

The Nord Center Timeline

In the late 1930's the Elyria, Lorain and Oberlin League of Women Voters conducted a countywide study of the public and private health and welfare agencies in Lorain County. As one result, a large group of interested citizens became aware of the absence of psychiatric services available to the people of Lorain County. In 1946, a committee sponsored by the Council Oberlin social Agencies was formed. Its first tasks were to familiarize itself with the local mental health problems, to learn how other communities were dealing with similar problems, and to build a well-informed nucleus of public support. In 1947, the Federal Government initiated grants to States for establishing community clinics. As a direct result, the State of Ohio provided to Lorain County the services of a psychiatrist for one day each month. This proved to be inadequate and in February 1948, Dr. David Sprague was sent by the State for one afternoon a week. He met his patients in Lorain, in the office of Dr. DeNardi, who provided the office without charge. Concurrently, the county began to explore the possibilities of establishing a Permanent clinic. A formal organization, which could devise policies and assure necessary means to promote further growth, was considered necessary. In 1948, the Lorain County mental Health Association was formed with a Board of 21 Directors. A minimum budget was established and was fully subscribed to by the community Chests of Elyria, Lorain, Oberlin and Avon Lake. In June 1948, Dr. Mildred Shelley was secured to direct the mental health clinic on a half-time basis. For a time two clinics were held each week—one in Lorain and one in Elyria—and a receptionist was hired. Briefly, other milestones were passed as follows:

- 1949** A psychiatric social worker was added to the staff. A move was made to larger quarters in Elyria and the Lorain office was discontinued.
- 1950** A full-time psychologist was added. During the 1950's additional office personnel were hired.
- 1957** The State Department of Mental Hygiene hired Dr. Arnold Windt as a full-time Director.
- 1958** Another move into more adequate quarters was made.
- 1960** Dr. Robert Eppley replaced Dr. Windt and additional staff was added as funds became available.
- 1961** The Guidance Center was incorporated and a nine member Board of Directors was formed, with the Mental Health Association remaining the sponsoring and fundraising organization. A fee for service system was inaugurated for those able to pay.
- 1968** Direct funding of the Guidance Center was taken over by the newly created Lorain County Mental Health and Mental Retardation Board, known as the 648 Board.
- 1969** The financial structure changed again with the Guidance Center operating on a contract basis with the 648 Board.
- 1970** The name of the Lorain County Guidance Center, Inc. was changed to Mental Health Service of Lorain County, Inc. In addition, a trade name, the Walter G. Nord Community Mental Health Center and a leader in mental health in the State of Ohio and the nation for

The Nord Center Timeline

- a number of years. The corporation was reorganized to develop a better representation of the community on the Board of Directors and to be more consistent with the Federal guidelines for Community Mental Health Centers.
- 1972** Recognizing the need for a distinct service environment to address the needs of post-hospitalized clients, the Agency opened a psychosocial rehabilitation program (the O.K. Corral) in a residential building in the city of Lorain.
- 1975** The Agency received funds to operate a Group Home to provide intensive residential treatment for post-hospitalized clients.
- 1976** The position of Clinical Director was established. Also, the Forensic Center was established as a specialized service to the criminal justice system.
- 1977** The Group Home was closed and the resources redeployed into the Outreach Team, providing liaison to inpatient facilities, follow-up treatment and case management for post-hospitalized and high-risk clients.
- 1978** The Associate Director for Programs position was created to centralize coordination and supervision of services. An Emergency Program was established to provide 24-hour availability of mental health services.
- 1979** Achieved certification by the Ohio Department of Mental Health. In recognition of the growing complexities of the organization, a Fiscal Officer position was created to oversee the financial systems of the Center. COPE, a 24-hour information and referral service developed by the Lorain County Federation for Human Services, joined the Agency. A formal system for Quality Assurance was developed. Proposals were approved for the construction, purchase and renovation of buildings for the Agency.
- 1980** The Fiscal Officer's responsibilities were expanded and the position upgraded to Associate Director for Business Affairs. Recognizing that limited resources in outpatient services had restricted the Agency's ability to serve individuals with mild to moderate problems, the service was enlarged and divided into two programs, Outpatient and Aftercare Clinical services. A building was purchased for the Habilitation Program. Land was acquired for construction of a new Center.
- 1981** Construction began on the new Center. The first weeklong overnight camp for the Community Support Program population was introduced. Ronald E. Mihalick, Ph.D., Executive Director, resigned. Samir Mourad, M.D. served as Acting Director as well as Clinical Director.
- 1982** Moved into the new W.G. Nord Community Mental Health Center on 6140 South Broadway in Lorain, and closed the old offices in Lorain and Elyria. Bernard Greenberg, Ph.D., was appointed Executive Director in April. A public relations program was initiated that included the first issue of Profile, a professionally produced agency newsletter, and slide show.

The Nord Center Timeline

- 1983** The Residential Program was expanded with the addition of two halfway homes. Seminar programs at Lorain Community College were initiated. A new agency logo was adopted. A formal development of Policy and Procedure Manual was started. A Social Club Model was adopted to provide socialization and self-improvement opportunities to clients.
- 1984** The Community Support Program added semi-independent apartment living to its range of residential services. Received grant from the Ohio Rehabilitation Services Commission for the development of a sheltered janitorial service. Branch offices opened in North Ridgeville and Oberlin. COPE eliminated due to funding cuts, and in its place, a new Crisis Intervention Unit was introduced. The position of Director of Marketing and Development was established. Women's Seminar sponsored, with attendance of more than 200 local participants and nationally known speakers.
- 1985** Initiated a new Work Adjustment Program via a grant from the Ohio Rehabilitation Services Commission. Received grant from the Lorain County Transit Board to provide transportation services to mental health consumers. The geographical service area was expanded via a contract with the Mental Health Board of Erie and Ottawa Counties. A formal plan was initiated to increase efforts to serving minority and Hispanic populations. The Nord Center sponsored the first annual family Good Health Festival. Board of Directors expanded. A new corporate structure was formed. Oberlin and North Ridgeville offices opened; Mental Health Network concept established by the Board of Mental Health
- 1986** Center's first annual recognition luncheon at DeLuca's; passage of 1.6 mill levy after repeated defeats. Nord Center Mental Health foundation established, advisory board formed; first family Good Health Festival held on grounds; Center's first policy and procedure manual completed; CARF accreditation; business department and MIS formed new business wing on first floor; new receptionist/cashiering area; Janitorial Service created (Pro-Clean).
- 1987** Three year CARF accreditation for Work Adjustment, Supported Employment and Pro-Clean; Center celebrates 40 years with a gala —40's|| dinner dance; Elyria office opens; Center becomes provider with Tri-Care health care network.
- 1988** New corporate structure formed to include Norcare as parent company, Nord Vocational Industries and Nord Center Associates; new services developed to serve older adults and people who are deaf; passage of the Mental Health Act of 1988.
- 1989** ESS Crisis Line/mobile assessment unit and Rape Crisis Service began operation in space rented from St. Joseph Hospital – the first mental health emergency response system of its kind in the county; Nord Center Mental Health foundation honors donors at dinner, sponsors estate planning seminars for professionals and family members.
- 1990** Camp celebrates its 10th year; Rape Crisis opens satellite office at Lorain County Community college; Drop-in Center opens at Rehab.

The Nord Center Timeline

- 1991** Start of the Family Violence Project through support of local foundations and Lorain County Board of Mental Health, ODMH approves \$862,000 grant for 24,000 square foot expansion of main facility; Center gears up for its first capital campaign effort; 1.2 mill mental health levy renewed; Rape Crisis brochure and Profile take top honors in national media contest; Nord family makes gift of landscaping; 3 year CARF certification awarded to Supported Employment; Center gets beautification award; CSP divided into three separate divisions of Case Management, Residential and Rehabilitation, each with its own director; restructuring of Quality Assurance program to comply with revised ODMH standards.
- 1992** \$2.6 million capital campaign in full gear; groundbreaking ceremony held April 29; ESS received national recognition from MIMH for being one of 57 emergency systems in the nation to implement all five essential components of a crisis system; Food Service work adjustment program initiated.
- 1993** New building addition completed in June; successfully reached capital campaign goal, including a grant from the national Kresge Foundation. All services moved in by July; renting space to Guidance Centers; special open house in October; selected Agency of the Year by FAMI; CARF accreditation renewed; crisis intervention groups initiated; Edible Delights food service contracts to provide all meals for ESS/PH; initiated staff psychiatrist model of service; consumer operated Drop-in-Center opens.
- 1994** Creation of the NIA Project via grant from ODMH to provide innovative services to young African American males with mental illness; Center approved as a training provider for continuing education; HUB concept for centralizing all Center screenings and intakes initiated in ESS; clerical work adjustment program initiated.
- 1995** Staff at 250; serve 4,500 consumers; strategic planning focused on preparing for OhioCare/Managed Care environment; Elyria branch moved to Midway square location; major system changes implemented involving information systems, medical records, etc. to achieve information Center wide.
- 1996** The agency's technicians and support staff voted to be represented by SEIU 1199, the Service Employees International Union. On June 6, 1996, the agency officially changes its name from the W. G. Nord Community Mental Health Center to The Nord Center.
- 1997** In April, longtime Executive Director, Bernie Greenberg, leaves The Nord Center to pursue a career in education. In June, the first contract between The Nord Center and SEIU 1199 was ratified. Samir Mourad, M.D., medical director and cornerstone of the agency for over 20 years, retired to private practice. The Psychosocial Rehabilitation and Vocational services program is initiated.
- 1998** Implementation of the MICA program (Mental Illness / Chemical Abuse) to serve consumers suffering from both mental illness and chemical addiction. An Africentric Team was developed to serve African-American consumers. In May of 1998, Dr. Antoni Sulikowski became the Executive Director of the agency. In August 1998, the agency is awarded a 3-year CARF accreditation.

The Nord Center Timeline

- 2000** In May, the SANE (Sexual Abuse Nurse Examiner) program opened for business in a suite on the first floor of The Nord Center. In July, the men's MICA (Mental Illness / Chemical Abuse) residence opened on Infirmiry Rd. in Elyria. The Herbert Drive group home in Lorain was purchased and opened for residents during July. The Step-Down facility was moved from its Oberlin Ave. location to Toledo Ave. during October. Certification by the Ohio Department of Alcohol and Drug Addiction Services (ODADAS) is granted. Staff size is 234.
- 2001** In November, the agency receives unconditional three-year CARF accreditation.
- 2002** The Nord Center is selected as one of only four sites in Ohio to pilot the Illness Management and Recovery program, part of the Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration's National Evidence-Based Practices. Nord Addiction Services is established.
- 2003** In April, the Emergency Stabilization Services Crisis Residential Unit was licensed by the Ohio Department of Health as a Type 1 residential facility. The Supported Employment program received an ODMH grant to add Bilingual Hispanic and African American job placement specialists to meet the needs of minority clients in seeking competitive employment. Women's MICA (Mentally Ill/Chemically Addicted) House is opened to help with co-existing disorders. In August, Dr. Jane Spiegelberg is promoted to the position of Associate Executive Director. The theme of "recovery is ahead" is introduced to all Nord communication materials and a new logo emphasizing a passageway to wellness through comprehensive behavioral healthcare is created. In October, the Center celebrates its 55th year of continuous service to the citizens of Lorain County. The Center employs over 230 employees and serves more than 5,500 clients and their families each year.
- 2004** The Nord Center received its third three-year CARF accreditation, was recognized for exemplary utilization of the Evidence Based Practice approach to behavioral health, and was selected as one of only four sites in Ohio to pilot Illness Management and Recovery and Integrated Dual Disorder Treatment protocols. The success of the Center's integrated treatment approach to individuals with co-occurring substance abuse and mental illness disorders was documented in the summer 2004, issue of *SAMI Matters*, a newsletter published by the Ohio Substance Abuse and Mental Illness Coordinating Center of Excellence. Additionally, the evidenced-based practice of Supported Employment was implemented through the Center's Vocational Services Program. The Kidz First Children's Advocacy Center, a one-stop local source for the investigation of child sexual abuse in Lorain County, opened in October. The Elyria Counseling Office at 992 N. Abbe Road opened to serve consumers in the rapidly growing areas of Avon, Avon Lake, Sheffield Village, and Elyria. The Elyria office staff consists of 4 full-time counselors (2 LPCCs, 2 LISW,) and 1 part-time psychiatrist. The Center employs 306 employees and serves more than 6,000 clients and their families each year.
- 2005** Executive Director Jane Spiegelberg resigns after two years and Steve Laubacher, head of Norcare Enterprises, The Nord Center's parent organization, is elected as director of

The Nord Center Timeline

The Nord Center in September. The Center was awarded the Ohio Clinical Quality Excellence Award for 2005 by the Ohio Department of Mental Health Clinical Quality Council and received a Certificate of Appreciation from ODMH for outstanding contributions to the National Implementing Evidence-Based Practices Project. The Center inaugurated its first full-service department designed to meet the special mental health needs of children, adolescents and their families. The Ohio Department of Job and Family Services recognized the Housing Service Program “for going the extra mile to assist a reservist and his family when called to active duty in Iraq.” Barb Miller retires from The Nord Center Board after 26 years of service. The Center employs 318 employees and serves more than 6,000 clients and their families each year.

2006 The Center’s Vocational Services Program relocates to 3150 Clifton Avenue in Lorain. Art Goodman retires from The Nord Center Board after 27 years of service. The Center employs 317 employees.

2007 Steve Laubacher leaves his position as Executive Director in June and Daniel Haight is appointed as interim executive director for the agency. Beginning in August, at the annual agency picnic, The Nord Center began recognizing staff anniversaries/years of service. The three floors supported living program at the Lakeview Plaza site of Lorain Metropolitan Housing Authority began transitioning from the auspices of Neighborhood House Association to The Nord Center. The transition was due in part to Neighborhood House Association streamlining services they offer in the community. The Nord Center saw this as an opportunity to ensure that residents living at that site would continue to have safe and affordable housing as well as an array of individual services to meet their needs. The Center employs 338 employees.

2008 William D. Bierie is appointed Executive Director in January. The center joined with the Department of Mental Health in a pilot study to determine the most efficient utilization of resources to achieve good outcomes for adults with severe mental disability. This study: “Cluster-Based Planning and Statewide Service Package/UM Demonstration”, designed in a public health approach, is to develop a system-wide planning process to help groups of citizens achieve greater levels of health and wellness. The Nord Center held its first annual Golf Outing at Oberlin Golf Club to benefit the Sexual Assault Care Unit and Kidz First Children’s Advocacy Center. The Nord Center receives its fourth three-year renewal of accreditation from CARF. The Housing Service Program becomes HUD-Certified through Ohio Housing Finance Agency allowing for the expansion of its foreclosure prevention services. Housing Counselors of the Housing Service Program become certified counselors through NeighborWorks, a HUD approved training provider. The Center employs 333 employees.

2009 The Center adopted the Baldrige Program as its management and organizational best practice and is a member of the Ohio Partnership for Excellence, Ohio’s statewide organization which promotes the Baldrige Program among other organizations across Ohio in our “Quest for Excellence.” The Center received the Ohio Partnership for Excellence 2009 Pioneer Award in its implementation practices of the Baldrige Program. The Center’s Bilingual Services Team was presented with the 2009 Excellence in

The Nord Center Timeline

Multicultural Outreach Award by the National Alliance on Mental Illness of Ohio. The Nord Center receives the prestigious honor as one of the “Top 100 IT Projects of 2009” from *InfoWorld Magazine* for transforming its paper-based documentation process into a fully, electronic, biometrically authenticated system. The Nord Center organized the new role of Advanced Practice Nurse with Prescriptive Authority to help extend the services of the organization’s ten psychiatrists and established the Katie King, R.N., Compassionate Service Award in memory of a long-time employee to recognize caring, compassion, dedication to clients and dedication to The Nord Center. This award is presented annually at the agency picnic. The Housing Service Program expanded its services to provide Emergency Food and Shelter Program assistance to residents in need of rental or utility assistance and became a Benefit Bank site, helping people apply for publicly sponsored programs like CHIP, Food Stamps, LIHEAP, and more - at one convenient location and at no cost. The Center employs 330 employees and serves more than 7,000 clients and their families each year.

2010 New branding and marketing concepts were formalized and incorporated in the FY 2009 Annual Report. The FY 2009 Annual Report was the first report published since 2005 and was recognized with “Best Yearly Publication” at the 2010 Elizabeth L. Coleman Dinner (31st Annual First Community Interfaith Institute Festival). The theme “Opening the door to hope and health” is introduced to all Nord communication material. The African-Centric Team received the 2010 Service Award from the Lorain Club of Negro Businesses and Professional Woman’s Business Club for its awareness of the rich diversity of the community. The Nord Center along with 17 other community behavioral healthcare providers across Ohio joined with the Department of Mental Health in a pilot study to determine the most efficient utilization of resources to achieve good outcomes for adults with severe mental disability. This study: “Cluster-Based Planning and the Statewide Service Package/UM Demonstration”, designed in a public health approach, is to develop a system-wide planning process to help groups of citizens achieve greater levels of health and wellness. Built upon over 20 years of “cluster-based planning” research, the demonstration projects hopes to inform the Department of Mental Health in designing benefit structures for adults with severe mental disability. Transportation Services and Suboxone Replacement Therapy were discontinued during this fiscal year due to budget reductions from LCBMH. The Center employs 315 employees and serves more than 8,000 clients and their families each year.

2011 The Nord Center received its fifth three-year CARF accreditation. The Ohio Partnership for Excellence recognizes the Center’s application of the Baldrige principles with its Bronze Award. William D. Bieri, President and CEO and Amy Denger, Associate Executive Director were invited speakers at The National Council for Community Behavioral Healthcare 41st Mental Health and Addictions Conference in San Diego, California. The Nord Center’s presentation was on their application of the Malcolm Baldrige National Program for Performance Excellence as a management best practice for community behavioral health organizations. William D. Bieri is elected to a three-year term as Member-At-Large on The Ohio Council of Behavioral Health and Family Services Providers’ Board of Trustees. The Nord Center opens Edible Delights Café inside its main lobby at 6140 South Broadway, Lorain. Edible Delights Café offers a

The Nord Center Timeline

wide selection of premade breakfast and lunch food items as well as coffee and tea. Edible Delights Café is operated by volunteers and trainees in the Nord Vocational Industries food service skills training program. Proceeds from the café are used to support sexual assault services programs. New “Client Guide” patient handbook in both English and Spanish was developed and is provided to clients during intake. In October, the Employee Assistance Program celebrates its 25th year of continuous service. The Center employs 238 employees and serves more than 8,000 clients and their families each year.