

## **Executive Director's Report- January 21, 2025**

**Transportation Service Updates:** In November and December, Jackson County completed 46 and 64 transports, respectively, while Marshall County had 98 and 198 transports. Our new 15-passenger van is now used for transporting a portion of the day program participants in Marshall County, replacing Guntersville Public Transportation. This change is expected to save approximately \$3,000 per month in transportation costs.

**Opioid Settlement Grant Program:** We are pleased to announce that both of our grant proposals were approved by the Alabama Department of Mental Health (DMH). We will continue the second year of our treatment program with \$350,000 in funding, and we will provide new Prevention services through our First Responders/Veterans Program with \$75,000 in funding.

**2024 Consumer Survey Results:** The results from our 2024 DMH consumer surveys for Adults and Youth/Families have been received. Our results were highly favorable and met or exceeded statewide and national positive baselines. The survey results are attached for your review.

**Albertville City Schools Mental Health Grant:** Albertville City Schools were recently awarded \$3.5 million over five years to expand School-Based Mental Health services. We have initiated discussions with the schools and will continue collaborating to explore opportunities for partnership, including potential service delivery contracts under this grant.

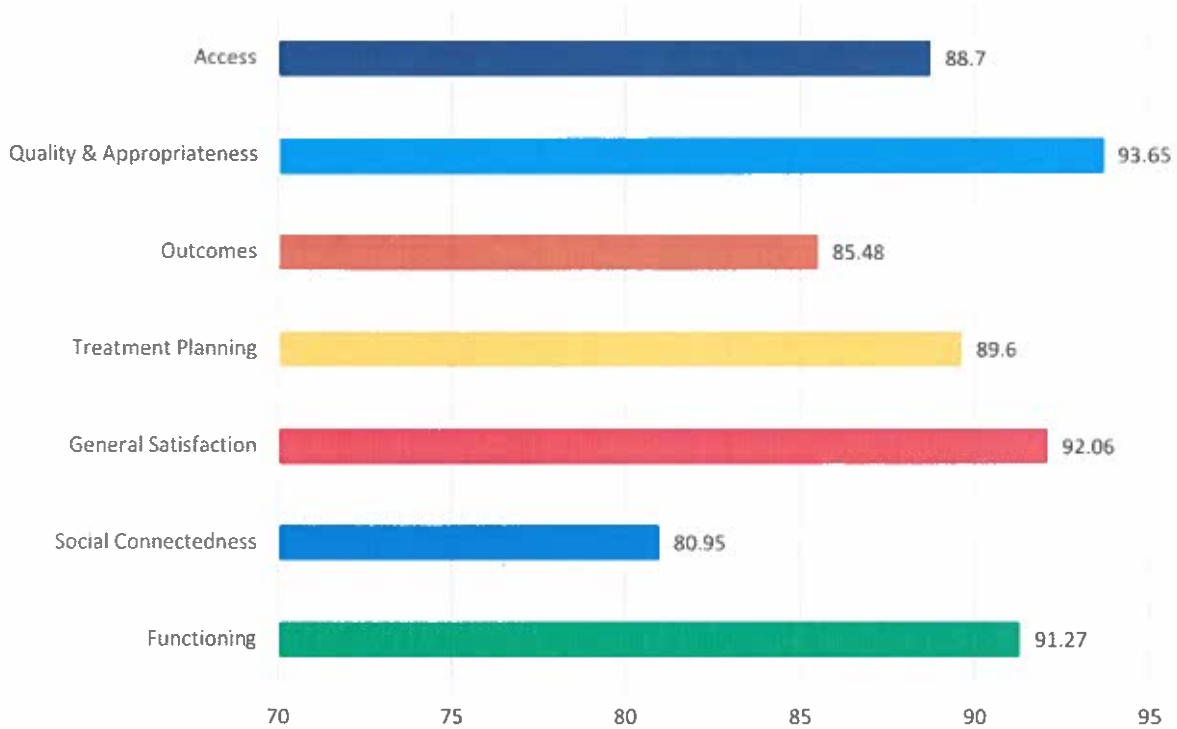
**Certified Community Behavioral Health Clinic (CCBHC):** Significant progress is being made on the CCBHC project. Our application was submitted last week, and we are working to complete additional requirements due by the end of this month, including the Needs Assessment, Cost Report, and Agency Self-Assessment. A recent training provided an infographic comparing the current Community Mental Health Center (CMHC) model with the new CCBHC model. This infographic is attached for your review and serves as a helpful visual comparison of the two models.

**2024 "State of the Organization" Report:** 2024 was an exceptional year, marked by progress in all areas of our operations. The report highlights the achievements we made, and we are proud of the collective efforts of our outstanding team in accomplishing these goals.

**Discussion on the potential purchase of a mobile clinic vehicle**

# Mountain Lakes 2024 Consumer Survey Results

## Mountain Lakes 2024 Adult MHSIP Survey

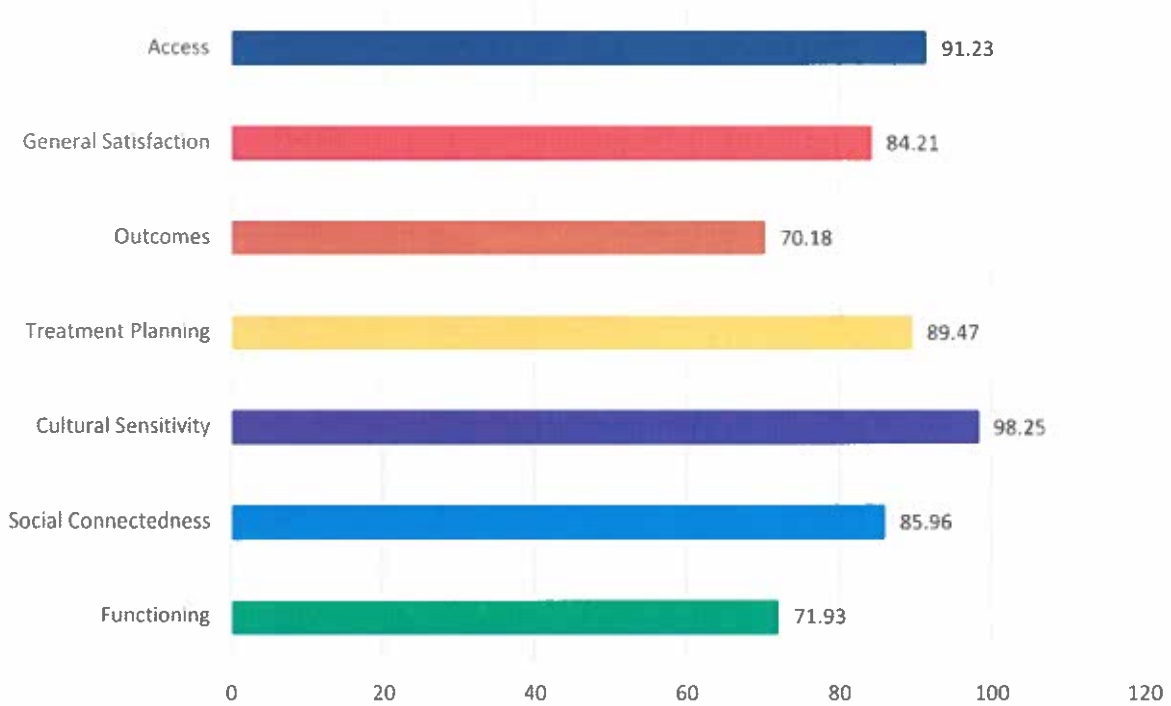


2024 Adult Consumer Satisfaction Survey Results	2024 Mountain Lakes % Positive	2024 State % Positive	2023 Mountain Lakes % Positive	2022 Mountain Lakes % Positive	*2022 US % Positive
1. Reporting Positively About Access	89%	87%	80%	88%	87%
2. Reporting Positively About Quality and Appropriateness	94%	89%	98%	93%	89%
3. Reporting Positively About Outcomes	85%	81%	85%	85%	78%
4. Reporting Positively About Participation in Treatment Planning	90%	82%	92%	93%	85%
5. Reporting Positively About General Satisfaction	92%	86%	90%	94%	88%
6. Social Connectedness	81%	78%	76%	79%	74%
7. Functioning	91%	81%	88%	85%	75%

\*Most Recent US Results Available

# Mountain Lakes 2024 Consumer Survey Results

## Mountain Lakes 2024 Youth Family Survey

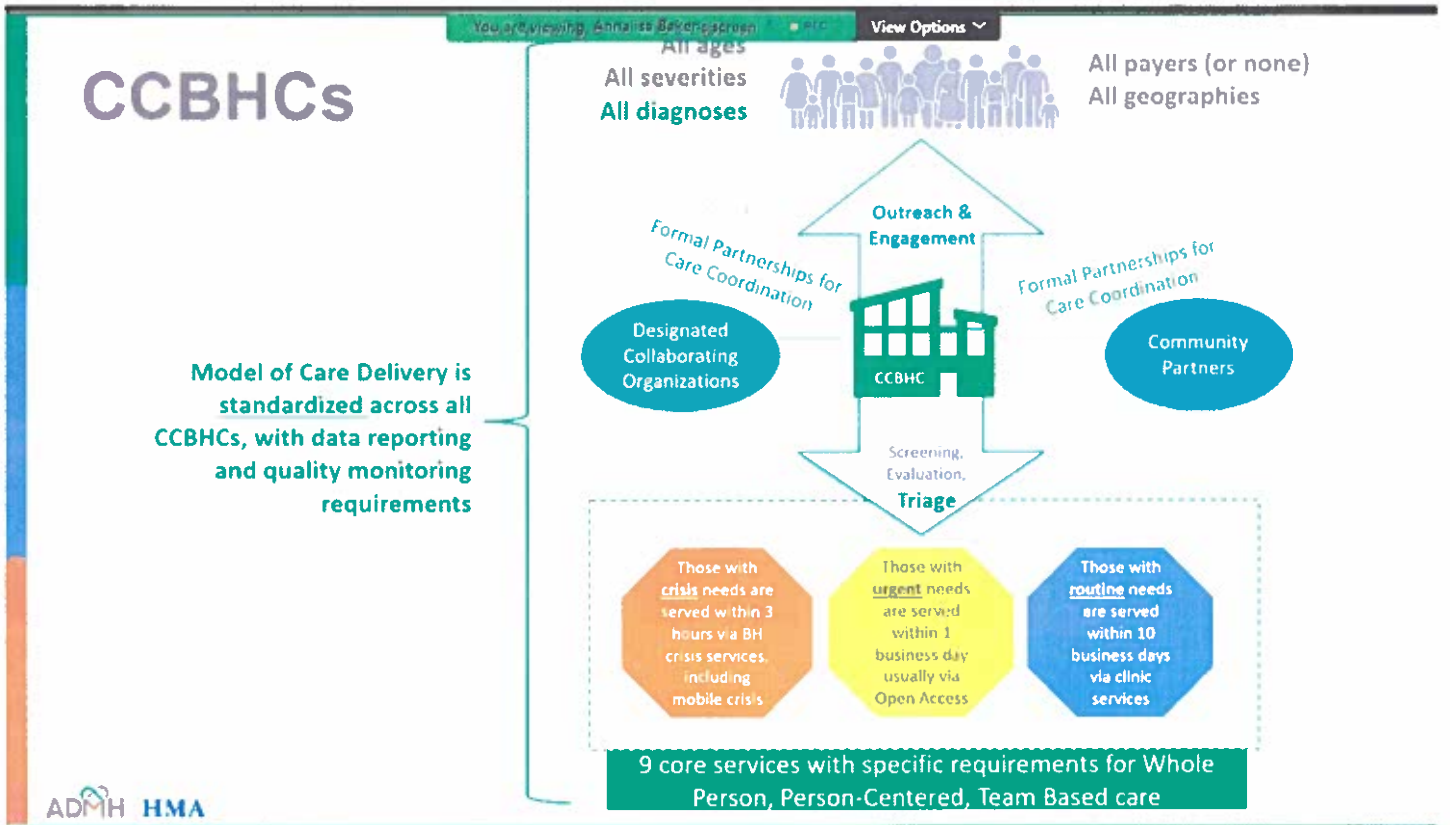
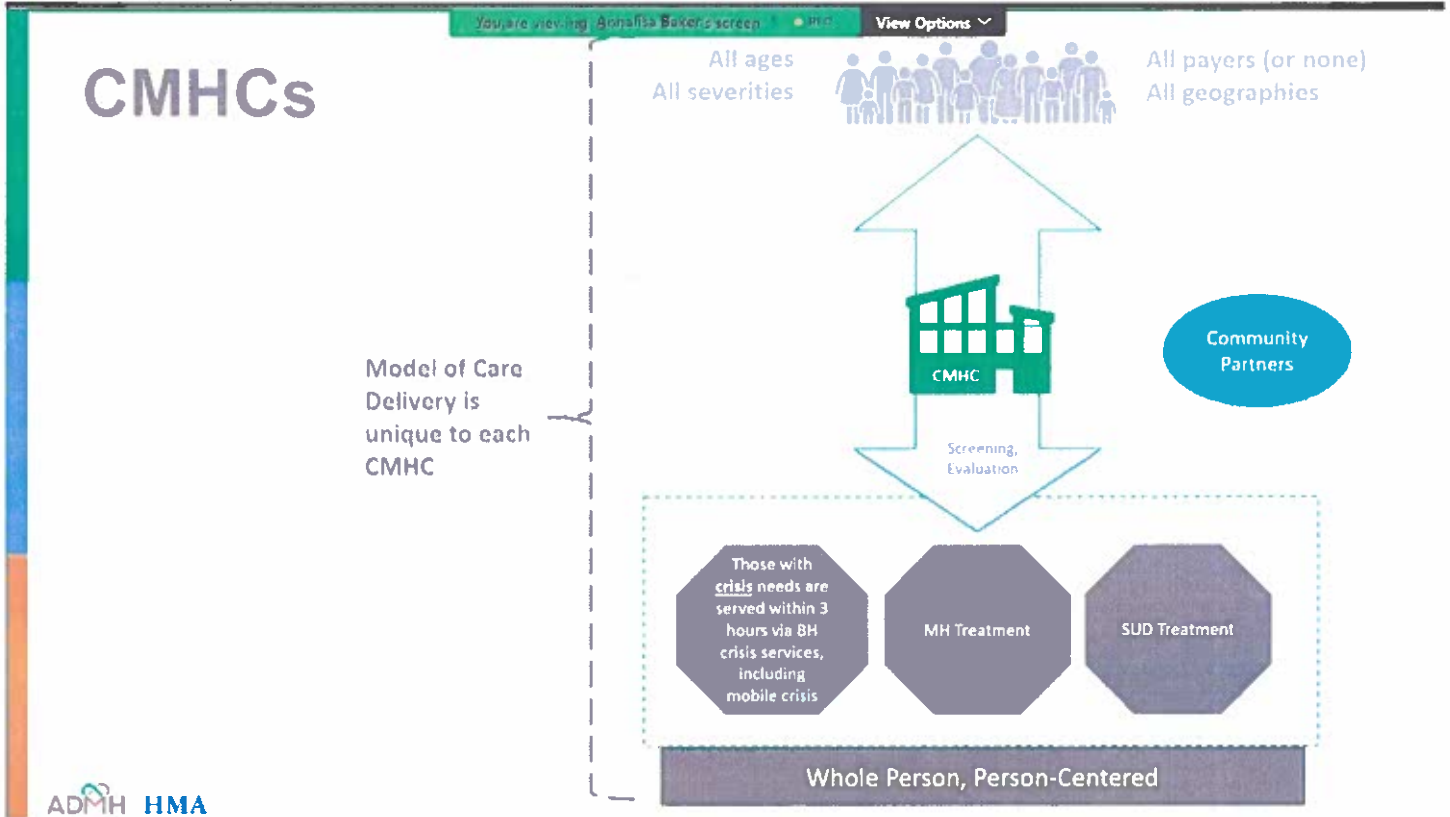


2024 Youth Family Consumer Satisfaction Survey Results	2024 Mountain Lakes % Positive	2024 State % Positive	2023 Mountain Lakes % Positive	2022 Mountain Lakes % Positive	*2022 US % Positive
1. Reporting Positively About Access	91%	85%	69%	87%	87%
2. Reporting Positively About General Satisfaction	84%	84%	86%	87%	86%
3. Reporting Positively About Outcomes	70%	71%	67%	75%	71%
4. Reporting Positively About Participation in Treatment Planning	89%	85%	74%	80%	88%
5. Reporting Positively About Cultural Sensitivity of Staff	98%	93%	95%	93%	94%
6. Social Connectedness	86%	82%	83%	82%	86%
7. Functioning	72%	71%	65%	73%	71%

\*Most Recent US Results Available

ADMH

Division of Mental Health and Substance Use Services  
Office of Quality Improvement and Risk Management  
November 18, 2024



## **MLBH "State of the Organization" Review of Calendar year 2024**

### **Community Outreach & Education-**

- Delivered presentations on mental health and treatment at over 100 locations.
- Presented or assisted other therapists in speaking to high school and middle school students on topics such as suicide prevention, career planning, and abuse prevention.
- Participated in eight resource fairs across the region.
- Conducted six parent education classes through local school systems.
- Organized a clothing and shoe donation drive, distributing items within offices and the community.
- Maintained partnerships with agencies to serve complex populations, including individuals experiencing homelessness, women and children in domestic violence shelters, and migrant students separated from their families.
- Continued membership with the North Alabama Healthcare Coalition, collaborating with 150 agencies to address public and organizational needs and support disaster response. Presented on mental health in healthcare at one of the coalition's quarterly meetings. Secured a grant from UAB for air purifiers for group home clients.
- Facilitated four Mental Health First Aid (MHFA) classes.
- Achieved CPR Instructor Certification and provided classes for internal staff and partnering local agencies.
- Partnered with Sand Mountain Park as the Presenting Sponsor for the Miracle League field. Staff members volunteered as Buddies, supporting special needs players during spring and fall baseball seasons.
- Established an annual memorial award honoring two Miracle League players who passed away.
- Participated in the Miracle League fundraiser.
- Contributed to multiple newspaper articles, podcast interviews, and radio shows on mental health topics.
- Delivered in-service training sessions for five local healthcare facilities.
- Partnered with Vets4Vets, a nonprofit led by a local psychologist, to offer comprehensive care to veterans in need.
- Participated in a Polar Plunge fundraiser for the American Foundation for Suicide Prevention and began plans to host a local event.
- Continued to provide suicide and homicide risk assessments for local school systems.
- Participated in a National Weather Service panel discussion on the mental health impacts of major weather events.

### **Public Safety Program**

**2024 was a year of significant growth, establishing the program as a model for mental health care within the first responder community in North Alabama.**

- Successfully completed the second year of fundraising, doubling last year's effort with almost \$20,000 raised. This included a golf tournament with 68 players and a softball tournament with eight teams.
- Achieved Peer Support Certification through the Alabama Fire College.
- Completed Force Science training for officer-involved shootings.
- Provided services to clients from 28 first responder agencies across North Alabama and all branches of the military.
- Responded to 18 major incidents to provide stress management support for first responders.
- Delivered over 200 hours of education and training to first responder departments.
- Conducted two stress inoculation courses for rookie police officers.
- Presented at two major first responder conferences and was accepted to teach a session at ASADS on developing comprehensive wellness plans for trauma-exposed agencies.
- Established partnerships to offer innovative treatments, including light therapy, cold exposure, and ketamine therapy.

- Conducted two interventions, resulting in both first responders receiving inpatient treatment and maintaining sobriety while returning to work.
- Provided countless hours of individual and group therapy.
- Conducted 56 wellness checks.
- Since the program's inception in 2023, verbal feedback from agency chiefs indicates no participating agency has lost an employee to traumatic stress-related causes.

### **Human Resources-**

- **Employee Turnover:** Overall employee turnover decreased by 22% in 2024, with 11 fewer employees leaving compared to 2023. Senior Clinical turnover remained steady at nine employees, while Paraprofessional (LSS) turnover decreased by 12.5% (three fewer employees).
- **Unemployment Tax Rate:** The unemployment tax rate remained stable at 0.14%, with no claims paid during 2024.
- **CCBHC Hiring and Retention:**
  - Reported hiring challenges related to resume gathering, interviewing, and hiring under the CCBHC model to the Alabama Department of Mental Health (ADMH). Tracking will continue from January through June 2025.
  - Conducted interviews with the HR Coordinator and staff as part of the ADMH consultant group's preparation for CCBHC hiring and retention strategies.
- **Employee Recognition:** The REBOOT Committee featured nine staff members in the Employee Spotlight, recognizing their contributions in the newsletter and presenting them with small gifts.
- **Education Assistance Program:** The program continues to support staff advancement, with six employees earning bachelor's, master's, or doctoral degrees since its inception.
- **Preparation for CCBHC:**
  - Developed a list of new positions to align with CCBHC requirements.
  - Incorporated CCBHC training into new employee orientation programs.
- **Wellness and Benefits:**
  - Reduced Local Government Health Insurance premiums through staff participation in wellness checks.
  - Implemented a Leave Donation Program to support staff in need.
- **Training and Development:** Delivered HR training presentations to Leadership Committee members to enhance organizational effectiveness.

### **Information Technology (I.T.)-**

- The Avatar IRIS database was successfully migrated to a new platform.
- The Avatar system was upgraded to the 2024 version.
- The Avatar platform was moved to the AWS Cloud, including the reporting server, E-prescribe module, NIAM 2FA, and KPI functionalities.
- A new ODBC connection was implemented for the Avatar system.
- Ubiquity switches and controllers were upgraded to the latest versions.
- VMware Broadcom was transitioned to a new support portal.
- The Vcenter management server was upgraded to version 8.0.
- VMware hosts were updated to the latest operating system version.
- A new Secureworks Security Agent was successfully migrated.
- The Barracuda email system was migrated to cloud storage and filtering services.
- Farmers locations received a new Sboro WAN fiber installation and an increase in WAN speed.
- New Dell laptops and computers were deployed across the organization.
- Windows systems were upgraded to versions 23H2 and 24H2.

- The Dell SAN firmware was updated to the latest version.
- A new MLBHC webpage was rebuilt by Wes.
- A Ubiquity WireGuard VPN was implemented.
- Wi-Fi and POE switches were installed in the new Sboro building.
- Initial setup for IP phone systems in the new Sboro building began.
- Processor upgrades for phone systems were initiated.
- Additional cameras were installed at the Dutton location.
- New Xerox copiers were upgraded with fax server functionality.
- A new metering server was implemented for copiers.
- Cyber insurance coverage was increased.
- The Netsmart E-prescribing system experienced a security breach.
- Cisco VPN servers were compromised at the first layer of security.
- A video conferencing system was installed in the new Woodville home.
- The Secureworks contract was renewed.
- The ATT phone line contract was renewed.
- Verizon cell phone rates were adjusted, and usage caps were removed.
- A Proxmox virtualization lab was built.
- Numerous logistical changes were made in the Avatar system to prepare for CCBHC readiness.
- End-of-year cleanup tasks were completed, including removing old users, computers, and logons.

### **Employee Compensation & Recognition-**

- The Board approved generous merit-based wage increases and one-time bonuses again this year.
- Following a recommendation from the Board's Personnel & Compensation Committee, the pay scale was upgraded, resulting in a 16.6% increase in starting and top-out pay for Master's level staff and Registered Nurses.
- Multiple additional compensation opportunities beyond base pay were offered to employees.
- Top performers were consistently recognized with awards such as the Wall of Fame, "I Saw That," newsletter articles, and 5-year service awards.
- The Employee Engagement Group (EEG) continued its efforts to enhance employee feedback and communication, promote team-building activities, and improve organizational processes.
- The Reboot Committee remained proactive in addressing employee burnout prevention.

### **Financial-**

- A successful FY23 401(k) audit, accompanied by financial statements, confirmed full compliance with all ERISA guidelines.
- Loyalty bonuses continued to be distributed throughout 2024.
- In February 2024, the Board approved the cash purchase of property on Highway 35 from the Jackson County Board of Education. Renovations and improvements for this location were subsequently approved during the April Board meeting.
- The Board implemented a temporary Leave Donation policy, which was later made permanent after a successful trial period.
- MLBHC received approval for an Opioid grant with a budget of \$518,500, effective April 2024.
- On February 29, 2024, MLBHC purchased a house on Cobb Street in Woodville to support the expansion of Jackson Place.
- In July 2024, the Department of Labor increased salary thresholds. MLBHC conducted a comprehensive review of employees' exempt and non-exempt statuses.



- A \$60,000 grant was awarded for a Stepping Up program in Marshall County, set to begin in October 2024.
- Alabama was selected as one of 10 new states to participate in the four-year demonstration grant for CCBHC.
- Starting September 1, MLBHC began providing after-hours and weekend psychiatric screenings at both MMC-North and MMC-South locations.
- The Board approved an increase in cyber insurance coverage to \$2,000,000 to enhance security measures.
- Shift differential payments for MI residential LSS employees were continued throughout the year.
- The second annual softball tournament for first responders was held successfully, with donations covering therapy costs and mental health training for first responders.
- MLBHC purchased a 2024 Ford Expedition & 2024 Ford Transit Van to support organizational operations.
- The Board of Directors approved significant salary increases for Master's-Level Therapists and Registered Nurses to reduce turnover and stabilize staffing in preparation for becoming a CCBHC.
- The debt-to-asset ratio measures a company's overall financial risk. A ratio of less than 1 indicates that the company owns more assets than liabilities, with lower ratios reflecting reduced risk. In 2024, MLBHC's debt-to-asset ratio was 0.04 (calculated as \$682,441 in liabilities divided by \$16,354,201 in assets), demonstrating an outstanding financial position.
- MLBHC's total investments reached \$10,193,279 by the end of 2024. This represents significant growth since October 2015, when investments initially began at \$3,447,132.

### Clinical-

- Total Consumers Served: Provided care for 3,875 consumers in 2024.
- MI Residential Beds: Maintained an average occupancy rate of 91%, excluding EBSHP beds due to inadequate funding.
- School-Based Mental Health Program: Served 1,044 students across various schools.
- Free Services Provided: Delivered over 64,000 hours of services at no cost to consumers.
- Telehealth Services: Conducted 1,350 telehealth sessions.
- Substance Use Treatment: 213 clients successfully completed the substance use treatment program.
- Administrative Review: Reviewed 28,000+ documents, achieving a compliance rate exceeding 99%.
- Screening and Risk Assessment: Developed a comprehensive triage and risk assessment process to prioritize service delivery based on acuity of need.
- Transportation Program: Provided transportation for an average of 116 consumers per month.
- Consumer Employment: Hired five former consumers as Life Skills Specialists.
- Emergency Department Consults: Conducted over 200 consults at Marshall Medical Centers.
- Psychological Fitness for Duty Assessments: Performed 8 assessments for newly hired law enforcement officers.
- Community Mental Health Officer Calls: Responded to 33 calls for service.
- Emergency Psychiatric Consultants: Hired and trained 14 consultants for psychiatric screenings at Marshall Medical Centers.
- STOP Program: Launched the Substance Abuse Treatment and Overdose Prevention (STOP) program, hiring and training a case manager and a peer-support specialist.
- Stepping Up Program: Initiated in Marshall County with a case manager hired and trained for program operations.
- CEU Trainings: Delivered 4 hours of CEU training on DSM-5-TR in collaboration with Marshall County DHR.
- Stress Awareness and Management Training: Provided 8 hours of training at Northeast Alabama's Jail Management School.



- Internship Program: Sponsored multiple interns from local colleges to support professional development.
- Creekside Hospital Support: Provided critical staff support to Creekside Hospital, enabling continued operations.
- Added Adult Peer Support Specialist for both counties
- Jackson County Outpatient Services provided Christmas presents to 36 families through their resource room and distributed school supplies and backpacks to over 20 clients.
- We received highly positive feedback from DMH liaisons regarding the hiring and retention of staff for our EPSDT services.
- Our Parent Peer Specialist successfully completed the Circle of Security facilitator training, enhancing their ability to support families effectively.
- Prevention Team Activities:
  - Billed 3,470 hours of services in the community.
  - Sponsored safe drug storage and disposal events, distributing over 700 drug disposal pouches.
  - Collaborated with juvenile courts and schools to teach classes on vaping dangers, communication, and decision-making.
  - Distributed Narcan and fentanyl test strips to the community.
  - Organized drug take-back events, collecting hundreds of pounds of medications for safe disposal.
- MLBH successfully negotiated with DMH to move up our entry into the CCBHC program 1 year earlier than originally planned. The current goal is to be certified by July 2025 and we continued our training, preparations and planning during 2024.

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#### Summary of Services Billed (MI and SU)\*

- MI Intake Assessments: 935
- Substance Use Disorder Assessments: 431
- Individual Counseling: 10,922 hours
- Medical Assessment and Treatment: 3,251 hours
- Peer Services (including group hours): 11,258 hours
- Nursing Assessment and Care: 492 hours
- Crisis Intervention and Resolution: 409 hours
- Case Management: 6,249 hours
- High-Intensity Care Coordination (C/A): 79 consumers
- Non-Physician Medication Monitoring: 770 hours
- Medication Injections: 1,553
- Oral Medication Administration: 22,619
- Basic Living Skills/Psychoeducation: 4,825 hours
- Rehabilitative Day Program: 7,416 hours
- Therapeutic Mentoring (C/A): 259 hours
- Treatment Plan Reviews: 4,595
- Child/Adolescent In-Home Services: 83 consumers
- Assertive Community Treatment: 81 consumers

(\*Numbers reflect events unless otherwise specified.)