

ANNUAL REPORT OF ST. CLAIR COUNTY COMMUNITY MENTAL HEALTH AUTHORITY FISCAL YEAR 2019

Hope, Healing and Recovery

By Debra Johnson, Executive Director

The concepts of Hope, Healing and Recovery are more important now than ever before as we all work together to battle the impact of COVID-19. For decades, hope, healing and recovery have been well-known and embraced themes among individuals with behavioral health disorders who understand the connection between them. Echoing the example of those whom we serve, belief in Hope, Healing and Recovery also inspired the efforts of everyone at St. Clair County Community Mental Health (SCCCMH) throughout 2019.

As you read their stories, you will see that the three individuals who have received SCCCMH services, who are recognized in this year's Annual Report, Bethany Gernand, Mark Welsh, and Victoria Schoenberg, exemplify the motto "Hope, Healing and Recovery." The same is true of our Employee of the Year, Barb Sudomier and the members of our Team of the Year, Leslie Brown and Dave Burnham, who model and encourage others towards hope, healing and recovery. Equally impressive is the lifelong example of civic mindedness demonstrated by Community Service Award winner Mike McCartan and the institutional community spirit displayed by Organization Award winner McLaren Port Huron. Finally, through the accurate and insightful reporting of Communications Awareness Award winner Jackie Smith of The Times Herald, Blue Water Area residents are made aware of the challenges faced by individuals with behavioral health disorders and their paths to recovery.

Our biggest accomplishment at SCCCMH continues to be our integration of behavioral and physical healthcare for individuals we serve. An effort begun

more than a decade ago, it continued last year with our becoming a Certified Community Behavioral Healthcare Clinic (CCBHC). Enhanced funding as a CCBHC helps assure we have the resources to provide many new programs and services that have the potential to assist more individuals in their recovery and improve their physical health outcomes. These programs include the introduction of six new Evidence Based Practices (EBPs), which demonstrate scientifically that they improve individuals' overall wellness. It also includes services for individuals with a Substance Use Disorder (SUD) who do not have a co-occurring mental illness. Detailed stories about the six new EBPs, expanded SUD services, and the benefits of our becoming a CCBHC are included in this annual report.

Twenty Nineteen marked several other exciting milestones. Last year, Mobile Crisis Unit services, in which team members respond to behavioral health crises 24 hours a day, 7 days a week wherever they occur, were extended to our locations in Capac and Marine City. Working with the St. Clair County District Court, a Recovery Court was established that gives select individuals with SUD an alternative path to recovery through the court. We introduced a Spravato Clinic, which provides cutting-edge medication assisted treatment administered as a nasal spray for individuals experiencing treatment-resistant depression. Our commitment continued to the Zero Suicide Initiative, an EBP approach to suicide prevention that aims to reduce the risk of suicide for all individuals receiving services at SCCCMH. Then, in November, we opened our new Children and Family Services building on 24th street in Port Huron. We also extended our Prepare U program, a 15-week mental health curriculum piloted in 2018/19 school year at Riverview High School, to



Debra Johnson, SCCCMH Executive Director

Yale High School for the 2019/20 school year. Five additional high schools are slated to provide the training to students during the next school year.

For several years, spanning both the Snyder and Whitmer administrations, there have been discussions and legislative action designed to continue to improve the Michigan behavioral health system by better integrating physical and behavioral health. An initial 2016 proposal by the Snyder administration to turn the public mental health system over to for-profit insurance companies was defeated thanks to the combined efforts of individuals with behavioral health disorders, their friends and families, and treatment providers like SCCCMH. A compromise measure was passed by the Michigan legislature in 2017, authorizing four pilot programs. These pilot programs proved problematic getting off the ground and the concept was dismissed under the Whitmer administration, which brought a new team in at the Michigan Department of Health and Human Services (MDHHS) to devise an effective plan moving forward.



St. Clair County Community Mental Health

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Hope, Healing and Recovery

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SCCCMH is committed individually and as a member of the Community Mental Health Association of Michigan to working with the MDHHS to ensure that the final plan that emerges enhances those areas needing improvement while retaining those features that have made our public behavioral health system the envy of most other states. However, we have four major areas of concern. First, we are concerned that MDHHS's proposal to implement the plan by October 2022 gives insufficient time to design a system that anticipates and corrects for potential unintended negative consequences. Second, we believe that as initially formulated the plan does not utilize the existing highly organized public health system whose networks of care have been built up through decades of hands on relationships. Third, the plan does not address the primary stumbling block preventing improved care statewide at this time, the lack of trained mental health professionals in our state. Finally, the first draft of the plan focuses on integrating administration of primary and behavioral healthcare as if this were the same thing as providing integration of primary and behavioral healthcare to an individual.

Though not in the news as much as it used to be, there continues to be consequences to Congress's 2017 repeal of the individual mandate in the Affordable Care Act, which removed a fine on individuals without health insurance. Under the ACA, between 2013 and 2016 the number of uninsured individuals in Michigan declined from 1.1 million to 527,000, a 50.8 percent decrease.

As a percentage of the population, the portion of uninsured individuals in Michigan fell from 11 percent to 6.5 percent. After the removal of the fine in 2017, the uninsured rate of Michigan residents rose to 7.8%, approximately 790,000 individuals. Virtually all of these individuals are without behavioral health insurance coverage, placing additional financial strains on the public mental health system.

In closing, I encourage you, as COVID-19 presents us with social, economic, and mental health challenges in 2020, to do as we in the behavioral health field have learned to do, to look to the resilience of people with behavioral health disorders as incredible examples of Hope, Healing and Recovery.

Art of Caring Awards

St. Clair County Community Mental Health (SCCCMH) will present the Art of Caring Awards to award recipients during the agency's annual Awards Breakfast tentatively scheduled on August 5 at the Blue Water Convention Center in Port Huron.

These awards recognize individuals, businesses and community organizations that in 2019 made a significant impact on the programs and individuals supported by SCCCMH. The following award recipients are true champions of mental health recovery:

Tom Foster is the President & Chief Executive Officer of Blue Flame Propane Inc. and Foster Energy Services LLC. Tom has never denied a request for assistance from SCCCMH, including sponsoring various initiatives and activities such as our annual Run for Recovery. Most recently, Tom kindly allowed our staff to park free on his property while parking is completed at our new Children and Family Services building.

Harbor Impact Ministries provides basic require-

ments, including food, clothing, and other household necessities, to economically disadvantaged individuals and families in St. Clair County. Since opening in 2010, they have served an average of 450 families or 1200 individuals a month. Another way they serve their community is by allowing others to be of service, including individuals who receive SCCCMH services, some of whom volunteer at Harbor Impact Ministries. Volunteering, a meaningful activity, provides an important opportunity in peoples' recovery journeys.

Memphis Lions Club annually assists dozens of worthy causes, including donating to the Penrickton Center for Blind Children, which provides care and services for multi-disabled children and supporting the Special Olympics, which many individuals we serve participate in.

Regina Spain is Executive Director of Enter Stage Right (ESR), a local theatre company. Regina has opened ESR's doors to many individuals who receive CMH services, mentoring and casting them in ESR productions. Regina also teaches drama classes to individuals receiving services and directs the annual production of the CMH Players, a theatre troupe comprised of individuals who receive services from SCCCMH, both current and retired SCCCMH employees, and members of the community.

Margie Spencer – Margie represents Crossmark Inc., a subcontractor to the retail and consumer goods industries. Margie has worked with our Individual Placement and Support (IPS) team, who support people in their efforts to achieve steady, meaningful employment in mainstream competitive jobs, by hiring several individuals receiving SCCCMH services. However, her involvement has not ended there. Her understanding, encouragement and active engagement in these individuals' training has helped them succeed at their new jobs.

A Picture of Resilience

Bethany Gernand

Throughout her childhood and teenage years, Bethany Gernand faced extraordinary challenges. These challenges began from virtually the moment she was born, when her parents realized she was having difficulty breathing while sleeping. She was diagnosed as having what was at the time labeled near-miss SIDS, Sudden Infant Death Syndrome. This meant that the part of her brain that should have regulated breathing during sleep was not functioning properly, causing her to frequently stop breathing in her sleep. She survived only with continuous monitoring throughout her infancy. Then, as a toddler, she struggled with gross motor skills. These challenges, which continued throughout her childhood,

included balance, posture, muscle tone and fatigue. She also experienced severe childhood trauma that contributed to her developing Bipolar Disorder as a young adult.

Despite these challenges, Bethany was a dedicated student with aspirations to become a teacher. A national merit scholar, she earned a full academic scholarship to Vanderbilt University, where she graduated Summa Cum Laude in 2004 with degrees in Early Childhood Special Education and Child Development. During the next five years Bethany lived life on her terms. She moved to Virginia, where she worked as a preschool special education teacher, helping children with intellectual / developmental disorders. Committed to overcoming the challenges creat-

ed by impaired gross motor function,

she hiked three to four days a week.

During the summers when school

was out, she volunteered at an innercity mission. Then, in 2009, Bethany developed a rapidly progressing neurological disorder. Within three months of the onset of her illness, she could no longer do any of these activities she loved. She returned to Michigan that same year.

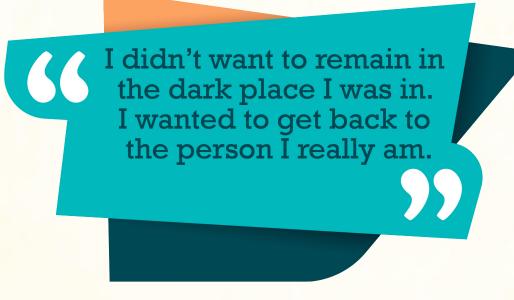
It took several years but Bethany finally received a diagnosis that explained not only her current condition but the health problems she experienced as a child. Bethany has mitochondrial disease, a rare progressive genetic cellular disease. Mitochondria, present in every cell, are the cell's power plant. When they are disrupted less energy is produced and organs throughout the body can begin to malfunction and even fail.

when she lost that she felt adrift. The, in October 2016 Bethany chose to receive St. Clair County Community Mental Health services. She explains, "I didn't want to remain in the dark place I was in. I wanted to get back to the person I really am." Since that time Bethany has embraced every opportunity to advance her recovery.

individuals, she solicited donations of books, puzzles, and art supplies for the mental health unit library. Another example is that because of the impact of her mitochondrial disease on her immune system, there are limits on face-to-face teaching opportunities with children. So, she found several non profit organiza-

tions dedicated to helping kids in developing countries obtain their education and sought ways to help. She is now a mentor via writing to young people in Kenya, Uganda, Columbia, Indonesia, and Kazakhstan. She also volunteers completing administrative paperwork for a non profit organization that supports children in multiple countries. Bethany remains hopeful to someday volunteer her services to help children with intellectual / developmental disabilities in a school setting.

Despite continued challenges, no one demonstrates the power of hope in living a life in recovery more than Bethany. Thank you for sharing your recovery story Bethany!



Present from birth, it is the likely cause of her Near SIDS episodes as an infant. It is also the likely cause of her poor gross motor skills.

Bethany's health challenges contributed to episodes of depression. She explains that her identity was so bound up in being a teacher that

A talented poet, she rekindled her love of writing and also began taking art and pottery classes. Bethany lives independently and is intent on being engaged in the community. For example, becoming aware that McLaren's Mental Health Unit had only 20 to 30 books available to

New Children and Family Services Building

St. Clair County Community Mental Health's (SCCCMH) new Children and Family Services building officially opened last November at 2415 24th Street in Port Huron Township. Purchased in June from Lake Huron Medical Center, the 15,000 square foot building houses approximately sixty SCCCMH staff providing services to over 1,000 area children with either a severe emotional disturbance, intellectual or developmental disability or those with co-occurring disorders. This includes children with autism receiving Applied Behavioral Analysis (ABA) services, which were previously located at Baker College on Lapeer Road. ABA is an evidence-based scientific approach that focuses on improving specific behaviors, such as social skills, communication, reading, and adaptive learning skills for children with Autism.

The decision to consolidate all children's services in one location was prompted by the need to accommodate growing substance use disorder services at SCCCMH's building on Electric Avenue.

However, while prompted by necessity, the new Children and Family Services building provides benefits in terms of resource savings, better design parameters, increased efficiency and synergy of services, and an enhanced sense of community among children and families visiting the location.

The new space was designed specifically to accommodate the delivery of services to children with rooms and areas made more comfortable for both kids and families as a whole.

This was particularly important regarding ABA services. To accommodate delivery of ABA services, the program has its own entrance and lobby at the back of the building, along with space for staff and storage of toys and materials. Special care was taken in designing these areas to accommodate sensory sensitivities common among children with autism, resulting in rooms with a clear and definable program to promote focus and reduce over-stimulation, soft color palettes with limited pattern, texture and color, and careful placement of areas so as to



have similar noise levels to avoid adjacent areas of quiet and loud spaces.

The new Children's and Family Services building positions SCCCMH to continue to provide to children in the Blue Water area the most up-to-date and effective treatment options available in the coming decade.

Communications Awareness Award

Jackie Smith

The death of the local newspaper, like the disappearance of the local beat reporter, has been greatly exaggerated, especially in the Blue Water Area, where The Times Herald and reporter Jackie Smith provide the vital local news coverage of issues that affects area residents the most, continuing the local newspaper's indispensable contribution to building social cohesion and a sense of community.

A Metro Detroit native, Jackie studied journalism at Central Michigan University, graduating in 2011. She joined The Times Herald in 2015. A prolific writer, in addition to The Times Herald she has also been published in USA Today, U.S. News & World Report, The Toronto Star, Washington Times, Detroit Free Press, and Detroit News. As The Times Herald's Local Government Reporter, Jackie is a jack of all trades, informing readers of what is happening in local councils of government, in our schools, and on our streets. In one recent two-week peri-

od, while filing multiple stories about the local impact of the COVID-19 virus, she also wrote stories about Port Huron's ongoing sewer separation, property slated to be demolished, and new apartments slated in St. Clair.

Like all good reporters, Jackie knows how to conduct an interview, research unfamiliar topics until she can answer questions like an expert, fact check and then fact check again, all in pursuit of writing a story that clarifies with a clear narrative while providing context for often complex and multifaceted issues. This is particularly true regarding her reporting about mental illness, intellectual / developmental disabilities and substance use disorders, where many myths continue to negatively affect the lives of individuals who need behavioral health care treatment.

Issues surrounding behavioral healthcare can be confusing to the lay person. Different terms for the same conditions may be used and what

someone reads about national trends may or may not be reflected in their local community. Jackie's coverage of behavioral health in the Blue Water Area has been uniformly accurate and exceptional. Writing the truth about behavioral healthcare – nothing more or less – is a crucial component in building community support and understanding for individuals receiving St. Clair County Community Mental Health (SCCCMH) services.

SCCCMH Executive Director Deb Johnson shares that, "Jackie is the consummate professional. Her reporting always adds to the community's understanding of an issue, including the often unique and complex issues surrounding behavioral health care. A great benefit to SCCCMH over the years has been accurate and informative reporting from The Times Herald, a tradition Jackie continues."

For reporting that has educated the community about SCCCMH, our services, reduced the stigma associ-



ated with mental illness, intellectual / development disabilities and substance use disorders, while showing that recovery is possible, the Board of Directors of SCCCMH are proud to name Jackie Smith the 2019 SCCCMH Communications Awareness Award winner.

If You Put in the Effort, the Rewards are Great

Mark Welsh

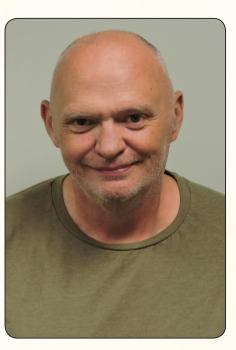
Like tempered steel emerges from the forge stronger and harder, so also do those who face challenges and emerge victorious. This is certainly the case with Mark Welsh. Mark experienced a lifelong battle with alcoholism. In one of life's ironies, in 2015, at a point Mark reports he felt he was coming to grips with his addiction to alcohol, he lost June, his wife of 21 years, to bone cancer. In the grips of grief, this precipitated a period of depression and heavy drinking that led to rehab, homelessness, and eventually living in a rescue mission.

But Mark never gave up. In 2017, fortuitous circumstances brought him into contact with St. Clair County Community Mental Health (SCCCMH) staff. When offered the opportunity for assistance in his recovery, Mark eagerly seized it and since then has consistently made good choices that furthered his recovery. And along the road to his own sobriety and recovery, he discovered a passion for supporting the recovery of others.

Today, Mark is a house manager at a Vision Quest home. This is a transitional house for people who have recently gotten out of inpatient rehab. Individuals live at the Vision Quest home for six months. It provides them a clean, safe environment while they attend meetings and classes. There, Mark spreads the message of recovery, hope, choice, and empowerment.

In addition to his work at the Vision Quest home, Mark is a Certified Recovery Coach, meaning he has received special training on how to assist others in overcoming obstacles to their recovery. This training, combined with his lived experience, has make him an important figure in Port Huron's recovery community, where he is always ready to lend assistance in any way he can, providing support for more fulfilling futures.

For Mark, the most important word in recovery is honesty. As he explains, "Recovery is not easy. I believe in honesty. I won't tell you what you want to hear to appease you. A lot of hard work has to be done by the individual. I'm not going to tell them that it's going to be easy. But I will tell them that it's going to be worth it, that every day they're sober is one more day in recovery. If you put in the



effort, the rewards are great."

Today, Mark teaches the important rule that saved his life, that "it doesn't matter how slow you go as long as you do not stop." Through his example and commitment to helping others along the same path he has walked, Mark continually demonstrates the power of hope and healing in recovery. Thank you for sharing your recovery story Mark!

I'm not going to tell them it's going to be easy. But I will tell them it's going to be worth it, that every day you're sober is one more day in recovery. If you put in the effort, the rewards will be great.

SCCCMH is Your Certified Community Behavioral Health Clinic

Over a decade ago, St. Clair County Community Mental Health (SCCCMH) began to explore opportunities to improve the physical health of individuals receiving services. The motivation was the publication of numerous studies showing that people with serious mental illness were dying decades earlier than people without. Equally disturbing was the conclusion that this tragic disparity was the result of preventable and treatable chronic illnesses like hypertension, diabetes, obesity and cardiovascular disease. These studies concluded there were two major causes. First, many people with serious mental illness had poor health habits such as inadequate physical activity, poor nutrition, smoking, and substance use, all of which are major contributors to chronic health conditions. The second major cause was that many people with serious mental illness faced barriers to primary care, including the challenge of navigating a complex and disjointed healthcare system, high deductibles and co-pays, lack of available treatment providers, provider restrictions, long wait lists, transportation barriers, and more. Many individuals with serious mental illness also have a history of trauma and/or a substance use disorder, which can also increase barriers to quality care. So, while susceptible to developing preventable chronic conditions, individuals with serious mental illnesses often did not receive the care they needed.

It was determined that integrated healthcare offered the best solution to this dilemma. Integrated healthcare brings together the different physical and behavioral health providers involved in an individual's care so that services delivered are consistent and coordinated. This results in higher-quality, more efficient care that better meets each person's needs. Further, it was decided that SCCCMH could make a significant impact on the overall health and wellness of individuals served by providing on-site primary healthcare services and delivering integrated healthcare through a collaborative treatment team. In 2015, we partnered with the Peoples' Clinic for Better Health, who relocated to our Port Huron main office, thus providing a co-located physical health provider. At the end of 2015, we pursued and obtained a 4-year, \$1.6 million Primary and Behavioral Health Care Integration (PBHCI) Program grant from the Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration (SAMHSA), a division of the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services. The resulting Health Integration Project was open to all adults with a serious mental illness with Medicaid health insurance. It provided the resources to create a support team for participants that included their case holder, psychiatrist, peer support specialist, and primary care physician. It also provided the resources to empower participants to take charge of their own health outcomes.

As SCCCMH worked to strengthen integrated healthcare efforts, the CCBHC program emerged as a pilot program in 2014 as part of the Excellence in Mental Health Act. Although Michigan was not included as one of the original eight states selected to participate in the CCBHC demonstration project, in 2018 Congress appropriated funds for a CCBHC expansion, from which we received a two-year \$4 million grant for 2019 and 2020, to become a CCBHC. Some of the major enhancements SCCCMH has made due to CCBHC funding includes:

- Expanded psychiatric coverage and Medication Assisted Treatment options.
- Expanded access to services, including providing services for individuals with private insurance and/or who require a sliding fee scale payment option.
- Offering substance use disorder treatment for individuals who do not have a co-occurring serious mental illness or intellectual/developmental disability.
- In collaboration with the St. Clair County District Court, the establishment of a Recovery Court that provides select individuals with substance use disorder an alternative path to recovery through the court system.
- Increased the number of staff with Alcohol and Drug Counselor certification.
- Expanded and improved coordination and collaboration with area hospitals, physicians, courts, schools, and other community service providers.
- Increased number of evidence-based practices offered by SCCCMH.
- Began a Spravato Clinic for individuals who

- experience treatment-resistant depression.
- Increased number of Certified Recovery Coaches, who work with and support individuals with substance use disorder.
- Expanded In-Shape staff capacity to serve more people, and began providing nutrition education via a certified Dietician Nutritionist.
- Offered several new health and wellness classes, including Living Well with Diabetes, Trauma Sensitive Yoga, LGBTQ Support Group for teens, Mindfulness & Meditation, and exercise classes.
- Expanded school-based health and wellness supports such as implementation of the Prepare U mental health curriculum into existing health classes and offering Trauma Sensitive Yoga to students.

Recently, SCCCMH received notification that our CCBHC grant funding was renewed through April 30, 2022, allowing the agency to continue and expand our efforts even more over the next two years. Receiving the continued CCBHC funding will allow SCCCMH to continue making enhancements to service provision and treatment options, improve the mental and physical health of individuals receiving services and other county residents, and attract and retain qualified staff during this time when there is a national workforce shortage in mental health professionals.

Over the past decade, SCCCMH has transitioned from being solely a mental health provider to becoming a Community Behavioral Healthcare Clinic, providing integrated healthcare services and supports to treat the whole person, both mind and body. Our innovations to integrate physical and behavioral health have already shown improved health outcomes and more fulfilled lives. With the resources and programs made possible through our becoming a CCBHC, we look forward to another decade of promoting the success and recovery of individuals we serve.

You Are Worth it

Victoria Schoenberg

Sometimes in life, you come across someone with a strength of spirit so great they overcome challenges that to the rest of us seem insurmountable. Victoria Schoenberg is such a person.

A native of Yale, at nineteen Victoria moved west, eventually settling down in California for two decades before returning to Michigan in May 2016. It was while in the Golden State, following an abusive relationship and the tragic loss of her two little boys, that Victoria was diagnosed with Bipolar and Schizoaffective Disorder, Depression, and ADHD. Although on medication, it failed to adequately

address her symptoms and she shares that as a result she had difficulty achieving the stability she wanted.

In 2015, Victoria met her partner Floyd. When she expressed a desire to return Michigan and re-establish relationships with

her family Floyd, a native Californian, made the trip with her. Shortly after returning to Michigan, Victoria experienced a mental health episode, during which she drove a car without a license and hit another car. She was arrested, but instead of entering the criminal justice system, she program, a joint collaboration drugs and alcohol and are required

to follow through with mental health

was referred to the St. Clair County Mental Health Court. This voluntary between the 72nd District Court and St. Clair County Community Mental Health (SCCCMH), is available to misdemeanor offenders who have a severe mental illness or developmental disability. People accepted into the program have weekly hearings, must abstain from

recovery.

challenges that include health issues, the loss of a loved one, and the death of her beloved dog Napoleon, who was with her for eighteen years. Learning she had hyperglycemia, Victoria responded by changing her entire diet to

in the face of

stabilize her blood sugar levels and following up on all health appointments. The result has been an improved mood and increase in energy. She continues to build a

would never see me in his courtroom

Once she began receiving services

at SCCCMH, one of the first steps

Victoria took was to request that her

medications be re-evaluated. Staff

confirmed her belief that her existing

medications were not working for

her. They were discontinued and new

medications were introduced that provided Victoria the opportunity to

apply her determination, persistence,

and overwhelming desire to achieve

Since beginning her recovery

journey, Victoria has been undaunted

relationship with her mother, father and brother.

Despite the challenges she has faced, Victoria exudes hope. Living in a comfortable home in Capac with Floyd and her new dog, Tiny, adopted from a rescue shelter, Victoria says "I'm happy to be where I am now." About recovery, she says it is important to "never lose hope, to never give up." She also advises that when in recovery you want people in your life who will support your efforts to get better. For those people who hesitate to accept services she says, "It's OK not to be OK. Don't be ashamed if you have a mental illness. It is a daily fight but you are worth it."

Victoria powerfully represents the power of healing to live a life in recovery. Thank you for sharing your recovery story Victoria!

It's OK to not be OK. Don't be ashamed if you have a mental illness. It is a daily fight but you are worth it.

> treatment. Victoria explains, "At first, I did not want to do Mental Health Court. But it saved my life. When I graduated from Mental Health Court, I promised Judge Tomlinson he

Community Service Award Winner

Mike McCartan

Every city and town in America boasts a few exceptional people who, without expectation of reward or recognition, give their time, energy and resources to improve the lives of others. In the Blue Water Area, no one is a better example than Mike McCartan.

As a young man, Mike decided on a career where he could help others. His professional life at St. Clair County Community Mental Health (SCCCMH) spanned four decades. For twenty-four of those years he served as SCCCMH's executive director, shepherding the organization into the modern era of person-centered, recovery-based behavioral healthcare. Under Mike's leadership, SCCCMH introduced a host of programs that continue to this day to benefit individuals receiving SCCCMH services. Examples include Community Integration Services, which allows individuals with an intellectual / developmental disability supported accessibility to work and to participate in community programs, the Assertive Community Treatment program that provides services to individuals whose needs require intensive services so they can continue to live independently in the community, and the Integrated Dual Disorder Treatment program for individuals with both a mental illness and substance use disorder. What these and other programs Mike introduced to the Blue Water Area have in common is a deep respect for the individual and a determination to create an environment where each person could be a winner in their own race.

Filled with boundless energy fueled by a drive to do even more, at the same time he was improving the lives of thousands of individuals with behavioral health conditions and overseeing the growth of SCCCMH, Mike looked around and found other areas of improvement in St. Clair County. Recognizing the lack of institutional support for individuals responding to or involved in crises or traumatic events, he became the driving force in the creation of the St. Clair Critical Incident Stress Management (CISM) team, whose mission is to help individuals, particularly first responders such as police officers and firefighters, whose normal coping skills may be overwhelmed by a critical incident or traumatic event. As chairman of the St. Clair County Community Services Coordinating Body, which he also helped found, Mike was instrumental in the creation of a countywide Suicide Prevention Committee. In 2012, he was also influential in creating a countywide collaborative effort to address the issue of prescription drug abuse in St. Clair County. As a member of the St. Clair County Criminal Justice Board, he helped create the St. Clair County Mental Health Court, which diverts selected individuals from the criminal courts to treatment. During this period, Mike also served for 33 years on the East China School District Board, his last 10 years as president, was chairperson of the United Way Annual Fundraising Campaign, a member of library board of the city of St. Clair, and a Community

Action Agency board member.

Mike's mission to better the Blue Water Area remains unabated in his retirement. A comfortable deck chair in Florida, discovering America in a Winnebago, or enjoying a mountain cabin off the grid, these and other traditional retirement activities have been pushed off just a bit into the future. Instead, Mike continues to serve as chairman of the St. Clair County Suicide Prevention Committee. He also continues to serve on the CISM team, where he has participated in more than 250 formal and informal CISM debriefings. And answering the call of local organizations that value his energy, experience and expertise, Mike currently serves as a board member for the St. Clair County Child Abuse and Neglect Council, the St. Clair County Library system, the Community Foundation of St. Clair, and the St. Clair County Regional Services Agency Board of Education, where he serves as presi-

As busy as he remains in retirement, Mike indulges one personal passion, his lifelong love of the theatre. For several decades, area residents have enjoyed Mike's theatrical skills in dozens of area productions with various theatre troupes, including the CMH Players, a group he helped found that includes individuals who receive SCCCMH services, SCCCMH staff, and their families. However, ever the leader, even there Mike's greatest role has been as a mentor who encourages those around him to their very best.



Mike is a living example of Winston Churchill's adage that "We make a living by what we get, but we make a life by what we give." About Mike, SCCCMH Executive Director Deb Johnson says, "For as long as I've known Mike he has embodied the true essence of community spirit. Merely listing the number of organizations Mike is active with fails to convey the positive affect he's had on thousands of people in our area, often from the shadows without drawing attention to himself. Mike's contributions to our community bear witness that one man can make a tremendous difference."

For his community leadership and passionate devotion to improving the lives of Blue Water Area residents, the Board of Directors of SCCCMH is proud to name Mike McCartan the 2019 SCCCMH Community Service Award Winner.

SCCCMH Employee of the Year

Barb Sudomier

A smile, encouraging word, empathetic ear, sincere interest, and ordinary everyday kindness, these are the critical ingredients that differentiate a professional doing their job and a person who is driven by a desire to, in Gandhi's words, "lose yourself in the service of others." Barb Sudomier is such a person.

A nurse, Barb gained invaluable experiencing working for twenty-two years with severe, chronically ill individuals living with mental illness in the acute psychiatric unit at Henry Ford Macomb Hospital in Mount Clemens. After leaving Henry Ford and a brief stint as a home care nurse, Barb came to St. Clair County Community Mental Health (SCCCMH) in October 2017 as a member of our Assertive Community Treatment (ACT) team. The ACT team provides support to individuals whose needs are best met by more intensive services. Team members work with individuals in their homes, work settings, or places in the community

where additional support might be needed. This allows the approximately sixty individuals served by the ACT team to continue to live independently in the community.

As a nurse, Barb focuses on assisting individuals with their medication, including performing long-acting injections that otherwise would require a visit to a medical facility, a significant burden for some. Long acting injections allow for the slow release of medicine into the blood for a variety of different mental illnesses. For individuals receiving them, these long acting injections are a critical component of their recovery.

Barb shares that visiting people in their homes requires professional and personal flexibility and a genuine interest in individuals served by SCCCMH as people, not patients. "I enjoy the people I see every day," she explains. "Sometimes being quiet and just listening – not responding with suggestions or answers – is what

people need." She is also quick to make clear she views this honor as a recognition of the effectiveness and dedication of the entire ACT team. "I've never worked with a group of people so engaged, people who are all in," she explains.

In turn, Barb's fellow ACT team members are quick to point out that the thoughtfulness she demonstrates with individuals she serves is extended in equal measure to her coworkers. They share that she is always prepared to lend a hand, even if this takes her out of her comfort zone, and never asks anyone to do anything she will not do herself. Barb's supervisor, Michelle Walkowski, says of Barb, "She is a fierce advocate for the health and wellbeing of individuals we serve. She has a natural talent to not only engage but to build trust in some of the most challenging situations." SCCCMH Executive Director Deb Johnson echoes Michelle's words. "Barb's ability to connect with people,



inspire trust, and instill confidence, no matter the intensity of the challenges individuals are facing, is second to none. We are all thankful for Barb's passion and dedication."

In recognition of her commitment to the highest standards of her profession and her devotion to individuals receiving services, the SCCCMH Board of Directors is proud to name Barb Sudomier the SCCCMH 2019 Employee of the Year.

Rights Champion of the Year

Cheryl LaFrance

The Rights Champion of the Year award recognizes an individual for his or her extraordinary contributions to the Rights Protection System, which protects the human rights of individuals with mental illness, intellectual/ developmental disabilities and substance use disorders. In recognition of her dedication to ensuring individuals are treated at all times with dignity and respect, the St. Clair County Community Mental Health (SCCCMH) Board of Directors is proud to name Cheryl LaFrance of the ARC of St. Clair County the SCCCMH 2019 Rights Champion of the Year.



Hundreds: Participate in Annual Elementary School Bookmark Contest

Several hundred students from area elementary schools participated in the third annual St. Clair County Community Mental Health (SCCCMH) Elementary School Bookmark Contest. Students were asked to create an original bookmark design, 2" wide by 6" long, around the theme of how being kind to others is important.

One winner was selected from each grade level K-5. Winners were judged on originality, creativity, neatness, and printability. Each winner received a certificate and \$25 gift card to Barnes & Noble. Winning bookmarks were distributed to participating schools.

The winners are:

Kindergarten	Haydn Mencavage	St. Edward on the Lake Catholic School
First Grade	Isabella Bostick	Keewahdin Elementary
Second Grade	Madison Utecht	Belle River Elementary
Third Grade	Evelynn Connell	Washington Elementary
Fourth Grade	Reese Schroeder	Belle River Elementary
Fifth Grade	Nadine Cameron	Michigamme Elementary

Congratulations to all these winners!

New Evidence Based Practices

In concert with our becoming a Certified Community Behavioral Healthcare Clinic, St. Clair County Community Mental Health (SCCCMH) has introduced six new Evidence Based Practices (EBP) designed to improve individuals' overall wellness. An EBP is any practice that relies on scientific evidence to demonstrate that the practice is effective. As such, EBPs are more reliable than practices that rely on tradition, intuition, or other unproven methods. These six EBPs join twenty-six existing EBPs and Promising Practices offered by SCCCMH, together providing individuals receiving SCCCMH services many powerful recovery supports.

Two of the new EBPs are interconnected - Medication Assisted Treatment (MAT) for individuals with Substance Use Disorder (SUD) and an Office-Based Opioid Treatment Program. MAT is the use of FDA-approved medication in combination with counseling and behavioral therapies to provide a "whole patient" approach to the treatment of SUD. MAT will be used in our Office-Based Opioid Treatment Program for individuals with Opioid Use Disorder.

The third EBP is the Adolescent Community Reinforcement Approach, a behavioral intervention that is designed for individuals between the ages of 12 and 25 with SUD and their parents or caregivers. Its purpose is to increase the family, social and educational/vocational support system of an adolescent to support their recovery from SUD. This is accomplished by replacing activities that encourage alcohol and drug use with positive behaviors that support recovery. Participants become more likely to seek out and continue care services, abstain from substance use, report fewer instances of depression and behavior problems, and demonstrate more social stability by working, receiving education, living in a home, or accepting medical care.

The fourth EBP is Motivational Enhancement Therapy (MET), an intervention and counseling approach that helps people resolve their uncertainty about engaging in treatment and stopping drug use in as little as five sessions. MET is designed to evoke rapid and internally motivated change. It is not designed to produce changes in substance use but to encourage individuals to engage in additional treatments that are designed to do so. It has proven particularly successful among individuals experiencing alcohol and marijuana dependence.

The fifth EBP is Interactive Journaling, a form of Narrative Therapy that helps people to view themselves as separate from their problems. It is a structured and experiential writing approach in which

events that occur over time in a person's life are viewed as stories, some of which stand out as more significant or more fateful than others. Participants learn how to achieve distance from these events, achieving a perspective that gives them the ability to determine how these issues positively or negatively affect their behavior. With this new perspective, they feel more empowered to make changes in their thought patterns and behavior and "rewrite" their life story for a future that reflects who they are, what they are capable of, and what their purpose is, separate from their problems.

Finally, the sixth EBP is Trauma Sensitive Yoga. The first yoga model recognized as an EBP for the treatment of trauma, it helps participants learn to calm their minds and regulate their physical responses and, thus, their emotions. Because one symptom of trauma may be difficulty or impaired ability to remember or verbalize the traumatic experiences, Trauma Sensitive Yoga, which teaches people to recognize and tolerate physical sensations and thereby regain a feeling of safety inside their bodies, is a powerful addition to traditional therapy.

SCCCMH remains committed to providing leading edge tools to support individuals' recovery and these six EBPs are a great addition!

McLaren Port Huron Honored with Organization Award for Improving Community Health

What makes a great hospital? Is it the hospital's location, centrally placed and convenient for patients? Is it the hospital's age, size, layout, and number of rooms? Is it the range of services it offers or the educational accomplishments of its staff? While all of these are important, they are not enough to make a great hospital. As demonstrated by McLaren Port Huron, the key ingredients are leadership and a patient-centered culture.

The leadership of a great hospital makes decisions by doing what's right. This is harder than it may appear to be on the surface, because doing what's right means balancing limited resources with short and long-term goals, while still ensuring patients excellent care. Doing what's right means a laserlike focus on fostering strong relationships among staff and between staff and patients. Doing what's right means a relentless commitment to quality control and innovating patient services. Doing what's right means maintaining a commitment to community that extend beyond the walls of the hospital. In these and other crucial respects, Jennifer Montgomery, President and CEO of McLaren Port Huron and her Executive Team are prescient and proven leaders.

The second key ingredient of a great hospital, a patient-centered culture, exists when hospital staff communicate empathetically and effectively each and every day with patients and their families and one where managers make improvements happen so patients always receive the best care, proactive and not reactive. Thus, while a patient-centered culture recognizes the importance of large strategic decisions, its focus remains on the daily management of the hospi-

tal and ensuring a superior patient experience. The success of McLaren Port Huron's patient-centered culture is attested to by the sheer volume of treatment provided yearly. In 2019, over 11,000 adults were admitted for care, over 6000 surgeries and surgical procedures were performed, almost 46,000 people were treated in the Emergency Center, and nearly 210,000 outpatient visits were conducted. Finally, a patient-centered culture embraces the potential of technology to radically improve patient care and outcome. This means being aware of cutting-edge research and making available new treatment opportunities as early as possible. Examples of McLaren Port Huron's commitment to technological innovation include expanding the Karmanos Cancer Institute and building the James C. Acheson Heart and Vascular Center, which when completed this summer will provide comprehensive cardiac services in one location, including cardiac and vascular testing and two new labs for diagnostic and interventional cardiac and vascular procedures, including open heart surgeries. Both are part of a \$161 million expansion begun in 2015. Other examples of McLaren Port Huron's commitment to technological innovation include using the world's smallest heart pump for patients whose heart disease is too severe for traditional angioplasty and several robotic surgical systems used across a wide spectrum of minimally invasive surgical procedures. This same innovative spirit was extended to patient service in August 2018, when McLaren Port Huron introduced online ER check in, which allows patients to register in advance for care in the emergency department.



Nor does McLaren Port Huron's concern for the community stop at the hospital walls. McLaren Port Huron routinely offers many free programs and events to area residents. These include its Children's Fun and Fitness Festival, going on its 29th year, scholarships to area students pursuing degrees in professions represented in the hospital and the community to the tune of \$560,000 since 1988, free diabetes care programs, free cancer survivor picnics for survivors, their families and care teams, and a free Beauty and Healing program for women in any stage of cancer treatments.

One program in particular demonstrates McLaren Port Huron's commitment to serving all members of the Blue Water community. In 2019, recognizing that while for the average person medical procedure such as blood pressure or temperature readings are normal and routine, that for someone with autism or special needs they can be a challenging and difficult experience, McLaren Port Huron became the first hospital in Michigan to develop a comprehensive special needs patient program, Levi's Link. This program improves the hospital experience for individuals with special needs by promoting individualized patient care that begins during preadmission with special intake forms that help hospital staff understand how to communicate with and care

for the individual. Educational material about the program is also made available to the individual and their family before the hospital visit.

Of special merit is McLaren Port Huron's continued commitment to the behavioral health needs of Blue Water residents as evidenced by their 24-hour inpatient Mental Health Unit that provides intensive, structured treatment towards rapid stabilization to vulnerable individuals with acute emotional and behavioral problems who cannot be treated in the community in traditional outpatient programs. Able to provide services to forty people at a time, without McLaren Port Huron these individuals would have to travel out of county for stabilization services, putting them far from the support of family and friends. Teamwork between St. Clair County Community Mental Health (SCCCMH) and McLaren Port Huron ensures that individuals receive consistent and effective care at all stages of treatment.

For superior leadership, their innovative patient-centered culture, community service and collaborative, caring approach to improving community health and wellness, the St. Clair County Board of Directors are proud to name McLaren Port Huron the SCCCMH 2019 Organization of the Year.

Rights Champion Team of the Year

Mayfield Group Home

The Rights Champion Team of the Year award recognizes organizations for their extraordinary contributions to the Rights Protection System, which protects the human rights of individuals with mental illness, intellectual/developmental disabilities and

substance use disorders. In recognition of their commitment to ensuring individuals at residential facilities are treated at all times with dignity and respect, the St. Clair County Community Mental Health (SCCCMH) Board of Directors is proud to name

the staff of the Mayfield Group Home the SCCCMH 2019 Rights Champion Team of the Year. This outstanding team includes the following individuals: William Donaldson, Moeta Fabelo, Lynda Fogel-Simpson, Meredith Gates, Wendy Halliday, Dayna Landschoot, Mariah Love, Lora Monaghan, Aleesha Mugridge, Kristen Osko, Desire Richardson, Lisa Scouten (Supervisor), Nicole Theeuwes, Gloria Valentin, and Cathy Ward.

Congratulations Mayfield Group Home staff!

Reorganization of Michigan's Public Behavioral Health System Proposed

Significant changes in Michigan's public mental health system are on the horizon. For over a decade, behavioral care providers, including SCCCMH, have focused on integrated care - coordinating physical and behavioral health care. Efforts to achieve this goal statewide by the Snyder administration failed because of resistance to their solution among behavioral health stakeholders. However, also sharing the goal of integrated care but rejecting the Snyder Administration's solutions, Governor Whitmore brought in a new team at the Department of Health and Human Services (DHHS) to develop a plan for integrated care throughout Michigan.

Currently, Medicaid recipients with mild-to-moderate health needs receive both physical and behavioral health services through a Medicaid Health Plan, a private for-profit insurance company. In contrast, Medicaid recipients with severe and persistent behavioral health needs receive physical health services through these same for-profit Medicaid Health Plans as individuals with mild-to-moderate needs, but receive behavioral health services through public non-profit entities like St. Clair County Community Mental Health (SCCCMH). This is because there is a significant difference in mild-to-moderate and severe and persistent mental illnesses, in duration, the degree to which they affect a person's ability to function without assistance, the type of treatment required, and finally the necessary expertise and experience of the treatment providers. The new DHHS proposal introduces Specialty Integrated Plans (SIP), defined as special managed-care organizations that will manage the complete health needs, primary and behavioral, of the approximately 300,000 people with severe and persistent mental illness currently in the Medicaid behavioral health system.

There are several concerns with this draft. First, it fails to bring all individuals in need of behavioral healthcare into the SIP plan. Second, the plan does not address the critical shortage of trained behavioral healthcare professionals in Michigan. In response, SCCCMH and other behavioral health providers are encouraging several changes that include extending the implementation date past October 22, increasing the safety net for individuals who do not quality for Medicaid, and folding treatment of children, adolescents and adults with mild to moderate mental health needs into the public behavior health system.

The one thing that can be said with certainty is that change is coming. At SCCCMH, we will do everything in our power to ensure that this change creates an even stronger public behavioral health system that protects and provides for everyone.

St. Clair High School Student Wins Best in Show



Gabrielle Furtah

The artwork of Gabrielle Furtah, a junior at St. Clair High School, was voted "Best in Show" in the 17th annual St. Clair County Community Mental Health (SCCCMH) High School Art

The annual art contest is held to educate high school students about, and to chip away at stigma associated with, mental health conditions. The winning artwork is used to promote May as National Mental Health Month.

All artwork is the original, individual work of a high school student, grades 9 – 12, residing or attending school in St. Clair County. This year's entries addressed the theme "Hope, Healing and Recovery."

Gabrielle will receive a congratulatory ribbon and \$350 prize. Her winning

artwork will be featured on billboards, on posters distributed to hundreds of agencies and businesses in St. Clair County, and permanently displayed in all SCCCMH locations.

All contest winners will receive prizes for their accomplishments. The complete contest results are as fol-

BEST IN SHOW	Gabrielle Furtah	St. Clair High School
1st Place	Thalia Lansky	Marysville High School
2nd Place	Brenna Austin	Yale High School
3rd Place	Audrey Hollenbaugh	Marine City High School
Honorable Mention	Brandan Zisler	Yale High School
Honorable Mention	Annie Vokes	Yale High School
Honorable Mention	Elaina Bailey	Marysville High School
Honorable Mention	Ethan Cummins	Marysville High School

2019 Marks Milestone in Substance Use Disorder Treatment

At the end of 2018, St. Clair County Community Mental Health (SCCCMH) received a \$4 million Certified Community Behavioral Healthcare Clinic (CCBHC) grant over two years from the Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration. While providing the opportunity to introduce new and expand existing programs, in particular it made it possible for SCCCMH to expand Substance Use Disorder (SUD) services beyond individuals with both an SUD and mental illness to people with just an SUD, regardless

of their ability to pay.

The CCBHC grant has also positioned SCCCMH to provide an Office-Based Opioid Treatment Program, which will include continued Medication Assisted Treatment in the form of Suboxone and Buprenorphine, both of which block opiate receptors in the brain, thereby helping individuals to reduce or quit their use of opiates. Having an Office-Based Opioid yond only opioid use, to address the Treatment Program in the Blue Water Area is important for several reasons. First, while the number of opioid re-

lated deaths have declined since a high of 74 in 2016, death from opioid overdoses continues to be the largest contributor of overdose deaths in the Blue Water Area. Second, this will help eliminate the need for individuals to travel elsewhere for treatment.

As important as combatting the opioid crisis is, the overall impact of expanded SUD services goes well beresurgence in the use of methamphetamine and other substances locally. Meeting this scope of need means

GRAND PRIZE

substantially increasing the amount of space devoted to SUD treatment at our Port Huron main office. SCCCMH is in the midst of converting recently vacated space made possible by our new Children's and Family Service building into SUD treatment. If you believe you could benefit from SCCCMH SUD services, even if you have applied in the past and been denied, please call the Region 10 Access Center at 1-888-225-

St. Clair Middle School

St. Clair Middle School Student Wins Writing Contest Grand Prize

Cailyn Hutton, a 7th grade student from St. Clair Middle School, was selected as the Grand Prize winner in the 13th annual St. Clair County Community Mental Health (SCCCMH) Middle School Writing Contest for her poetry entry "The One Who Cared." In recognition of her accomplishment, Cailyn will receive a congratulatory ribbon and \$250 prize.

The annual writing contest is held every year to promote May as National Mental Health Month, provide education, and to chip away at stigma associated with mental health conditions.

All entries are original, individual pieces of writing from a middle school student, grades

6 – 8, residing or attending school in St. Clair County. This year's entries addressed the theme "Hope, Healing and Recovery."



Cailyn Hutton

Cailyn will receive a ribbon and \$250 prize. All contest winners will receive prizes for their accomplishments. The complete contest results are as follows:

Grand Prize Winner

Cailyn Hutton

Fiction GRAND PRIZE St. Clair Middle School Cailyn Hutton 1st Place Central Middle School Max Mylan 2nd Place Jackson Zhang St. Clair Middle School 3rd Place Benjamin Farkas St. Clair Middle School

Non-Fiction

1st Place	Mackenzie Adamson	Algonquin Elementary
2nd Place	Brookelynn Haslem	Marine City Middle School
3rd Place	Hannah Palmer	Central Middle School

Poetrv

1st Place	Ethan Zhang	St. Clair Middle School
2nd Place	Megan Zultak	Achor Bay Middle School
3rd Place	Kate Nichols	Fort Gratiot Middle School

2019 St. Clair County Community Mental Health Board of Directors

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Sue Bolton Georgina Day Barbara Deegan John Duddy Rosella Mirabelli **Ed Rieves** Jo Ann Wilton

St. Clair County Community Mental Health Program Operations **Revenue and Expenditures** For the Fiscal Years 2016-2019

REVENUE	
Medicaid, including MI Child and Autism Benefit	\$ 47,726,934
Healthy Michigan Plan	\$ 4,398,712
General Fund	\$ 1,544,481
Local Funds	\$ 1,203,666
Other	\$ 4,857,810
TOTAL REVENUE	\$ 59,731,603

EXPENDITURES			
Intellectual / Developmental Disabilities	\$	33,505,853	
Mental Illness - Adults	\$	14,516,569	
Mental Illness - Children	\$	5,405,799	
Other	\$	5,294,891	
St. Clair Share of Managed Care Administration	\$	596,770	
St. Clair Share of PIHP Delegated Administration	\$	<u>475,661</u>	
TOTAL EXPENDITURES	\$	59,795,543	
Net Expenditures in Excess of Revenues	\$	<u>{63,940}</u>	

CMH Local Fund Balance Increase		
General Fund Services Surplus - Carryforward	\$	32,040
Local Funds Reserve Utilized	\$	{95,980}
Net Expenditures in Excess of Revenue	\$	{63,940}

2019 St. Clair **County Board of** Commissioners

Jeffrey L. Bohm

Greg McConnell

Jorja Baldwin

Howard Heidemann

Duke Dunn

David Rushing

Bill Gratopp

2019 St. Clair County Community Mental Health Management Team

Debra B. Johnson, MSA **Executive Director**

Mohammad Saeed, M.D.

Medical Director

Tracey Pingitore, MM Associate Director of

Administration

94%

Program Director

Kathleen Gallagher, LMSW

Karen A. Farr, CPA **Finance Director**

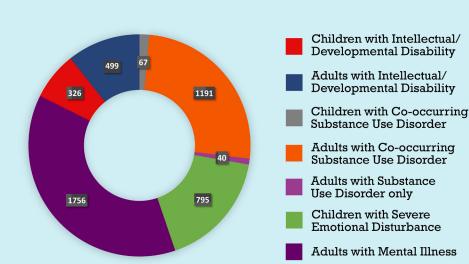
Dann Hayes, BS, A+ *Information Technology Director*

Michelle Measel-Morris, MA,

MA, PhD

Support Services Director





Customer Satisfaction Survey 96% Staff believed I could grow, change, and recover. 95% Services were available at times that were convenient for me. Staff were sensitive to my cultural/ethnic 97% background and treated me with respect

My family got the help we

services I have received.

Overall, I am satisfied with the

needed for our child.

