



NorthKey
COMMUNITY CARE

20
25

ANNUAL IMPACT REPORT

A Message From the CEO, Danielle Amrine

Dear Friends,

It is an honor to present NorthKey's Annual Report and to share this moment of reflection and forward vision with you. As the new CEO, I've spent the past few months listening, learning, and witnessing firsthand the extraordinary work that happens here every day. While I am still new to NorthKey, what is already crystal clear is that this organization is powered by people who are deeply committed to improving lives — not just through clinical expertise, but through compassion, innovation, and a fierce belief that everyone deserves access to quality care.

NorthKey is more than a provider of mental health, primary care, substance use, and developmental disability services. It is a cornerstone of hope and healing for thousands of individuals and families across Northern Kentucky. I've met staff who go the extra mile for a client in crisis, leaders who think boldly about system change, and partners who share in our vision for stronger, healthier communities. What we do here matters — and I am so proud to be part of it.

This report reflects the incredible impact of the past year, made possible by the dedication of our team, the trust of our clients, and the support of our community and partners. As a Certified Community Behavioral Health Clinic (CCBHC) and a state-designated Community Mental Health Center (CMHC), we are uniquely positioned to expand access to care, bridge gaps in the behavioral health system, and lead with equity and whole-person care at the center of all we do.

Looking ahead, I am filled with optimism. NorthKey's future is bright — not just because of where we've been, but because of where we're going. Together, we will elevate our services, strengthen our workforce, deepen our community collaborations, and reimagine what's possible for whole-person healthcare in Kentucky. Thank you for being part of this journey. Your support ensures that no one faces these challenges alone — and for that, I am deeply grateful.

With appreciation,

Danielle Amrine

Chief Executive Officer

NorthKey Community Care



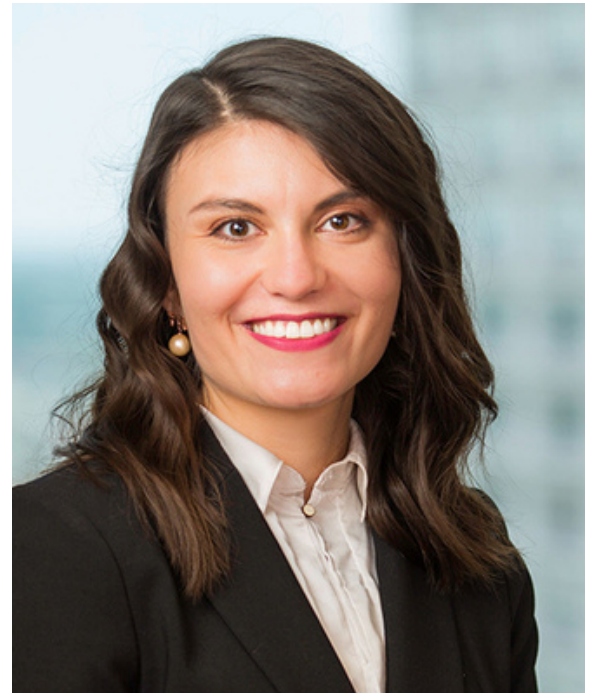
"NorthKey is more than a provider of mental health, primary care, substance use, and developmental disability services. It is a cornerstone of hope and healing for thousands of individuals and families across Northern Kentucky."

A Message From the Chair of the Board, Cassandra Welch

Greetings!

As newly-appointed Chair of the Board of Directors, I am excited and honored to share this year's Annual Report. I hope that, as you read through the Report, you will see all of the hard work that NorthKey's team has put in to achieve its internal goals and milestones, the most important and enduring of which is to meet the growing needs of the community we service.

This has been a year of change at NorthKey, with the retirement of our long-time CEO, Dr. Owen Nichols, and the welcoming of our new CEO, Danielle Amrine. Being involved in the process of this transition first hand allowed me to bear witness to the incredible strength and dedication of NorthKey's executive team, staff, and Board, as they worked tirelessly to ensure the best fit for NorthKey and the smoothest transition as possible. As we expected, Danielle has hit the ground running and brought a new and exciting energy to NorthKey as we endeavor to expand our services and ensure we are reaching the members of our community who are most in need of NorthKey's services.



As you review the Report, I hope you feel as proud as I do of NorthKey's achievements this year, particularly in light of a change in leadership. Most importantly, however, I hope you take pride in all of the people that NorthKey has helped in their time of need, and, in turn, the benefit that NorthKey has provided to the community at large. The services NorthKey provides are essential to our community, which we could not achieve without our exemplary team and your continued support.

My very best,

Cassandra Welch

Chair of the Board of Directors
NorthKey Community Care

Meet the Board of Directors



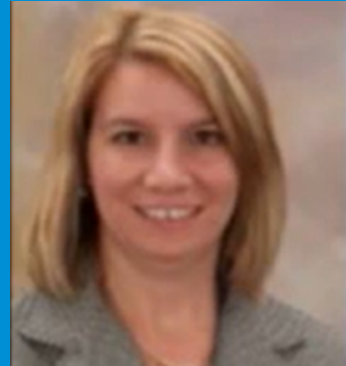
Cassandra Welch

Board Chair
Kenton County



Gary Goetz

Board Vice Chair
Kenton County



Stephanie Huhn

Board Treasurer/Secretary
Kenton County



David Christen

Boone County



Molly Laird

Boone County



Kelly Fallon

Campbell County



Bari Joslyn

Kenton County



**Stephen
Zimmerman**

Kenton County



Jim Thelen

Kenton County

In the Community

NorthKey team members—including therapists, prevention specialists, case managers, and crisis staff—regularly engage in community events to raise awareness and connect people with services. Our crisis team also visits local food pantries and shelters like Welcome House to ensure individuals know how to access support.



We partner with organizations such as NAMI Northern Kentucky, Mental Health America, and St. Elizabeth to host impactful events, including NAMI's mental health walk and the "Blue Christmas" program, offering hope and resources during the holidays.



We're proud that the NorthKey mission extends far beyond the walls of our office. **Our team members consistently go above and beyond to live out our values in the community!**



During Hunger and Homelessness Awareness Week, staff supported local efforts by planting fruit trees, making hats, and preparing meals for shelters.



Employee Spotlight

Each year, NorthKey hosts an Employee Appreciation and Recognition event to celebrate staff achievements from the previous fiscal year. Staff nominate peers who exemplify NorthKey's mission of transforming lives and communities through excellent service.



ADMINISTRATIVE ACHIEVEMENT WINNER STANLEY FUGATE

"Stanley goes above and beyond every single day!!

When you call him, he always gives you 100% of his attention and always takes the time to help you no matter what! We are very lucky to have Stanley and hope he stays for many many years to come."



CLINICAL ACHIEVEMENT WINNER STELLA MASSEY

"Stella's impact extends far beyond the confines of her professional responsibilities.

She embodies the true spirit of service, using her skills and passion to uplift and empower those around her. Her commitment to making a difference in the lives of others is an inspiration."



QUALITY ACHIEVEMENT WINNERS MISSY TAYLOR

"Missy is willing to help with any task and can be counted on to complete each task to perfection.

Missy is always positive and is a great team player."



ANGELA FOX

"She has been striving for NorthKey's greatness and what we can bring to families in our community.

She strives to follow regulations; Angela cares about doing a good job, and shows great work ethic daily."



ROOKIE OF THE YEAR WINNER KELLY PICHOTTA

“Kelly's work spans both our Newport and Covington locations, where she consistently shows a profound care for her clients.

Her positive attitude and professional demeanor make her a pleasure to work with and an invaluable asset to our team.”



TEAM SPIRIT WINNERS SONSERRA FREEMAN

“Sonserra has such a positive attitude, contagious laugh and wonderful energy.

She is always looking for ways she can help her team and other staff feel supported in their positions.”



LAILA ELMASRI

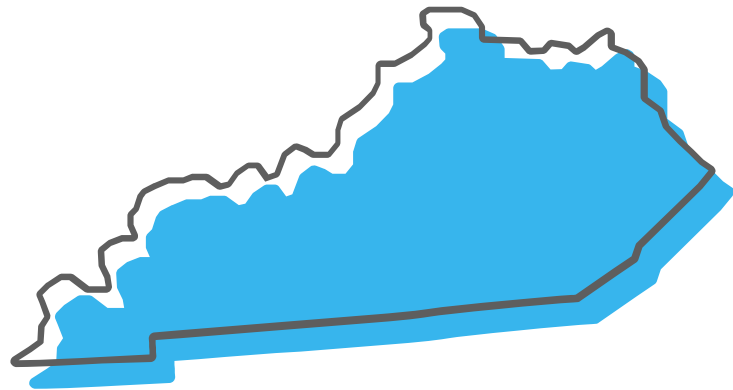
“Laila consistently serves as the welcoming and professional “face” of NorthKey.

Her dedication and uplifting attitude make her an invaluable part of the NorthKey team, and I'm truly grateful for her contributions.”

Community Impact

Our Mission in Action

From May 2024 to April 2025, NorthKey Community Care delivered high-quality, evidence-based behavioral health services to **thousands of Northern Kentuckians.**



**14,380 Clients
Served in 2024***

*Based on fiscal year.

**13,131 Clients
Served So Far in 2025***

*Based on fiscal year.

Through crisis response, therapy, case management, and substance use treatment, we are not only improving lives—we are reducing strain on emergency rooms, jails, and long-term state systems.



Key Impact Metrics



7,196

individuals received outpatient therapy



1,762

individuals supported through crisis intervention



1,625

individuals treated for co-occurring mental health and substance use disorders



1,047

students served through school-based behavioral health programs

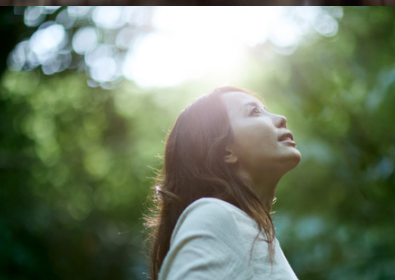


1,053

engaged in case management

6,495

total crisis intervention contacts (walk-in, mobile, CSU)



70%

of clients showed improvement in depression

54%

of clients showed improvement in anxiety

Key Impact Metrics



587 peer support participants



784 group therapy participants



49,855 total therapy appointments provided



11,043 total school-based appointments provided



38,812 total outpatient appointments provided



11,431 psychiatric/medication visits delivered to 4,067 unique individuals

15,010 monthly case management summaries

Substance Use Disorder (SUD) Treatment: Saving Lives



4,000+ individuals received substance use treatment

1,288 SUD evaluations conducted

945 clients referred directly into treatment
(often same-day)

604 engaged in IOP or therapeutic groups

21,259 group therapy sessions delivered

1,739 individual SUD services
(including therapy, intakes, psychiatric)





Medication for Opioid Use Disorder (MOUD):

520% increase in MOUD participants since 2023



Crisis Stabilization Unit Launched in January 2025

35 clients served **93%** stabilized without hospitalization



Rural Equity in Action

48 rural clients began MOUD treatment in 2024

69% treatment initiation rate within rural areas, 9% higher than urban areas



Mobile units and telehealth expanded to overcome barriers.

IDD Services: Supporting Independence and Community Living



400+ individuals served annually through the Michelle P. Waiver Program

147 individuals actively served in the Supports for Community Living (SCL) waiver



100 individuals served in IDD Crisis Services

26 individuals in Adult Foster Care (non-institutional)

25 individuals participated in Adult Day Training (greenhouse program)



6 Individuals supported by the Home and Community Based (HCB) waiver help elderly adults and those with physical disabilities live independently in the community.

Whole-Person Integrated Care

484 clients with serious mental illness
received primary care through
NorthKey

55% of primary care clients also
received a mental health service

41% received both mental health
and substance use disorder
services

**Integrated care reduces duplication,
prevents medical complications, and
improves long-term stability.**



Client Success Stories*

*Client PHI has been changed.



PEER SUPPORT SUCCESS STORY

Jill, 57, has made significant progress managing PTSD and dissociative identity disorder since starting Peer Support in April 2023. With consistent support, she now demonstrates emotional stability, increased self-awareness, and effective coping, reflecting the strong impact of integrated care on her recovery.

ADULT DAY TRAINING SUCCESS STORY

Logan joined Falmouth ADT in April 2023 through the IDD crisis department and later transferred to Grant ADT for proximity. With support from ADT staff and a job specialist, he began working at Culver's and gradually increased his hours. Logan now works three days a week and attends ADT two days, with plans to transition to full-time work at Culver's soon.



SCHOOL-BASED SERVICES SUCCESS STORY

Grace, a 13-year-old receiving counseling since 2020 for severe mental health challenges, began making significant progress in 2024 after building trust with a new school-based therapist. With weekly support and a healing connection through cooking with her grandmother, she's shown resilience and growth on her path to recovery.

KENTUCKY EARLY INTERVENTION SERVICES

Ethan, after months of hard work in physical therapy through KEIS, made great progress in walking, balance, and strength. With support from his therapist and family, he met all his goals and proudly graduated, ready to explore the world with confidence.



OUTPATIENT SUCCESS STORY

Andrew started at NorthKey in September 2023 after hospital discharge, struggling with substance use and serious mental illness. Through therapy and medication, he learned to manage hallucinations, address trauma, improve his health, rebuild family relationships, secure independent housing, and maintain sobriety for one year.



ADULT FOSTER CARE SUCCESS STORY

Ryan and Tommy have lived with Bruce and his family through the AFC program for nearly six years. They're fully included in family life—celebrating holidays, joining vacations, and sharing everyday moments. From beach trips to camping, they've built lasting memories and continue to thrive in this warm, supportive home.

SUPPORTED EMPLOYMENT SUCCESS STORY

Janet, 44, came to NorthKey after surviving domestic violence and substance use. Living in a rural area with no public transportation, she joined the supported employment program and secured a local job, eventually saving enough to buy a car. In May 2024, she landed her dream job as a front desk associate at a major hotel chain. Now thriving in recovery, Janet enjoys her work, visits family more often, and is working toward a promotion with support from her employment team.



IDD CRISIS SUCCESS STORY

In April 2024, IDD Crisis was contacted about Edgar, a 24-year-old man with Cerebral Palsy and a Moderate Intellectual Disability, who was at risk of homelessness while living in unsafe conditions with his mother. He had been neglected, isolated, and without proper medical care. With help from IDD Crisis, Edgar was relocated to a safe, accessible family home in Louisville, where he now receives proper care, attends adult day programming, and is thriving physically, emotionally, and socially for the first time in his life.



RURAL CO OUTPATIENT SUCCESS STORY

Juan, 47, came to NorthKey experiencing severe panic attacks and anxiety that left him unable to work or sleep. Constantly overwhelmed by worry—especially for his daughter—he began therapy and psychiatric medication services. After a few months, Juan reported significant improvement: better sleep, reduced anxiety, and more confidence in letting his daughter attend social events. He is now actively interviewing and feels ready to return to work.



INTENSIVE OUTPATIENT SUCCESS STORY

Nick was referred to NorthKey for IOP and initially resisted treatment, denying substance use issues. Despite challenges with attendance and drug screens, support from group leaders helped him feel heard and address underlying trauma. Nick has since completed the program, gained employment, and is actively using sober supports to maintain his recovery.



Community Needs Assessment

Purpose

The CCBHC Community Needs Assessment (CNA), conducted every three years per SAMHSA requirements, identifies local behavioral health needs to guide staffing, service access, outreach, and quality improvement. It involves input from a wide range of community stakeholders through surveys, meetings, and focus groups. The CNA was conducted through stakeholder engagement to ensure community partners the opportunity to provide valuable insight into the behavioral health needs within the community. Surveys, meetings, and focus groups were conducted for stakeholder engagement.

Key Findings (Based on 2021-2023 data)

Prevalence of MH and SUD

Primary Diagnoses

Depressive Disorders: 48.8%

Anxiety Disorders: 35.2%

Trauma and Stressor-Related Disorders: 27.1%

Neurodevelopmental Disorders: 14.7%

Substances Associated with SUD

Opioid: 17.6%

Stimulant: 15.1%

Alcohol: 14.3%

Cannabis: 14.2%

Comorbidities

Generalized Anxiety Disorder: 48.8%

Post Traumatic Stress Disorder: 35.2%

Major Depressive Disorder: 27.1%

Attention-Deficit/Hyperactivity Disorder: 14.7%



Cultural and Linguistic Diversity Needs

Cultural Populations and Current Accommodations



Hispanic/Latino:

- Promote cultural awareness
- Staff Training
- Interpreters
- Spanish Forms/website
- Language identification form at front desk

Deaf and Hard of Hearing:

- Promote cultural awareness
- Staff Training/Support Interpreters
- Website includes International Deafness Symbol
- Language identification form at front desk

LGBTQIA+:

- Promote cultural awareness
- Staff Training
- LGBTQIA+ groups

Care Coordination

Identified Underserved Populations

- Early Childhood Ages
- Individuals in Crisis
- Hispanic/Latino Individuals
- Rural

Social Drivers of Health

Predominant SDOH

- Access to Healthcare
- Economic Instability
- Limited Support System
- Food Insecurity



Assessment of Staffing

CADC	5	APRN	11	LPA	2	Medical Assistant (MA)	2
CSW	9	MD/DO	1	LSW	9	Mobile Crisis Responder	3
PhD	4	Psychiatrist	2	PSS	20	On Call After Hours Crisis Interventionist	3
LCSW	11	CSA	5	TCM	35	Team Lead Prevention Specialist	1
LMFT	1	MHA	28	LPAT	5	Temporary Certified Alcohol and Drug Counselor	1
LPCC	24	RN	17	Engagement Specialist	4	Start Family Team Member Facilitator	2
LPN	6	LPCA	12	Housing Specialist	3	Team Lead Community Support Program	1

Evidence Based Practice Considerations

Identified Needs

- More providers trained in EBP

Identified Barriers

- Cost
- Time Commitment
- Staff Turnover



CNA Goals & Progress

Prevalence of Mental Health and Substance Use Conditions

Within 12 months, NorthKey will develop and implement an outreach and community education plan that includes a social media campaign and handouts to increase awareness about at least three behavioral health disorders impacting Northern Kentuckians and NorthKey groups available to help with these.



Within nine months, NorthKey's Quality Improvement Committee will track and review the three SDOH needs most commonly reported by individuals treated for substance use through use of BI reporting and develop a plan to increase assistance with these needs.



***Working on executing the plan.**

Accessibility and Availability of Services

Within six months, NorthKey will implement transportation to individuals enrolled in the Therapeutic Rehabilitation program at least two days per week per location to reduce barriers to individuals with SMI accessing care



Cultural and Linguistic Diversity Needs

Within six months, NorthKey will utilize one to two alternative methods to advertise job positions to Spanish speakers by exploring options and presenting to the Executive Committee.



Social Drivers of Health

Within six months, NorthKey will hire at least one additional Kynector to help individuals access Medicaid and other financial resources for help to reduce barriers to care. Within six months, NorthKey will increase knowledge of local food resources by creating at least three resource-focused posts on NorthKey's social media account and/or website.



Needs of the Underserved Population

Within 18 months, NorthKey will have two staff members trained in Conscious Discipline to expand available Early Childhood resources for the community. Within six months, NorthKey will increase mobile crisis response by 50% to help meet the growing crisis needs of the community.



Within 12 months, NorthKey will expand participation in discussions and planning surrounding housing by establishing partnerships with at least two additional area housing authorities or other organizations invested in increasing housing options and safe spaces for persons with mental illness and/or substance use disorders.



***Working on developing relationships.**

Within nine months, NorthKey will participate in at least one community workgroup whose focus includes evaluating the scope of regional resources and support available to family/caregivers of persons with mental illness and/or substance use disorders and present the findings or any resulting resources to NAMI family/caregivers support group members.



Within nine months, NorthKey will establish one to two new care coordination partnerships with organizations serving the Hispanic/Latino and Asian communities in order to better explore the unique needs of these populations and increase awareness of NorthKey services.



Assessment of Staffing

Within six months, NorthKey will explore at least two options for incentivizing current staff and/or applicants to work in the rural counties in order to increase on-site coverage in rural offices.



Within nine months, NorthKey will explore at least one new recruiting tactic for eligible Targeted Case Managers to increase filled positions.



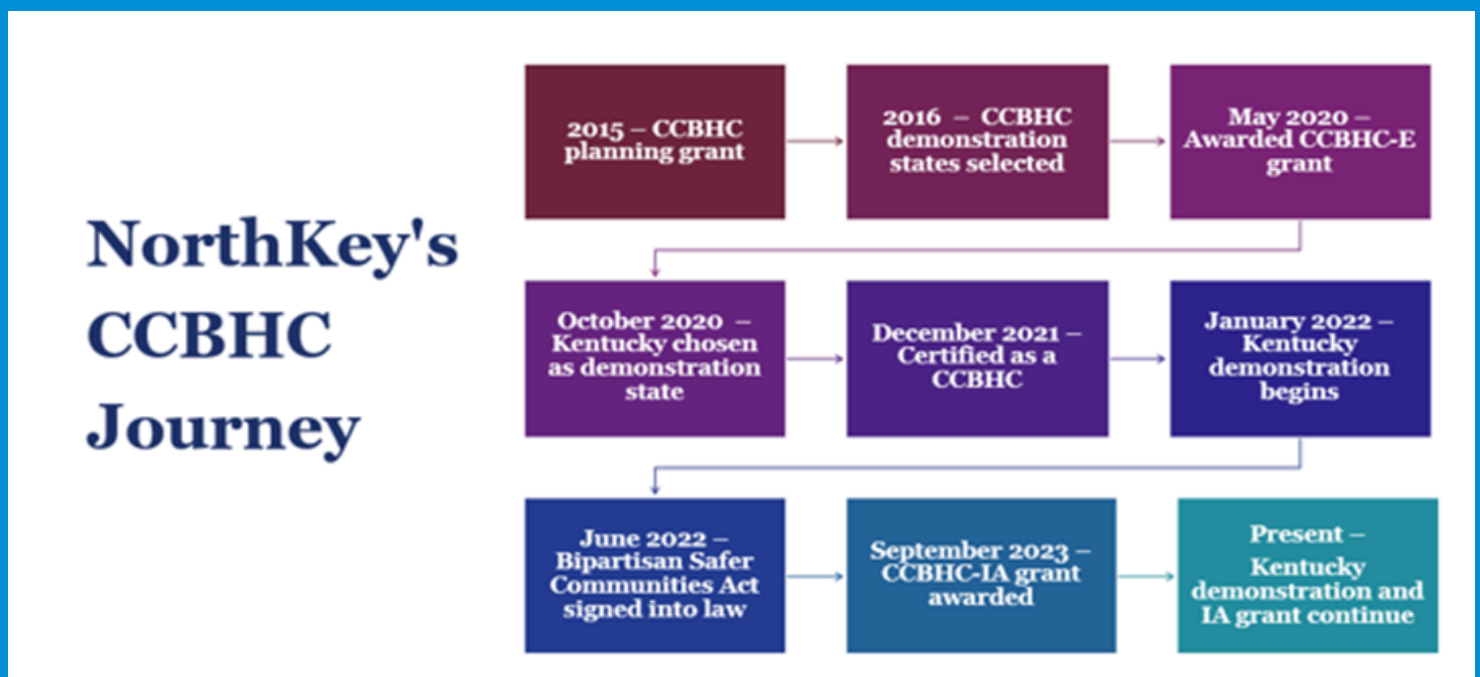
Evidence Based Practices Considerations

Within 12 months, NorthKey will have at least two therapists trained in each of the following EBPs: Multi-Dimensional Family Therapy, Child-Parent Psychotherapy, and Managing and Adapting Practice (MAP) to provide more opportunities for individuals to receive appropriate care.



NorthKey is a CCBHC

As a Certified Community Behavioral Health Clinic, NorthKey provides robust services that reflect our commitment to the CCBHC model. Since 2010, we've worked to adopt this approach, formally joining Kentucky's CCBHC planning grant in 2015. Our progress continues as part of the state demonstration and a SAMHSA Improvement and Advancement (IA) grantee.



CCBHC-IA Grant Goals

NorthKey was awarded the CCBHC-IA in September 2023.

Our goals for this grant are as follows:

Goal #1

Increase the penetration rate of adults and youth with SMI, SED, SUD and COD served by 5% each year.

Goal #2

Expand suicide prevention outreach, treatment, and care coordination efforts for adults and youth identified at risk for suicide.

Goal #3

Increase the number of individuals connected to physical health, primary care, and ancillary services by 2% each year.



So far, we have enrolled **over 470 clients** in our first year and have either met or are on track to meet all enrollment goals by demographics such as race, ethnicity, gender, and sexual orientation.

Most grant enrollees are individuals who are or were receiving Crisis services.

Accomplishments over the past several months include:



Filling all grant positions

988 | SUICIDE & CRISIS
LIFELINE

Expanded 988 coalition in Northern Kentucky, including increased collaboration with law enforcement



Developed procedures for client transportation

Developed a team to plan expanded school crisis response and met with schools



Met with the NAMI NKY Board President and began attending the NAMI Family and Friends support group to share updates about NorthKey, request feedback on services, and involve in NorthKey's 2024 Community Needs Assessment



Developed strategies to expand care coordination agreements with healthcare providers and community partners

Updated process for collecting client health measurements as part of integrated care



Increased education on suicide prevention, risk assessment, and intervention by requiring all clinical and medical staff take Counseling on Access to Lethal Means (CALM) training



Met several objectives on our Disparity Impact Plan targeting the Hispanic/Latino population:

- Staff completed trainings in marketing and outreach to Hispanic/Latino individuals
- Began expanding relationships and participating in events with community partners serving Hispanic/Latino individuals and families
- Updated multiple client-facing documents in Spanish
- Planned a training about serving this population to be offered during Hispanic Heritage Month in September

Taxpayer Value & Cost Saving

NorthKey's programs save taxpayers millions each year by reducing reliance on high-cost public systems like jails, hospitals, and emergency rooms.

Estimated Annual Public Cost Savings: \$23.56 Million

Category	Clients	Est. Savings	Assumptions
Crisis Diversions (via CSU)	33	\$115,500	\$3,500 saved per diversion (ER/jail/hospital costs)
Repeat Hospitalizations Prevented	183	\$1,555,500	\$8,500 per psychiatric hospitalization
SUD Clients in IOP	604	\$1,208,000	\$2,000 per person/year
ER Visits Avoided via Crisis Services	~649	\$908,600	10% of 6,495 diverted from ER, \$1,400/visit
Case Management (Reduced Recidivism)	1,053	\$1,579,500	\$1,500 per client/year
Co-occurring Treatment (Integrated Care)	1,625	\$1,625,000	\$1,000 per client/year (avoided duplication)
School-Based Therapy (Early Intervention)	1,047	\$785,250	\$750 per student
MOUD Expansion	50 est.	\$200,000	\$4,000/person/year in avoided overdose, jail, and medical costs
IDD Community-Based Services (SCL, AFC, ADT)	198	\$950,000	\$4,800/year per person savings vs. institutional care
Clinical Improvement in MH Clients	1,000 est.	\$1,200,000	\$1,200/year per client w/ improved PHQ-9 or GAD-7 scores
Integrated Primary Care for SMI	484	\$1,275,000	\$2,635/person/year (15% Medicaid savings from integrated care)
Michelle P. Waiver (MPW)	400	\$12,000,000	\$30,000/person/year vs. institutional care (conservative KY estimate)
HCB Waiver	6	\$150,000	\$25,000/person/year vs. institutional care
Total Estimated Savings		\$23,561,350	

Why Continued State Investment in Medicaid & CCBHCs Makes Sense

While Kentucky invests Medicaid dollars to support NorthKey as a Certified Community Behavioral Health Clinic (CCBHC), this funding is not a cost—**it's a strategic investment with a measurable return.**

- Medicaid operates as a state-federal partnership, where each state dollar is supported by additional federal funds
- These combined funds allow Kentucky to deliver comprehensive, accountable, and integrated care to the individuals most likely to otherwise rely on emergency departments, jails, or homelessness services
- NorthKey's work has resulted in **more than \$23.5 million in annual taxpayer savings, across health, justice, and crisis systems**

By continuing to support the CCBHC model, Kentucky ensures that its dollars are used to **prevent higher costs elsewhere, reduce duplication of services, and protect the health and safety of its most vulnerable residents.**

The question isn't whether the state can afford to fund behavioral health—
it's whether it can afford not to.



A Leader, A Legacy: Celebrating the Retirement of Dr. Owen Nichols

After nearly 40 years of service in psychology—and 16 years as President and CEO of NorthKey Community Care—Dr. Owen Nichols has retired.

Dr. Nichols has made lasting contributions to behavioral health as a psychologist, clinical director, and Joint Commission surveyor. Under his leadership, NorthKey doubled the number of clients served annually, strengthened its financial foundation, and expanded integrated care across Northern Kentucky, including launching two mobile care clinics.

He played a key role in advancing clinical psychopharmacology and co-founded the Western Kentucky Pre-Doctoral Internship Consortium, helping to shape future generations of psychologists. A passionate advocate for mental health, he has served on numerous boards, including the Mental Health Corporation of America and Eastern State Hospital, and is especially recognized for championing veterans' mental health.

Dr. Nichols is a Fellow in several prestigious organizations and is Board Certified in Clinical and Medical Psychology. His influence will be felt for years to come.

We thank Dr. Nichols for his visionary leadership and lifelong dedication—and wish him the very best in retirement!



NorthKey

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