

# *NEWS!*

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## **LAKE ADAMHS EARNS HIGHEST LEVEL OF CERTIFICATION**

*Painesville, OH* — The Lake County Alcohol, Drug Addiction and Mental Health Services (ADAMHS) Board has earned three-year recertification — the highest level available — for its overall operations through the Ohio Association of County Behavioral Health Authorities (OACBHA).

Established by Ohio Statute, the ADAMHS Board is responsible for planning, funding and evaluating Lake County's mental health and recovery services. OACBHA is an independent, statewide organization through which the 55 such boards throughout Ohio can seek certification.

The Lake County ADAMHS Board becomes the second system in the state to receive recertification, and was the first non-pilot board in Ohio to achieve its original multi-year certification in 2006.

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C.O.Q. (Culture Of Quality) certification initiative involves a rigorous and comprehensive peer audit of virtually every aspect of a board's operations, according to Fonda G. Dawkins, OACBHA's Chief of Program and Information Services. Three year certification is granted only to boards which demonstrate compliance with more than 140 standards that span Medicaid compliance, quality, efficiency, risk management, operations, ethics, and communication.

Lake County ADAMHS Executive Director Kim Fraser says there were plenty of high-fives in the office when the certification was announced, but she also hopes the good feelings extend beyond the ADAMHS walls. "Honestly, I want every Lake County resident to share in the pride we feel about this," she said. "We remind ourselves every day that we're accountable to the local families who rely on mental health or recovery services, to the agencies we support, and to the taxpayers of Lake County. Our team works very hard on behalf of those stakeholders. This multi-year certification is very gratifying because it substantiates that our efforts are well directed and effective."

Cheri L. Walter, CEO of OACBHA, says the certification process offers a substantive and objective means by which to evaluate boards' processes, systems and efficiencies. "We ask a great deal of Ohio's behavioral health boards, and it's important to be able to measure and quantify their performance," she said. "The certification process is something that we take very seriously. The audits are thorough, exacting and broad in scope. A multi-year certification offers conclusive evidence that a board is operating with very high levels of competency, skill and efficiency."

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Lake County ADAMHS operations are overseen by an eighteen member board comprised of Lake County residents who serve without compensation. Board members include medical professionals, mental health and recovery experts, consumers (people who need and use services), family members of consumers, community leaders, and business professionals. More information on the ADAMHS Board and its network of local providers is available on-line at [www.HelpThatWorks.us](http://www.HelpThatWorks.us).

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