

The Nord Center Timeline

In the late 1930s the Elyria, Lorain and Oberlin Leagues 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 of Oberlin Social Agencies was formed. Its first tasks were to familiarize itself with 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 to establish community clinics. As a result, the State of Ohio began providing to Lorain County the services of a psychiatrist for one day per month. This proved to be inadequate and in February 1948, Dr. David Sprague was sent by the State to provide services one afternoon per 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 possibility of establishing a permanent clinic. A formal organization, which could devise policies and assure necessary means to promote further growth, was considered necessary to this endeavor.

In 1948, the Lorain County Mental Health Association was formed with a board of 21 directors. A minimum budget was established that was fully funded 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.

Following these beginnings, other milestones were achieved 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 1950s 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 Lorain County 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.

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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 because it was created pursuant to the House Bill 648 of the Ohio Legislature.
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 was registered. The agency was considered to be a leader in mental health in the State of Ohio and the nation during this period. 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 an Outreach Team, providing liaison to inpatient facilities, follow-up treatment and case management for post-hospitalized and high-risk clients.
1978	The position of Associate Director for Programs was created to centralize coordination and supervision of services. An Emergency Program was established to provide 24-hour availability of mental health services.
1979	The agency achieved certification by the Ohio Department of Mental Health. In recognition of the growing complexities of the organization, a Fiscal Officer position was created. 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 position evolved and expanded into Associate Director for Business Affairs. Recognizing a greater need to serve individuals with mild to moderate problems Outpatient and Aftercare Clinical service programs were established. 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 participants was introduced. Ronald E. Mihalick, Ph.D., Executive Director, resigned. Samir Mourad, M.D. served as Acting Director as well as Clinical Director.

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1982	The agency moved into the new W.G. Nord Community Mental Health Center at 6140 South Broadway in Lorain and closed its former offices in Lorain and Elyria. Bernard Greenberg, Ph.D., was appointed Executive Director. A public relations program was initiated that included the first issue of "Profile," a professionally produced agency newsletter and a slide show.
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. Formal development of a 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. The agency received a grant from the Ohio Rehabilitation Services Commission to develop a sheltered janitorial service. Branch offices opened in North Ridgeville and Oberlin. COPE was eliminated and in its place a new Crisis Intervention Unit was introduced. The position of Director of Marketing and Development was established. A Women's Seminar was sponsored with attendance of more than 200 local participants and nationally known speakers.
1985	The agency initiated a Work Adjustment Program with a grant from the Ohio Rehabilitation Services Commission and transportation services for mental health consumers with a grant from the Lorain County Transit Board. 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 serve minority and Hispanic populations. The Nord Center sponsored its first Family Good Health Festival. The Board of Directors expanded and a new corporate structure developed. Oberlin and North Ridgeville offices opened. The Mental Health Network was established by the Lorain County Board of Mental Health.
1986	A 1.6 mill levy passed after repeated defeats. The Center held its first recognition luncheon at DeLuca's. The Nord Center Mental Health Foundation was established and an advisory board formed. The first family Good Health Festival was held on the grounds. The Center's first policy and procedure manual was completed. The agency attained its first CARF accreditation. The business department and management information systems were located in a new business wing on first floor. A reception/cashiering area was developed. A janitorial service called Pro-Clean was created.
1987	Three year CARF accreditation was attained for Work Adjustment, Supported Employment and Pro-Clean. The Center celebrated 40 years with a gala, 40s style dinner-dance. The Elyria office opened. The Center became a provider with the Tri-Care health care network.
1988	The Mental Health Act of 1988 passed. A new corporate structure was formed to include Norcare as the parent company, Nord Vocational Industries and Nord Center Associates. New services were developed to serve older adults and people who are deaf.

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1989	Emergency Stabilization Service Crisis Line/Mobile Assessment Unit and Rape Crisis Services began operation in space rented from St. Joseph Hospital – the first mental health emergency response system of its kind in the County. The Nord Center Mental Health Foundation honored donors at a dinner and sponsored an estate planning seminars for professionals and family members.
1990	Camp celebrated its 10th year. Rape Crisis opened a satellite office at Lorain County Community college. A drop-in center opened at the “Rehab” facility on Clifton Avenue in Lorain.
1991	The Family Violence Project began with support of local foundations and the Lorain County Board of Mental Health. The Center geared up for its first capital campaign with the Ohio Department of Mental Health (ODMH) approving a \$862,000 grant for 24,000 ft ² expansion of the Center’s main facility. A 1.2 mill mental health levy was renewed. Rape Crisis’s brochure and “Profile” took top honors in a national media contest. The Nord family made a gift of landscaping and The Center received a beautification award. Three-year CARF accreditation was awarded to Supported Employment. The Community Support Program (CSP) was divided into Case Management and Residential and Rehabilitation; each with its own director. The Quality Assurance program was restructured to comply with revised ODMH standards.
1992	The Center’s \$2.6 million capital campaign was in full gear with a groundbreaking ceremony held on April 29. Emergency Stabilization Services (ESS) received national recognition from the National Institute of Mental Health (NIMH) for being one of 57 emergency systems in the nation to implement all five essential components of a crisis system. A Food Service Work Adjustment program began.
1993	The Center successfully reached its capital campaign goal with the support of a grant from the Kresge Foundation. The building addition was completed and all services moved in shortly thereafter. A special open house was held in October. The Center rented space to Guidance Centers. The Nord Center was selected Agency of the Year by NAMI. CARF accreditation was renewed. Crisis intervention groups were initiated. Edible Delights food service began contracting to provide all meals for ESS and Partial Hospitalization. The Center initiated the staff psychiatrist model of service. The consumer operated Drop-in-Center opened.
1994	The NIA Project was established with grant support from ODMH to provide innovative services to young African American males with mental illness. The Center was approved as a provider of continuing education. The Center implemented the HUB concept for centralizing all Center screenings and intakes initiated in ESS. The Clerical Work Adjustment program was initiated.
1995	The Center’s strategic planning focused on preparing for the emerging managed care environment. The Elyria branch moved to the Midway Square location. Major system changes were implemented involving information systems and medical records to allow Center-wide information sharing.
1996	The agency’s technicians and support staff voted to be represented by the SEIU 1199, the Service Employees International Union. On June 6, 1996, the agency officially

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	changed its name from the W. G. Nord Community Mental Health Center to The Nord Center.
1997	Longtime Executive Director, Bernie Greenberg, left The Center to pursue a career in education. The first contract between The Nord Center and SEIU 1199 was ratified. After 20 years of significant service Medical Director Samir Mourad, M.D. retired to private practice. The Psychosocial Rehabilitation and Vocational Services programs were initiated.
1998	The Mental Illness/Chemical Abuse (MICA) Program was established. An Africancentric case management team was developed. Dr. Antoni Sulikowski became the Executive Director of the agency. The agency was awarded a 3-year CARF accreditation.
2000	The Sexual Abuse Nurse Examiner (SANE) program opened in a suite on the first floor of South Broadway facility. The Men's MICA residence opened on Infirmary Road in Elyria. The Herbert Drive group home in Lorain was purchased and opened for residents. The Step-Down facility moved from its Oberlin Avenue location to Toledo Avenue. The agency received Certification by the Ohio Department of Alcohol and Drug Addiction Services (ODADAS.)
2001	The agency received unconditional three-year CARF accreditation.
2002	The Nord Center was 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 Center Addiction Services was established.
2003	The Emergency Stabilization Services/Crisis Residential Unit was licensed by the Ohio Department of Health as a Type 1 residential facility. Women's MICA House was opened. The Center celebrated its 55th year of continuous service.
2004	The Nord Center received its third three-year CARF accreditation and was selected as one of only four sites in Ohio to pilot Illness Management and Recovery and Integrated Dual Disorder Treatment protocols. The Kidz First Children's Advocacy Center and the Elyria Counseling Office opened. Dr. Jane S. Spiegelberg was appointed Interim Executive Director.
2005	The Center was awarded the Ohio Clinical Quality Excellence Award by ODMH and received a Certificate of Appreciation 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. Barb Miller retired from The Nord Center Board of Directors after 26 years of service. Dr. Jane S. Spiegelberg and subsequently Stephen Laubacher, Ph.D. are appointed Executive Director.
2006	The Center's Vocational Services Program relocates to 3150 Clifton Avenue in Lorain. Arthur (Art) Goodman retires from The Nord Center Board of Directors after 27 years of service.

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2007	The Nord Center assumes three floors of supported living at the Lakeview Plaza site of Lorain Metropolitan Housing Authority from Neighborhood House Association. Daniel Haight is appointed Interim Executive Director.
2008	The Center participated in an ODMH pilot study to determine the most efficient utilization of resources to achieve good outcomes for adults with severe mental disability. The Center held its first annual Golf Outing. The Center received its fourth three-year accreditation from CARF. The Housing Service Program became HUD-Certified through the Ohio Housing Finance Agency. William Bierie was appointed Executive Director.
2009	The Center adopted the Malcolm Baldrige Quality Management Program and received the 2009 Pioneer Award from the Ohio Partnership for Excellence for its implementation of the program. The Katie King, R.N., Compassionate Service Award was established in memory of a long-time employee of the agency.
2010	New branding and marketing concepts incorporating the theme “Opening the door to hope and health” were implemented. Transportation Services and Suboxone Replacement Therapy were discontinued due to changes in available funding.
2011	The Nord Center received its fifth three-year CARF accreditation and the Ohio Partnership for Excellence Bronze Award. Edible Delights Café opens its doors at the South Broadway location. The Employee Assistance Program celebrates its 25th year of continuous service.
2012	The Nord Center broke ground on a Walking Path adjacent to its main South Broadway building with the support of the Lorain County General Health District and United Healthcare of Ohio. Associate Executive Director Amy Denger was appointed Interim Executive Director and subsequently Chief Executive & Operating Officer.
2013	A number of trees were replaced to help preserve the South Broadway building’s exterior façade and the building received its first exterior paint job in 30 years. Tele-psychiatry was implemented to help meet the demand for services. The Nord Center welcomed the National Alliance on Mental Illness—Lorain County (NAMI) to co-locate on the first floor of the South Broadway location.
2014	The Nord Center implemented public computer kiosks for clients and began collecting e-mail addresses as part of the move to develop a patient portal. The agency developed a Closed-Door Pharmacy at the South Broadway location to enhance convenience for its clients and staff.