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Contact: Suzanne Weinert
248-758-1991
weinerts@oaklandchn.org

Christine Burk
248-975-9684
burkc@oaklandchn.org

OCHN to increase Direct Support Professionals (DSP) wages

OAKLAND COUNTY, MI (November 23, 2022) – Oakland Community Health Network (OCHN) is implementing a network-wide, \$1 hourly wage increase for Direct Support Professionals (DSP) in the 2023 Fiscal Year (FY), effective January 1, 2023. The increase brings the funded network compensation for DSPs to \$16 per hour.

"Prioritizing the delivery of quality, behavioral health services to Oakland County residents requires providing appropriate compensation for frontline healthcare employees," states OCHN Executive Director and CEO, Dana Lasenby. "We will continue to be progressive and solution-focused in our efforts to hire and retain DSPs who provide personal care to our community's most vulnerable citizens."

OCHN also applied a \$1 pay increase to DSP hourly wages on October 1, 2021. This increase was in addition to a \$2.35 wage increase for DSPs by Michigan's legislature. OCHN then allocated an additional \$1.43 to this amount, bringing the funded wage for this position to \$15 an hour. The latest increase, announced on October 1, 2022 brings the hourly wage to \$16 per hour. The \$1 increase is effective, January 1, 2023.

OCHN provider network staff eligible for the wage increase include active full and part-time employees whose positions are funded through the OCHN provider network or a contracted provider organization. This includes DSPs working in Community Living Supports and/or Respite in unlicensed settings, Community Living Supports/ Personal Care Services in Specialized Residential, Vocational Services, and Overnight Health and Safety programs.

OCHN also implemented an initial retention payment of \$250 for part-time and \$500 for full-time DSPs in June 2022. A second retention payment of \$750 was also distributed prior to the end of OCHN's 2022 FY on September 30, 2022.

The DSP salary increases and retention payments demonstrate OCHN's commitment to ensuring appropriate living wages are available to these highly regarded healthcare heroes.

OCHN's Board of Directors approved the most recent pay increase at its November 2022 meeting.

About OCHN

OCHN is contracted by the Michigan Department of Health and Human Services to lead a provider service network that assists approximately 23,000 Oakland County citizens at more than 300 service sites across the county. People who receive public behavioral health services through OCHN's provider network include those who have an intellectual or developmental disability, mental health challenge, or substance use disorder. Most of these individuals have Medicaid insurance coverage.

OCHN's goal is to ensure these individuals are aware of and have access to services and supports that will improve their health and quality of life, as well as ensure their engagement in full community participation. Its mission to "inspire hope, empower people, and strengthen communities" reflects an unyielding belief in a "Valuable System for Valued People." Programs and supports provided by OCHN's service network are available at www.oaklandchn.org.

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5505 Corporate Dr. | Troy, MI 48098 | Phone 248.858.1210 | Fax 248.452.9793