



Improving Ohio's Emergency Department and Behavioral Health Overlap

Emergency departments across the country are challenged with overcrowding and inefficient behavioral health referral processes that result in long wait times for individuals needing access to critical services. The COVID-19 pandemic has intensified those challenges, particularly in relation to individuals needing mental health and substance use disorder (SUD) care.

Ohio hospitals handle approximately **5.9 million ED visits each year**. High ED utilization contributes to overcrowding, with 505 ED visits annually for every 1,000 state residents¹. ED wait times in the state remain long, especially for individuals experiencing mental health emergencies, according to the latest Centers for Medicare and Medicaid Services data²:

-  **155 MINUTES** = Average time individuals spend in the ED before leaving from the visit
-  **254 MINUTES** = Average time individuals in need of psychiatric/mental health spend in the ED before leaving from the visit






High wait times contribute to at least 1% of individuals leaving the ED before being seen by a clinician². Overall, 7.5% of Ohio adults report having unmet needs for mental health treatment, compared to a **national average of 7.5%**³.



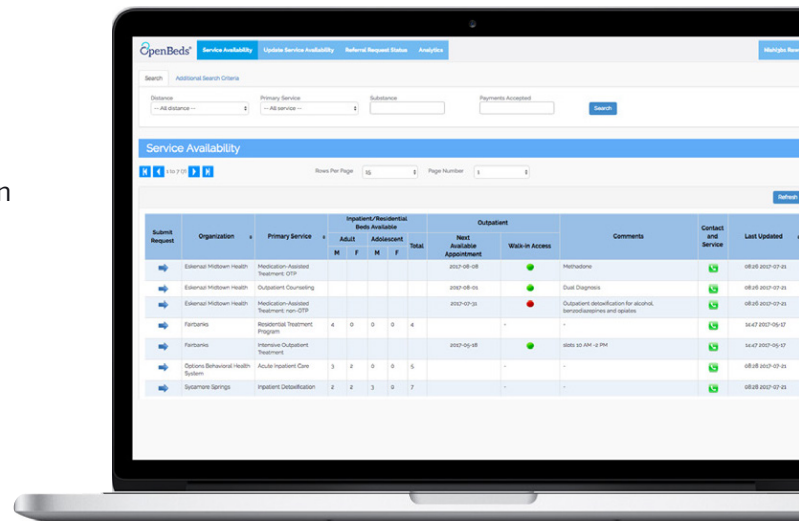
For Treatment Providers

Ohio has an opportunity to ensure mental health and SUD patients presenting in EDs across the state are efficiently routed to the most appropriate care. This requires building broad participation in the Ohio Behavioral Health Connection (B-CON) among hospitals, health systems, and other providers in every region of the state.

B-CON, powered by OpenBeds, currently enables real-time referrals, and monitors the availability of inpatient and outpatient health services among **70 Ohio behavioral health facilities**. It facilitates collaboration and serves as a one-stop shop for clinicians and the public to access information on available beds and treatment slots, along with other treatment resources. By optimizing its use of the OpenBeds solution, the state can improve overall access to mental health and SUD services, reduce ED wait times and overcrowding, and track trends in ED utilization, including:

-  Referrals by participating ED providers
-  Voluntary versus non-voluntary admissions
-  Difficult-to-place individuals and conditions, such as those in rural areas and vulnerable individuals from historically underserved populations

With the solution already in place and operational, the OpenBeds system is a critical tool available now to help emergency department providers identify the right care to serve an individual's specific needs, view a real-time inventory of available behavioral health services and resources, and rapidly connect them to optimal nearby available care.



Join the Ohio B-CON Network

If you would like to utilize OpenBeds to send digital referrals for individuals to receive behavioral health services, please contact the B-CON onboarding team at onboarding@bamboohealth.com or visit bamboohealth.com/oh-openbeds-onboarding-resources/ to initiate the process.

1. Kaiser Family Foundation, "Hospital Emergency Room Visits per 1,000 Population by Ownership Type, 2019," Accessed February 1, 2023
2. The Centers for Medicare and Medicaid Services, *Timely and Effective Care – State*, Dataset Explorer, Released Jan. 25, 2023
3. Kaiser Family Foundation, "Adults Reporting Unmet Need for Mental Health Treatment in the Last Year, 2018-2019," February 1, 2023