



News Now

Mike DeWine, Governor
Lori Criss, Director



Dec. 16, 2020

>>> COVID-19 Vaccination Resources

The first doses of the COVID-19 vaccination began arriving in Ohio this week with priority being given to hospitals and nursing homes. Ohio's psychiatric hospitals and congregate living settings (recovery housing, adult care facilities, SUD residential treatment programs, etc.) have also been designated as a Group 1A priority population and will be some of the first sites in the state to have access to the vaccine. In addition to the Ohio Department of Health's [vaccination portal](#), OhioMHAS has added a [special section](#) to our COVID-19 resources web page to keep Ohio's behavioral health services system up-to-date on the latest vaccine developments and resources. Please check this page often as it will be updated as new information becomes available. The Department has also established a dedicated email box for questions related to the process: BHCOVIDVaccine@mha.ohio.gov.



>>> Veteran Addictions Counselor Tapped to Coordinate State Opioid Treatment Efforts

The Ohio Department of Mental Health and Addiction Services (OhioMHAS) is pleased to announce the appointment of Cynthia Wohlford-Lotas, Ph.D., LPCC-S, LICDC-CS, as Ohio's State Opioid Treatment Authority (SOTA). Dr. Wohlford-Lotas has more than 25 years of experience in the behavioral health care field, which includes 14 years with CompDrug, a Columbus-based outpatient opioid treatment program (OTP). In her new role, Dr. Wohlford-Lotas will provide oversight to Ohio's federally licensed OTPs, partnering with colleagues from the Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration, the U.S. Drug Enforcement Administration, and the Ohio Board of Pharmacy. In addition to assisting with the licensure for new programs, Dr. Wohlford-Lotas will provide technical assistance to OTPs for topics like regulation, evidence-based practices, and disaster planning. Prior to joining OhioMHAS, Dr. Wohlford-Lotas worked for the Ohio Department of Medicaid where she served as a member of the agency's Behavioral Health Policy Team. Her clinical experience includes provider and supervisory work with adults in both community mental health and substance use treatment settings. She also has extensive experience in behavioral health policy and quality improvement policy efforts. Dr. Wohlford-Lotas received her Ph.D. in Psychology from the Union Institute & University in Cincinnati. She earned a master's degree in Counselor Education and a bachelor's degree in Psychology both from Ohio University. She was also an L2000+ Leadership Academy Fellow (2005-2006) at The Ohio State University John Glenn Institute.



>>> Mental Health First Aid Statewide Collaborative Reaches Milestone, Seeking More Trainees

The Ohio Mental Health First Aid Statewide Collaborative has reached an important milestone having trained more than 1,000 Ohioans in Mental Health First Aid (MHFA) over the past six months. This milestone is especially significant given the challenges of implementing MHFA trainings during the coronavirus pandemic. Despite this, the collaborative has transitioned rapidly from in-person to online training and trained thirty-five new virtual instructors. The non-profit collaborative, funded by OhioMHAS, includes Mental Health America of Northern Kentucky and Southwest Ohio; Miami University's Center for School-Based Mental Health Programs and the University's Discovery Center for Evaluation, Research, and Professional Learning; Mental Health America of Ohio; The Ohio Mental Health Network for School Success; as well as support from regional and national MHFA experts.

The grant provides funding to train an additional 3,000 Ohio adults who work, volunteer or interact with organizations that serve adolescents and transition-age youth, minorities, older adults and faith-based communities. Schools, colleges and universities, non-profit organizations, faith-based groups, and senior service agencies/providers are encouraged to contact the collaborative to schedule training. To schedule a class for your group or organization, or for more information, visit <https://mhaohio.org/get-help/mhfa/>, or email Tori Ivan, tivan@mhaohio.org (Adults) and Kathleen Oberlin oberlink2@gmail.com (Youth).

>>> OhioMHAS Creative Services RFPs

OhioMHAS is [seeking proposals](#) from qualified contractors to invest in expanding various mass media campaigns with creative pieces, including multi-language print, digital, audio, and video, to improve the general public's understanding of critical behavioral health issues, arm the public with basic prevention strategies, reduce stigma, and remove barriers to seeking help. This opportunity is currently available on the MBE market, and proposals are due at 8 a.m. on Dec. 28.

For information on Ohio's response to COVID-19, visit coronavirus.ohio.gov or call 1-833-4-ASK-ODH (1-833-427-5634). For behavioral health-specific information, visit: <https://mha.ohio.gov/coronavirus>. For behavioral health-related questions, email covid19BH@mha.ohio.gov. For COVID-19-related OTP questions, email OTP_COVID19@mha.ohio.gov, for Housing questions, email COVID19Housing@mha.ohio.gov and for Telehealth questions, email COVID19BHTelehealth@mha.ohio.gov. COVID Careline 1-800-720-9616. Click [HERE](#) for a list of pop-up COVID-19 Testing Sites and [HERE](#) for the latest SAMHSA COVID-19 training and technical assistance resources.

In the News

- 12.15.20 | *Ashland Source* [Ashland community sends holiday messages to psychiatric hospital patients](#)
- 12.15.20 | *Columbus Dispatch* [Central Ohio getting state dollars for new addiction center](#)
- 12.15.20 | *The New York Times* [Parenting with agoraphobia is hard. It's harder in a pandemic](#)
- 12.15.20 | *Medical News Today* [Christmas 2020: How to protect mental health](#)
- 12.15.20 | *Spectrum News 1* [Former shelter dogs help people with mental illness](#)
- 12.15.20 | *WCMH-TV (Daytime Columbus)* [Suicide in Ohio: Conversations with youth](#)
- 12.15.20 | *Lima News* [Brightview brings medication-assisted treatment, counseling to Cole Street](#)
- 12.15.20 | *Lima News* [Activate highlights community approach to health](#)
- 12.14.20 | *WCMH-TV (Daytime Columbus)* [Life is better with you here](#)
- 12.14.20 | *WDTN-TV* [Mental health professional says people should safely avoid social isolation this holiday season](#)

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