

Behavioral Health: Developing A Better Understanding

VOLUNTEER LEADERS GUIDING LOCAL PLANNING AND DECISION-MAKING

Ohio's Community Alcohol, Drug Addiction, and Mental Health system is led by a robust and diverse group of community volunteer leaders working together to ensure that Ohio's communities are healthy, safe, and strong. Each of Ohio's 53 Alcohol, Drug Addiction, and Mental Health (ADAMH) Boards is led by a governing board made up of 14 or 18 volunteer community members statutorily empowered by Ohio Revised Code Section 340 to establish a unified system of services and supports for individuals with mental illness and addiction.

ADAMH citizen board members are public officials who serve without compensation. These community leaders serve as members of the board because they have a passion for helping the citizens of their communities. Local boards are made up of community leaders from varied professional and personal backgrounds. Consumers, family members, recovery and mental health experts, medical professionals, law enforcement officials, and others with an interest in community behavioral health services serve on community ADAMH Boards. The resulting blend of expertise and perspectives makes the ADAMH Boards uniquely qualified to make important community funding and program decisions effectively and efficiently. Board members dedicate their time and considerable expertise to working to ensure that Ohio's community support systems for individuals, families, and communities impacted by mental illness or addiction have access to the services and supports that they need.

Volunteer board members are essential in designing effective and efficient mental health and addiction systems of care in all of Ohio's communities. These community leaders reflect on their personal and professional experiences within their communities to ensure that the plans and priorities developed by the local boards meet the needs of the citizens they serve.

Statutory responsibilities of local ADAMH Boards

Ohio's 53 Alcohol, Drug Addiction, and Mental Health (ADAMH); Alcohol and Drug Addiction Services (ADAS), and Community Mental Health (CMH) Boards are statutorily empowered to:

- Establish a unified system of treatment for mentally ill persons and persons with addictions;
- Establish a community support system available for every alcohol, drug addiction, and mental health service district;
- Protect the personal liberty of mentally ill persons so that they may be treated in the least restrictive environment;
- Encourage the development of high quality, cost effective, and comprehensive services, including culturally sensitive services;
- Foster the development of comprehensive community mental health services, based on recognized local needs, especially for severely mentally disabled children, adolescents, and adults;
- Ensure that services provided meet minimum standards established by the director of mental health and addiction services;
- Promote the delivery of high quality and cost-effective addiction and mental health services; and
- Promote the participation of persons receiving mental health services and addiction services in the planning, delivery, and evaluation of these services.

Community Boards...Community Benefits

Ohio's communities are unique and local citizens understand the intricacies of their service districts. As a result local citizen leaders are best positioned to assess local needs, determine local priorities, create local plans, and make local decisions.

ADAMH Board members are residents of their service districts. This means they are on the ground in their communities and from their vantage point they are able to identify changing local needs and make decisions to adjust their local service system accordingly.

Boards work in their communities to meet local needs by:

- ◇ ***Engaging community participation:*** Boards engage community participation in the development, planning, and delivery of community services and supports by encouraging community involvement in committee meetings, community forums, and other local activities. Through these activities, boards work to ensure that the voice of the community is represented during all board discussions.
- ◇ ***Openly deliberate issues:*** Governing Boards are public bodies and as such their meetings are open to public attendance and participation. At these meetings, Boards openly discuss issues, develop plans, and make decisions for their communities.
- ◇ ***Recruiting and promoting local financial support:*** Boards are able to pursue local property tax levies and other funding opportunities to support their local service systems. Board members actively participate in supporting levy advocacy and fundraising efforts.
- ◇ ***Planning to meet community needs:*** Each year, ADAMH Boards are required to submit a community plan to the Ohio Department of Mental Health and Addiction Services outlining community plans for the provision of alcohol, drug addiction, and mental health services and supports. During this planning period boards orchestrate a process to solicit feedback from consumers, family members, community members, and other constituents. Boards use a similar approach to develop strategic plans that articulate a future vision and goals for their service district.

The most effective, responsible, and responsive government is government closest to the people.

ADAMH Board Member Appointments

ADAMH Boards are made up of 14 or 18 volunteer community members. For each ADAMH Board made up of 14 members, the Director of the Department of Mental Health and Addiction Services appoints six members and the Board(s) of County Commissioners appoints eight members. For each ADAMH Board made up of 18 members, the Director of the Department of Mental Health and Addiction Services appoints eight members and the Board(s) of County Commissioners appoints 10 members.

In joint-county board areas, the County Commissioners of each participating county must appoint members in the same proportion as that county's population bears to the total population of the district. The appointing authorities must also assure that member appointments reflect as nearly as possible the composition of the population of the service district as to race and sex.

ADAMH Board members must be residents of the service district and half of the members must be interested in mental health services and half must be interested in alcohol, drug, or gambling addiction services.

Board members are appointed to serve four year terms. No member can serve more than two consecutive four-year terms under the same appointing authority.

Each ADAMH Board must include individuals serving in special appointment categories to ensure that the voice of consumers, family members, and professionals are equally represented on the boards. To fulfill these statutory requirements, at least one member of the board must be:

- ◇ a clinician with experience in the delivery of mental health services
- ◇ a person who has received or is receiving mental health services
- ◇ a parent or relative of a person who has received or is receiving mental health services
- ◇ a clinician with experience in the delivery of addiction services
- ◇ a person who has received or is receiving addiction services
- ◇ a parent or relative of a person who has received or is receiving addiction services