



Supporting Ohio's Behavioral Health Workforce By Creating Healthy Workplaces

By Maggie Hallett, Senior Director of Workplace Health and Education

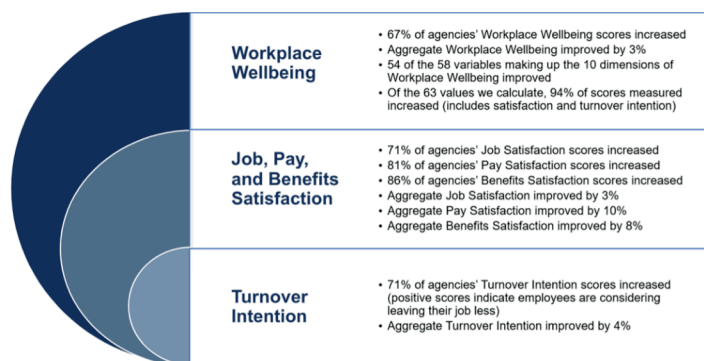
For years we'd been hearing about the workforce epidemic that behavioral health organizations were facing in Ohio. At MHAOhio we pride ourselves on creating programs that fill gaps in our behavioral healthcare system. In 2016, we saw a major gap in understanding the root causes of the workforce issues, so Occumetrics® was created to help organizations understand and address their unique workplace challenges.

Occumetrics is an in-depth data-driven workplace health assessment that helps leaders understand what is most important to their staff when it comes to job satisfaction and retention. Our workplace health team gathers data, listens and connects with employees and leaders, and synthesizes what we've learned to create a complete picture of each agency's specific needs. We then provide tailored recommendations to address those needs in a detailed report.

We started with a single pilot assessment in 2016. We're now on track to conduct around 30 assessments at behavioral health organizations across Ohio annually. At the time of publication, we've completed 108 assessments and are in the process of nine more, which represents over 20,000 Ohio behavioral health employees. Almost 13,000 employees have taken our workplace wellbeing survey, close to 3,000 employees participated in our 450+ focus groups, and we've conducted over 120 CEO interviews. We've worked with agencies with as few as four employees to agencies with over 1600 employees. We've worked with adult and child-serving organizations, substance use treatment organizations, peer run organizations, and more.

All that is to say, we've learned a lot—firsthand—from employees and employers about the challenges Ohio's behavioral health workforce faces.”

Our priority is to help each organization create a healthy work environment and address their unique workplace challenges. We're invested in their success, and we want to ensure our process is beneficial, so we also offer each agency the opportunity for a reassessment every 1.5 to 2 years. These follow-ups not only provide the organization a record of its longitudinal data, they have also allowed us to compile the following aggregate data, highlighting improvements agencies have experienced between assessments.



While we set out to help organizations individually, the treasure trove of aggregate data we've amassed provides insight into the behavioral health workforce challenges in Ohio collectively. This year, we had two critical opportunities to share those insights and this data at both the local and state level through my participation in the Franklin County ADAMH board's Workforce Development Council and OhioMHAS' Behavioral Health Workforce Advisory Council. Both are developing strategic frameworks for addressing the overarching behavioral health workforce issues.

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Can't afford counseling?
mhaohio.org/pro-bono-counseling



Need Peer Support?
mhaohio.org/support-groups



Not sure how to get started?
mhaohio.org/connect



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MHAOHIO NEWS

Welcome New Staff



Kejsa Lee
POEM Program Coordinator



Colleen Dempsey
Pro Bono Counseling Director

Staff Promotions



Brandi Allen
Director of Workplace Health



Laurie Zinn
Director of Marketing and Development

2nd Annual PRS + Community Event



On May 16, over 130 Peer Recovery Supporters, supervisors, employers, and people with lived experience gathered for the 2nd Annual PRS Community Event + Job Fair at the Columbus Metropolitan Library. The event was hosted by MHAOhio, Maryhaven, Southeast Healthcare, OhioMHAS, the ADAMH Board of Franklin County. Attendees participated in three workshops on resume-writing, interviewing, and professional demeanor; developing an individualized wellness plan; and supervision. Throughout the event, presenters, hosts, and sponsors emphasized the reason we'd come together—peer support changes lives!

MHAOhio's POEM Program Earns MHA's Award



We are proud to announce that the MHAOhio POEM Program (Perinatal Outreach and Encouragement for Moms) was presented with the Richard Van Horn Innovation in Programming Award during Mental Health America's Annual Conference in Washington, D.C. in June. The award recognizes the continuing innovation and creativity of an MHA affiliate in program development and implementation.

Founded in 2005 by Tonya Fulwider, Amy Burt, and Therese Roush, POEM closes gaps in care for pregnant and early parenting people who are experiencing postpartum depression and related mood and anxiety disorders. The program is grounded in peer support, connection, and lived experience, and was brought under the MHAOhio umbrella of mental health services in 2013.

POEM Rise provides exclusive services by and for Black and African American mothers and birthing persons. The Rise team connects to those who share similar experiences and challenges, along with joy, strength, and celebration. This understanding and empathy combats systemic issues, challenges discriminatory practices, and promotes equity and justice in the healthcare space.

Congratulations to the POEM staff: Becca Alexander, Hailee Childs, Tonya Fulwider, Bri'ana Jackson, Tanisha James, Keisa Lee, Tolu Schneider, Cass Stewart, and Raquel Williams—as well as our many volunteers. We appreciate all of you and are grateful to have you on our team.



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Some of the collective challenges we've encountered in Ohio agencies are:

- The overwhelming strain of high turnover and understaffed teams
- Pervasive dissatisfaction with pay; low Medicaid reimbursement rates
- Unmanageable productivity requirements and high caseloads
- Middle managers in need of more management training
- Disorganized and insufficient communication
- Inconsistent policies and procedures
- Front-line staff who experience change happening to them instead of with them
- Feeling undervalued by upper management/leadership

And some best practices that we've found apply to many organizations are:

- Addressing issues with pay
- Ensuring physical and psychological safety
- Cultivating supportive and skilled people managers
- Prioritizing and operationalizing DEI norms and practices
- Creating clear, multi-directional communication channels
- Granting flexibility and autonomy
- Ensuring benefits support and promote overall wellness
- Involving staff in decision-making that impacts them directly; sharing the "why" behind changes
- Implementing structured and consistent orientation, onboarding, and ongoing job-role training

Most of us have experienced an unhealthy work environment and the toll that it takes on our mental health and overall wellbeing – it bleeds into all aspects of one's life. If we are going to spend eight or more hours of our day working, it's imperative that it's in an environment that is healthy, supportive, equitable, and safe. While MHAOhio cannot singlehandedly address all of the challenges this particular workforce faces, it's reassuring to know it has the attention it needs and deserves locally and statewide and is a priority from the Governor's office and down. We're grateful that as we continue to work with organizations individually, changes are also happening on a grander scale to address some of the collective issues that can only be addressed systemically.

One thing we know for sure is that when employees thrive, everyone involved with the organization wins. Healthy work environments lead to less turnover, a more productive environment, and happier employees – and this all adds up to healthier clients. We are honored to play a part in helping to create those work cultures for behavioral health organizations across Ohio.

Regardless of sector or non-profit status, all organizations are invited to learn more about the Occumetrics workplace health assessment by contacting Brandi Allen, Workplace Health Director, at ballen@mhaohio.org.

Special thanks to our Occumetrics funders: The Ohio Department of Mental Health and Addiction Services, The Osteopathic Heritage Foundations, The Athens-Hocking-Vinton Alcohol, Drug Addiction and Mental Health Services Board (317 Board), and the Fairfield County ADAMH Board.



Board Spotlight Amanda Apling

Amanda Apling joined the MHAOhio Board of Trustees in 2020 after a few family members and friends lived bravely and openly with mental health conditions, and she experienced a few herself. She is proud of MHAOhio's mission and programs, and the passionate people who provide much-needed services rooted in genuine care, empathy, and compassion for each unique individual.

"The most fulfilling part of being a Trustee is that I have the opportunity to be a fierce advocate for the unique programming created, designed, and delivered by our exceptional and passionate staff at MHAOhio," she said. "I love having the opportunity to celebrate the positive impact they are making in our community."

A graduate of Ohio University with a Bachelor of Business Administration in Accounting and Management Information Systems, Amanda has spent her career in solutions delivery, project management, and advisory and technology consulting services.

As an MHAOhio Trustee, she serves as a member of the Governance and Human Resources committees, and contributes her strategic advisory skills for continued growth and scaling of the organization. She has also partnered with MHAOhio to bring wellness initiatives to her workplaces to help empower leaders in navigating mental health conversations and offer mental health education for employees.

"Being a small part of MHAOhio as a Trustee has ignited a passion within me to partner with MHAOhio to bring more mental health conversations, advocacy, thought leadership, and programming into my own workplaces," Amanda said.

Thank you, Amanda, for your years of service to MHAOhio.

TO YOUR MENTAL HEALTH

KEVIN MCDANIEL EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR



As we approach the end of summer and head into the final quarter of 2023, I'd like to take this time to extend my deepest thanks and appreciation to our donors and volunteers.

You've stayed steadfast with us through a pandemic, the cancellation of two planned Give Mom the Mic events in 2020 and 2021, and a transition in executive leadership over the last 11 months. Your commitment to our mission made it possible for us to provide the same level of consistency in our programming, which is essential to the people we serve.

Our entire agency is excited for Give Mom the Mic's long-awaited return on September 29 at The Grand Event Center. This popular fundraising event will inspire laughter, pull at your heartstrings, and raise money to support our programs. Now that it's back, we look forward to making Give Mom the Mic part of MHAOhio's fundraising landscape for years to come.

As I round out my first full year as Executive Director this October, I thank you again for your talent, resources, and ongoing support of MHAOhio and our programs. I look forward to our continued partnership.

Volunteer Spotlight: Family Advocate Participant Becomes Volunteer



Jackie is an MHAOhio Family Advocate volunteer. She knows first hand that it's like to care for someone with a mental illness. Her son, Jonathan, now 32 years old, was diagnosed with a mental health disorder when he was 23 years old.

"He was having auditory hallucinations, talking with someone who wasn't there. I asked him about it and he denied it, but the following January he was very depressed," she said.

Jackie helped him as best she could while he was in and out of hospitals and going on and off his medications. When things weren't getting better, she called MHAOhio's Get Connected line and was referred to MHAOhio's Family Advocate program. Long-time volunteer, Ed, stepped in to help as her Family Advocate peer volunteer.

A peer is someone who has lived experience helping a family member, significant other, or friend with a mental illness. They have knowledge of the local mental health system and can lend support to Family Advocate participants when needed.

"He was a lifesaver for me because he understood everything," Jackie said. "He was friendly, personable, and made it easy to talk. He got me all the way through the guardianship of my son."

She reached out to Ed whenever she had questions or needed support. Sometimes they met in person, other times they spoke on the phone or texted. A few years later, Ed asked her if she would want to become a Family Advocate peer volunteer. Listening, figuring out how to get help, and navigating the mental health system are all skills Jackie had learned over the years as a caregiver. She knew how important it was to talk about it with someone who understands. She was ready to help others.

"Years ago, I had lunch with a friend of mine whose son had a mental illness, and she talked freely about it," Jackie said. "It made me admire that and realize that this whole thing about not talking about it is really wrong. You need to talk about it, because it's happening to you as much as your child."

Jackie is the first participant to complete the Family Advocate program and become a peer volunteer. She has been a Family Advocate peer volunteer for eight months now and has connected with several family members who've needed support. We are grateful to volunteers like Jackie and Ed who help families through their difficult times. No family has to walk this journey alone. With Family Advocate peer volunteers, families caring for someone with a mental illness can experience understanding, encouragement, and hope.

MHAOhio Brings Back Give Mom the Mic!



September 29, 2023
The Grand Event Center
6 p.m. - 10 p.m.

Our hilarious and heartwarming fundraising event is BACK!

Proceeds benefit



For the first time since the pandemic, we are excited to announce that Give Mom the Mic is back!

Join us on September 29 at The Grand Event Center for our only fundraiser of the year!

Give Mom the Mic a fun night of laughs, connection, awareness, and encouragement—all to support POEM and MHAOhio's vital programs.

This upscale comedy show and mom's night out event will make you laugh and tug at your heartstrings. Your \$75 early bird ticket includes:

- An exciting, entertaining show at The Grand's elegant ballroom
- Uplifting stories from people who have benefitted from the support of MHAOhio
- Heavy hors d'oeuvres skillfully prepared by The Grand's Executive Chef – no need to have dinner before you come
- One drink ticket (wine, beer, or cocktail) and cash bar available throughout the evening
- Easy, mobile bidding on exciting silent auction packages such as OSU football tickets, a Hocking Hills overnight getaway, premium bourbon, wine, restaurants, and so much more—all to support MHAOhio's programs
- Complimentary parking in the adjacent 500-space parking garage



Meet Jen Mann

Our talent for this year's event is Jen Mann. She's an author, comedian, and mom blogger of the wildly popular blog, "People I Want to Punch in the Throat." She has been described by many of her 1+ million social media followers as Erma Bombeck—with f-bombs.



Say Hello to Ann Fisher

Ann Fisher, former host and executive producer of All Sides with Ann Fisher, will once again be Give Mom the Mic's emcee. She has been our emcee since the beginning, and we are grateful for her long-time involvement in this special night.

Thank you to those companies who have sponsored Give Mom the Mic and the individuals who have purchased tickets so far!

Please draw a big pink circle around September 29 from 6-10 p.m. and plan to enjoy a fun night out while making a difference in the mental health of our community.

Visit our website at www.mhaohio.org/gmtm for more information and to buy tickets!
Hurry - Seats are limited!

THANK YOU

To our donors and supporters

January 1, 2023 - July 31, 2023

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Thank you to everyone who participated in our MHAOhio merchandise sale through Bonfire in May, and the Target Circle Program in the second quarter of this year. These efforts raised nearly \$4,800 for MHAOhio. We appreciate your support!

A special thank you to the corporations and foundations that support our work

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thank you

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Susan Lear

In memory of Theodore Philip Shannon
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In memory of Howard Price
Neal Edgar

In memory of Katherine B. Dufrane
Keith Dufrane

In memory of Bryan Wilkinson
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In honor of Emily Gerber
Patrick Scott

In memory of Kevin Wymer
Wanda Wymer

We make every attempt to accurately acknowledge our donors. To report an error or omission, please contact Jen Van Camp at JVanCamp@mhaohio.org or 614-221-1441

Fundraising Spotlight

Ill Mannered's International Women's Day Brew Supports POEM

For the second year in a row, our friends at Ill Mannered Brewing in Powell designated POEM to receive proceeds from the Who Run the World (International Women's Day) brew. This year's recipe, Who Run the World vol 5 Hazy IPA, was brewed by an all-female Ill Mannered crew led by brewer Jenn Russell. It was released on Saturday, March 4.

Jen Mathias of Ill Mannered said they selected POEM because it is a local organization that supports women.

"We love the mission of MHA and the support services POEM can provide to women locally and throughout the state of Ohio," Jen said.

On release day (which ended up being an unseasonably sunny and warm day for Ohio), many MHAOhio employees and their families stopped by Ill Mannered for snacks, refreshments, and introductions on their outdoor patio.

"The POEM team gives their hearts every day in the care of new moms and birthing persons, and when those efforts are acknowledged and supported by women like Jen and her team, it goes beyond supporting our work financially," said Tonya Fulwider, MHAOhio's Associate Director and Co-founder of POEM. "It truly lifts us up in our work and continues to strengthen our resolve to provide that necessary care to those in our community."

Ill Mannered's Who Run the World brew raised \$1,000 for POEM. Thank you to Jen and Ill Mannered Brewing for supporting MHAOhio and POEM!



The Draft Room's Cheers To Women Event Benefits POEM



MHAOhio thanks The Draft Room in Westerville for choosing POEM to benefit from their Cheers to Women event on March 23.

Becca Alexander, Senior Manager of POEM Statewide Operations, talked to the group about the POEM program.

It was a fun evening of connection, awareness, and celebration of women and women business owners.

Proceeds from the event raised \$400 for POEM. Thank you!





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www.mhaohio.org

RETURN SERVICE REQUESTED



Friday, September 29, 2023

Join Us For a Hilarious
& Heartwarming
Night Out!

The Grand Event Center

Doors open at 6 p.m.; Program begins at 7:30 p.m.



FEATURING

JEN MANN

AUTHOR, MOM BLOGGER,
COMEDIAN

Buy tickets at mhaohio.org/gmtm

Details inside this issue!