illegal narcotics – roughly the equivalent of a fully loaded school bus.

**Over this same period, Troopers have seized more than 8,000 illegal weapons. That is more than 4 illegal weapons seized every day over the five-year time period.**

- OSHP offers local recovery services information to everyone arrested/charged with impaired driving and/or any drug offense.
- Arrestee information will be stored in Computer Automated Dispatch (CAD) Report.
- Using the CAD information, Post Commanders in the 26 pilot counties will generate a weekly report
- The report will be sent to their local county behavioral health administrator. Local behavioral health administrators make varying levels of contact: in-person, mailers, phone calls, texts, etc. The level of outreach depends on services available within each county.

## Ohio Office of Criminal Justice (OCJS) Services Funding

### RecoveryOhio Drug Task Force Funding through OCJS

RecoveryOhio provides funding for drug task forces demonstrating linkages to the Governor’s RecoveryOhio program throughout the state.

For the grant period beginning May 1, 2023, and extending into 2024, OCJS selected selected 32 drug law enforcement task forces to receive RecoveryOhio funding for a total of

**\$2,413,220.59**

RecoveryOhio provides funding for task forces working with the Organized Crime Investigations Commission (OCIC) through the Ohio Attorney General’s Office.

For the December 1, 2022 – December 31, 2023, grant period, OCJS funded 17 drug law enforcement task forces to receive Recovery Ohio OCIC funding for a total of

**\$3,310,497.99**

# Data & Technology

*Data and technology have become invaluable tools in understanding, addressing, and supporting individuals on their path to recovery.*

From telehealth solutions to predictive analytics, our commitment to innovation is integral to providing more effective and personalized recovery support.

This is where innovation meets compassion to create a future where data-driven insights inform personalized recovery plans, and technology becomes a bridge to connect individuals with the resources they need. Together, we will continue to push the boundaries of what is possible, forging a path where the fusion of recovery and technology leads to a more connected, informed, and supportive landscape for all on their journey to sustained well-being.



## The Healing Study

The HEALing Communities Study (HCS) was a research study in four states (Ohio, Kentucky, New York, and Massachusetts) with the goal of reducing opioid overdose deaths. Additional study goals included increasing overdose education and naloxone distribution, increasing access to medications for opioid use disorder, and increasing safer opioid prescribing and dispensing practices.

Participating counties included Allen, Brown, Franklin, Huron, Jefferson, Ross, Stark, Williams, and Wyandot.



## ODH Syndromic Surveillance

The Ohio Department of Health (ODH) furnishes vital data to numerous state partners, disseminating two Syndromic Surveillance reports on a weekly basis: the Suspected Drug Overdose Report and the Suspected Suicide Attempts and Suicide Ideation report.

Each report contains trend data and specific information regarding Emergency Department visits, encompassing visit counts, visit percentages, and rates per 10,000 Emergency Department visits. The reports delineate data by gender, age, and race/ethnicity, aiding agencies and communities in tailoring their responses effectively.

Additionally, the Drug Overdose Anomaly Update is provided as needed, detailing the anomaly date, county, number of emergency department visits, predicted visit count, and alert threshold. ODH promptly notifies affected counties of any anomalies, enabling them to enact prepared responses if necessary. Occasionally, a county may conclude that a response isn't warranted. In such instances, the report typically states, "Based on their analysis, the named county determined it was not necessary to initiate a response. They have a written community response plan and did not require assistance or additional information from ODH."

## Board of Pharmacy

The State of Ohio Board of Pharmacy is the single State entity in Ohio responsible for administering and enforcing laws governing the practice of pharmacy and the legal distribution of drugs.

In 2023, the Board led efforts to secure the passage of House Bill 558, which authorized any person in the state to possess and distribute naloxone and other overdose-reversal drugs. This change effectively made all formulations of naloxone available without a prescription by removing any legal barriers to distribution.

In June 2023, the Board filed a permanent rule to classify all products containing an unregulated drug that produces opioid-like effects - tianeptine (also known as gas station heroin) - as a Schedule I controlled substance.



The Board of Pharmacy's Licensing Department is responsible for the processing of all licensure and registration applications, all verifications of good standing, organization and reciprocity reviews, and support to all field agents, inspectors, and specialists. In 2023, **95,021** were active; **15,391** were new.

The Ohio Automated Rx Reporting System (OARRS) is a tool to track the dispensing and personal furnishing of controlled prescription drugs to patients. OARRS is designed to monitor this information for suspected abuse or diversion and give a prescriber or pharmacist critical information regarding a patient's controlled substance prescription history. This information can help prescribers and pharmacists identify high-risk patients who would benefit from early interventions.

In collaboration with the Ohio Department of Mental Health and Addiction Services, OARRS receives data on who is being actively treated at any of Ohio's opioid treatment programs. This information, which is only available to healthcare provider account holders, closes a blind spot for clinicians and improves overall care coordination.

## The Ohio Substance Abuse Monitoring (OSAM) Network

The Ohio Substance Abuse Monitoring (OSAM) Network consists of eight regional epidemiologists (REPIS) located in the following regions: Akron-Canton, Athens, Cincinnati, Cleveland, Columbus, Dayton, Toledo, and Youngstown.

The OSAM Network conducts focus groups and individual qualitative interviews with active and recovering drug users and community professionals (treatment providers, law enforcement officials, etc.) to produce epidemiological descriptions of local substance abuse trends. Qualitative findings are supplemented with available statistical data such as coroner's reports and crime laboratory data. Mass media sources such as local newspapers are also monitored for information related to substance abuse trends. Once integrated, these valuable sources provide the Ohio Department of Mental Health and Addiction Services (OhioMHAS) with a real-time method of providing accurate epidemiological descriptions that policymakers need to plan appropriate prevention and intervention strategies.

The OSAM Network creates three types of publications:

In addition to its six-month drug trend reporting, OSAM publishes Targeted Response Initiative (TRI) and Mental Health Initiative (MHI) reports. TRIs are designed to address specific populations/drug abuse trends and other addiction-related concerns (e.g., problem and pathological gambling, employment needs of persons receiving treatment for substance use disorder), while MHIs examine topics related to mental health. Topics of interest for TRIs and MHIs are identified by OhioMHAS leadership and data for these reports are gathered on an as-needed basis.

These reports can be found here:

<https://mha.ohio.gov/research-and-data/data-and-reports/osam/osam>





**RecoveryOhio** 

**2023 Annual Review**

RecoveryOhio  
77 S. High St., 30th floor  
Columbus, OH 43215



**MIKE DEWINE**  
GOVERNOR OF OHIO

[www.RecoveryOhio.gov](http://www.RecoveryOhio.gov)