

Together, as partners in progress, we've achieved much this year and over the past 40 years!

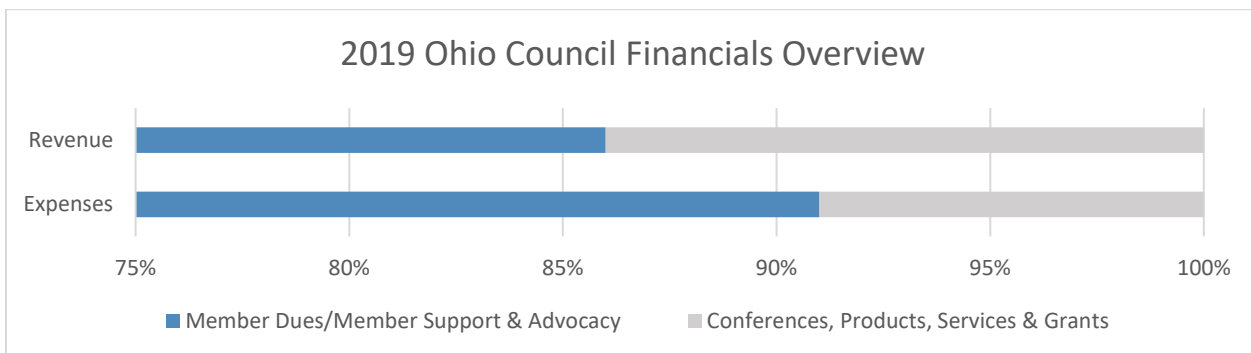
A lot can happen in a year! (Let alone 40 years!) We anticipated this year would bring changes, challenges, and struggles and it did not disappoint. The members of the Ohio Council have demonstrated resolve in the face of adversity and achieved steady progress in a rocky business environment. While the opiate epidemic and addiction crisis continue to harm communities and suicide rates climb, behavioral health providers have stood tall, adapted when necessary and survived to continue delivering vital healthcare services in your communities. We've seen a new day dawn as Governor Mike DeWine took office, built a cabinet of talented and compassionate leaders (including Lori Criss, former Ohio Council CEO), and set forth a policy agenda that prioritized behavioral health and support for the healthy development of children and families. Progress has been slow, but since January it has been steady.

For the past four decades, your organizations have brought the hope of recovery and promise of healing to individuals and families. Your passion, dedication to service excellence and commitment to caring for people facing addiction and mental illness endures. Your work inspires the Ohio Council staff daily. Your creativity, spirit of innovation, commitment to mission and drive to succeed against adversity motivate our advocacy and policy activities. Your active participation in the Ohio Council committees, surveys, and events provide the fuel we need to drive change.

Together, I have no doubt we will continue to grow and thrive. The Ohio Council will continue our 40 years of excellence in providing timely and accurate information, training, technical assistance, policy analysis, advocacy and opportunities for networking. We will continue to build relationships with elected leaders and businesses that offer products and services to support your organization's success. The Ohio Council will continue our advocacy efforts to find opportunities and advance solutions that strengthen our members as service providers, businesses, and employers.

The Ohio Council has built a solid legacy of strong, credible and effective advocacy that we will expand into the future. We will offer solutions that end Ohio's behavioral health crisis so our children, families, men and women can achieve recovery, be connected to a community of compassion and live meaningful lives.

Wisa Lampel, LISW-S
 Chief Executive Officer



OC-PAC is the Political Action Committee and a restricted account of the Ohio Council. The OC-PAC compliments our traditional policy and regulatory advocacy efforts allowing us to build and strengthen relationships with policy makers who share and support the interests and policy priorities of the Ohio Council. The OC-PAC is funded by the personal donations of individuals who are associated with or employed by members of our trade association. To learn more or make a personal contribution, call (614) 228-0747.

2019 ACHIEVEMENTS:

- Expanded opportunities for member-CEO networking, added National Council for Behavioral Health membership benefit, and grew membership by adding 15 new members this year.
- Active support for the Governor’s inaugural state budget and House and Senate funding and policy decisions that maintain the integrity of the Ohio Medicaid program and the behavioral health workforce, along with key investments to enhance services for children, families and communities struggling with the crisis of untreated mental illness and addiction.
- Strong engagement with RecoveryOhio, including appointment to the RecoveryOhio Advisory Board, and participation in development of the RecoveryOhio Initial Report that is aligned with the Ohio Council’s priorities.
- Elevated BH provider and school partnerships as critical in developing school-based behavioral health services that includes prevention, early intervention and treatment.
- Established insurance parity education and enforcement as a budget and policy priority through participation in the Parity@10 Coalition.
- Intense and sustained advocacy to address BH Redesign and managed care integration challenges, including technical assistance and supports for providers navigating the clinical and business changes needed to operate in a managed care environment. Such activities included:
 - Advocacy and engagement with lawmakers and administration officials to convey a sense of urgency and demand accountability for implementation challenges.
 - Development of provider data reporting to bring transparency and accurate reflection of the provider experience, which demonstrated system-wide loss of service capacity and workforce.
 - Immediate engagement and collaboration with key DeWine administration officials to spur actions to stabilize claims payments, delay recoupment of cash advances and address other managed care transition challenges.
 - Successful advocacy for BH Redesign policy and payment rate changes.

2020 ADVOCACY: We will continue our advocacy to advance the policy priorities outlined in the Ohio Council’s [“Policy Solutions for Ohio’s Addiction and Mental Health Crisis.”](#) Our vision and priorities remain the same:

- Establishment of an adequately financed full continuum of care that includes access to prevention, treatment, and recovery supports;
- Education and enforcement of federal insurance parity; and
- Availability of a quality behavioral health workforce.

Supporting these priorities in the coming year will require focused efforts on:

- Revising the BH Redesign service model to restore access to behavioral health services, build a competent behavioral health workforce, implement the 1115 SUD Waiver, and improve clinical and financial designs of the Behavioral Health Care Coordination service.
- Working closely with Governor DeWine and RecoveryOhio as well as the General Assembly to implement the policy recommendations outlined in the RecoveryOhio Initial Report.
- Advancing ideas for Medicaid managed care re-procurement to create a transparent, accountable, and less administratively burdensome relationship with the managed care plans.
- Educating policy makers on the merits of integrated behavioral health and primary care services and advocate for development of Certified Community Behavioral Health Centers.
- Implementing key initiatives for children and families including prevention services, student wellness and success funding, and efforts to reduce custody relinquishment with expanded services for multi-system youth.
- Continue internal operational improvements to create efficiencies and enhance membership services.