

# Developing a Better Understanding



*ADAMH Boards work with individuals in recovery, family members, and community partners to respond to community needs.*

*ADAMH Boards ensure that individuals and families effected by mental illness and/or addiction have access to a high-quality, Recovery-Oriented System of Care, inclusive of prevention, treatment, and recovery support services.*

*ADAMH Boards, as the go-to community experts, serve as the hub of their local communities, facilitating partnerships and relationships with individuals and organizations throughout the community representing individuals in recovery, families, law enforcement, criminal justice, elected officials, faith-based entities, education, child welfare, human services, and more.*

## **ADAMH Boards: Your County Mental Health and Addiction Leaders**

Ohio's Alcohol, Drug Addiction, and Mental Health (ADAMH) Boards are statutorily empowered to plan, develop, fund, administer, and evaluate the local system of mental health and addiction services. Local Boards, governed by volunteer Board members appointed by the state and the county commissioners, do this work with a mix of federal, state, and local funds. Ohio's 50 Alcohol, Drug Addiction, and Mental Health Boards, covering all 88 counties, provide community members with access to a statutorily defined continuum of care, inclusive of prevention, treatment, and recovery supports, in communities throughout the state.

ADAMH Boards, through strong community partnerships, lead and advance efforts to ensure Ohio's communities are healthy, safe, and drug-free, while assuring accountability and effectiveness in client care. Local Boards are uniquely positioned to rapidly identify changing community needs, respond to crisis situations, and serve as catalysts for change.

As the local public agency empowered by Ohio Revised Code to establish a unified system of care for mental health and addiction services, ADAMH Boards operate in compliance with Ohio's Sunshine Laws with open meetings and open records. As public agencies, Boards encourage input and involvement from the public as they develop, promote, and sustain the community system of prevention, treatment, and recovery services. ADAMH Boards are governed by a body of county and state appointed public officials who volunteer their time to serve their community.

ADAMH Boards are stewards of public, taxpayer funds dedicated to supporting community mental health and addiction services. Boards have a fiduciary responsibility to ensure that taxpayer funds are spent in an effective, efficient, transparent, and quality manner to purchase services and supports that are needed by constituents in their communities. Local Boards are able to generate revenue through local levies (78 of 88 counties currently have levy support for mental health and addiction services). Through partnerships, grants, and other collaborations Boards are able to blend local, state, and federal funds to support community-based programs and services.

ADAMH Boards are charged with ensuring the community-based continuum of care inclusive of prevention, intervention, crisis, treatment, and recovery services and supports for both mental illness and addiction, as outlined in ORC 340.032, is available and accessible for citizens of their Board area. Local ADAMH Boards do not deliver direct services. They contract with a network of private providers to deliver services across the continuum. It is the responsibility of the Board to ensure the complete continuum of care is available as each provider may not deliver every service.

## 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 ADAMH Board is guided by a governing board made up of 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. 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.



50 ADAMH Boards  
31 Single County Boards  
19 Multi-County Boards

County Boards work in their communities to meet local needs by:

**Engaging community participation:** Boards, as the county mental and addiction leaders, 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 deliberating 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 on behalf of 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 the local plans for the provision of alcohol, drug addiction, and mental health services and supports within the county(ies) in their Board area. 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.

**Contracting for community services:** ADAMH Boards enter into contracts with private community addiction and mental health services providers for the provision of certified addiction and mental health prevention and treatment services and recovery supports.

- Within this contracting obligation, Boards are charged with considering cost-effectiveness and quality of services and supports.
- Boards must also consider continuity of care for clients when contracting with providers.
- Through this contracting process Boards remain accountable to the public and ensure that federal, state, and local funds are effectively utilized to provide access to critical mental health and substance use disorder services.

## Sources