

# **Ohio Chemical Dependency Professionals Board**

## **Testimony on House Bill 64, FY 2016-2017 Biennial Budget Medicaid Committee of the Ohio Senate**

April 30, 2015

Chairman Burke, Ranking Member Cafaro, members of the Committee, I am Amanda Ferguson, Executive Director of the Ohio Chemical Dependency Professionals Board. Thank you for the opportunity to appear before you today.

### **Background**

Created in December of 2002 with the passage and signing of H.B. 496 (124<sup>th</sup> General Assembly), the Chemical Dependency Professionals (OCDP) Board was organized in April 2003 and assumed the authority to credential chemical dependency professionals June 13, 2004. The Board provides licensing and certification services to over 8,500 chemical dependency treatment and prevention professionals. It endorses over 350 individual trainings per year and awards, annually, approximately 25 to 30 educational provider status designations.

### **Mission**

The Board's mission is to ensure high standards of alcohol and other drug treatment and prevention for all citizens through the assurance of a competent, well trained and ethical workforce. This is accomplished by:

- establishing and maintaining standards for those who seek a license or certification
- guiding practice through the enforcement of ethical standards
- providing oversight and monitoring of continuing education activities
- overseeing the administration of professional examinations

The public is served further by the Board's ongoing efforts to develop a workforce of appropriate size and skill to serve the needs of Ohio's citizens. The Board seeks to facilitate professional development opportunities and serve as a catalyst for positive change.

### **Organizational Structure**

Organizationally, the Board has thirteen members. Twelve members are appointed by the Governor and consist of seven alcohol and other drug treatment professionals holding a chemical dependency counselor license, two professionals holding the prevention specialist certification, one medical doctor with experience practicing in a field related to chemical dependency counseling and two public members. The Director of OMHAS is authorized to appoint one ex officio member to the Board.

The Board currently has four full time staff positions: an Executive Director, Treatment Credentialing Administrator, Credentialing Coordinator and Office Assistant. The staff

provides technical expertise and knowledge to the professionals in the field, allowing them to move efficiently through the licensing process. Thoroughness of application review and timeliness of staff responses are all a part of the quality customer service the Board values and expects.

### **Board Leadership**

The Board continues to play a key leadership role in a number of initiatives designed to provide chemical dependency professionals greater opportunities in the present, strengthen the profession in the future and ensure the state is provided well trained and qualified professionals. Some examples include:

- Playing a key role in workforce development with the goal of identifying pathways to recruit, retain and increase the number of alcohol and other drug treatment and prevention professionals
- Actively engaging with state-wide, national and international organizations to ensure Ohio continues to be a leader in the credentialing of alcohol and other drug treatment and prevention professionals.

### **Budget**

The Board is a fee based entity and does not receive or use General Revenue Funds. Specifically, the Board is part of the 4K9 Fund group. This fund serves as a repository for fees collected by Ohio's professional and occupational licensing boards.

The Board supports its portion of the Executive budget as proposed: \$490,644 in FY 2016 and \$489,666 in FY 2017. Board revenues for FY 16-17 will provide the dollars necessary to support the executive proposal for the Board.

The Executive budget recommendation aligns with the Board's priorities for the upcoming biennium and its overall strategic plan and will:

- Support the operations of the board and staff
- Ensure the Board is able to provide consumer protection through the enforcement of ethical standards
- Enable basic renewal and new application processing
- Support continuous efforts to improve services for the Board's credentialed professionals and increase efficiencies in the processing of applications
- Enable the Board to continue its work with colleges, universities, and educational providers to expand professional development opportunities

The Board will continue to use DAS' Central Service Agency (CSA) in order to help contain costs and as a vehicle to expand its participation in the sharing of services whenever and wherever possible.

With the passage of House Bill 483 of the 130<sup>th</sup> General Assembly, the Board was charged with creating a Gambling Disorder Endorsement which its licensees could obtain as a means

of increasing their scope of practice and assisting those in Ohio with gambling disorders. The Board launched this new endorsement on March 22, 2015 and is now accepting and reviewing applications. In this first month the Board has received eleven applications and staff has responded to numerous inquiries to assist interested professionals in identifying the steps they need to take to begin accruing the required hours of education and experience to apply. We look forward to seeing the growth of this endorsement holder population over the next biennium.

In closing, the Board intends to continue working diligently to contain costs, increase efficiencies and ensure that its expenditures are covered with sufficient revenues. Thank you for your time and consideration. I will be glad to respond to any questions you may have at this time.