

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

New toolkit section provides guidance for Community Mental Health providers and their role in AOT

Michigan, September 14, 2022



In partnership with Michigan's [Mental Health Diversion Council](#), the Center for Behavioral Health and Justice (CBHJ) has launched a new section of the Assisted Outpatient Treatment (AOT) [toolkit](#) for Community Mental Health (CMH) [providers](#) to obtain information and resources about how to effectively provide and monitor services under AOT orders.

AOT orders may mandate a variety of services to help prevent relapse or deterioration of a person's mental health. Statutorily, the responsibility for implementing and monitoring AOT belongs to the [CMH authority](#) and their contracted service providers, but this process can be complex and involves many community partners. New toolkit content offers specific guidance for CMH providers about their important role within the [AOT system of care](#).

In a recorded Community of Practice [webinar](#), representatives from [Genesee Health System](#) and [Detroit Wayne Integrated Health Network](#) share their successes and lessons learned while launching AOT programs in their communities, outline practical steps and processes they've developed, and share tips for other CMH providers who are interested in expanding or implementing their own AOT program.



Even with court ordered assisted outpatient treatment, engaging people in their treatment is a vital component in the provision of care and Community Mental Health providers play an essential role in keeping people engaged. A [training](#) from Dr. Debra A. Pinals, Medical Director for Behavioral Health and Forensic Programs for the Michigan Department of Health and Human Services, is offers practical tips for clinicians to

improve engagement with individuals under AOT orders. Additional trainings over guidance on CMH [requirements](#) and what CMH [needs to know](#).

[Research](#) shows there were significant increases in medication adherence, reductions in suicidal behavior, homelessness, inpatient psychiatric hospitalizations and reductions in both drug and alcohol use for people under an AOT order. Additionally, [research](#) shows promising cost savings to CMH providers and other community agencies.

Every part of the AOT system of care plays a uniquely important role in ensuring individuals receive high-quality services in the community and work toward transitioning back to voluntary care. The AOT toolkit seeks to provide guidance to each component of that system of care. The first section of the AOT Toolkit, targeted to court professionals, was released on Friday, July 1, 2022. Additional sections with content for families and advocates, individuals, hospitals, and law enforcement, will be released as content is added.

The CBHJ is seeking [feedback](#) about the toolkit contents and [testimonials](#) about experiences with AOT orders, which can be submitted on the CBHJ's website. Visit the [toolkit online](#) to view all the resources and learn more.

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**About the Michigan Mental Health Diversion Council:** *Created by Executive Order 2013-7, the Mental Health Diversion Council was created in the Michigan Department of Community Health to advise and assist in the implantation of the Diversion Action Plan and provide recommendations for statutory, contractual or procedural changes to improve diversion. The Council is charged with “reducing the number of people with mental illness or intellectual or developmental disabilities (including comorbid substance addiction) from entering the corrections system, while maintaining public safety”. [Learn more](#).*

**About the Center for Behavioral Health and Justice:** *The Wayne State University School of Social Work Center for Behavioral Health and envisions communities in which research, data, and best practices are used by multiple partners to enhance the optimal well-being of individuals with mental illness and/or substance use disorders who come into contact with the criminal/legal system. [Learn more](#)*