

## Older Adult Services

The Oklahoma Department of Mental Health and Substance Abuse Services promotes healthy communities and the provision of the highest quality care to enhance the well-being of all Oklahomans. Therefore, in response to the demographic shift in our state projecting older adults will outnumber children and youth by 2034, the Department has established a division to focus specifically on the strengths and needs of older adults. This division is proactively infusing dedicated resources to elevate behavioral health as a foundation of older adult health and well-being.

While the Department's care and services, including Certified Community Behavioral Health Centers (formerly Community Mental Health Centers) have always been available to Oklahomans across the lifespan, this new division allows us to focus on enhancing the opportunity specifically for older adults to experience age-informed health, mental health, and substance use services.

The Department is working with multiple stakeholders to build the requisite infrastructure to support the health and well-being of older adults through a purposefully curated system of care relevant to the older adults of today and tomorrow. This work is guided by the newly forming Behavioral Health Forum on Aging. The Forum is focused on policy and practice to develop and sustain a system of care, including strengthening inter-organizational collaboration, workforce development and support, and a campaign to enhance the understanding about what it may mean to age (e.g. physically, physiologically, psychologically, emotionally, socially) and how we can embrace aging while simultaneously working toward a more age-inclusive society.

Several workforce development trainings are already underway by the Department through the [Training Institute for Excellence in Mental Health and Substance Use](#), including:

- ✓ *Aging 101: An Overview for Leadership* (1.5 hours)
- ✓ *Aging 201: A Comprehensive Analysis* (6.5 hours)
- ✓ *How to Use the Geriatric Depression Scale* (1.0 hours)
- ✓ *And in partnership with the PRSS Team, Peer Recovery Support Specialist with a Focus on Older Adults* (6.5 hours)

The Department is also working in partnership with CCBHCs to bring the evidence-based PEARLS program to Oklahoma by facilitating access to Coach Training. PEARLS is a community-based program that helps older adults who are living with depression create happier, healthier lives and can be particularly beneficial for those who may have limited access to depression care.





Lastly, as a component of the Forum, we are engaging with partners to develop a mechanism to disseminate age-informed training opportunities to the vast array of providers who work with older adults across the health, behavioral health, and social service continuum, and to advocates, familial caregivers, and older adults.

Resources:

- Oklahoma Department of Mental Health and Substance Abuse Services' Training Institute for Excellence in Mental Health and Substance Use  
<https://oklahoma.gov/odmhsas/trainings/training-institute.html>
- Oklahoma Mental Health and Aging Coalition [omhac.org](http://omhac.org)
- Oklahoma Resources for Older Adults from the Oklahoma Mental Health and Aging Coalition  
<https://view.officeapps.live.com/op/view.aspx?src=http%3A%2F%2Fomhac.org%2Fattach%2FOklahoma-Aging-Resources-MHBG-Trainings.docx&wdOrigin=BROWSELINK>
- OKCares <https://okcares.org/>
- 988 <https://988oklahoma.com/home>
- Reframing Aging Institute <https://www.reframingaging.org/>
- E4 Center for Excellence in Behavioral Health Disparities in Aging [E4 Center – Rush Center for Excellence in Behavioral Health Disparities in Aging](https://www.e4center.org/)
- National Coalition on Mental Health and Aging <https://www.ncmha.org/>

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