



Ottawa
PATHWAYS
to better health

2023 Annual Report

Compiled November 2024

What is Pathways to Better Health?

The Ottawa Pathways to Better Health (OPBH) program is an initiative designed to improve health outcomes by addressing individual risk factors through a Community Health Worker (CHW) model.

Program Overview:

- **Launch:** February 2017 as a 3-year pilot, fully implemented since 2020.
- **Approach:** Evidence-based CHW model focusing on building trust and providing culturally relevant support.
- **Goal:** Improve physical and mental health outcomes for underserved populations by helping them navigate healthcare systems and connecting them with essential resources.

Eligibility:

- 18 years or older (or pregnant).
- Reside in Ottawa County, including in the 49423 ZIP code.
- Enrolled in or eligible for Medicare and/or Medicaid.
- Have two or more chronic health conditions, such as: Diabetes, Depression or Anxiety, Heart disease, Arthritis, Asthma, Hypertension, or Chronic pain.

Services Provided by CHWs:

In 2023, the OPBH program employed 11 CHWs embedded within:

- Public health
- Mental health services
- A local medical group

CHWs offer:

- Flexible meetings in the client's home or other convenient locations.
- Assistance with goal setting and health condition management.
- Guidance through the healthcare system and connections to necessary care (e.g., primary, dental, specialty, mental health, or substance use treatment).
- Help to reduce hospital and emergency room visits.
- Links to community services like food, housing, utility assistance, transportation, and employment opportunities.
- Presence of OPBH in community organizations to ensure a comprehensive approach to health.

Impact:

The OPBH program has demonstrated significant health benefits, reducing barriers to care and enhancing quality of life for its clients. By leveraging the unique insights and shared experiences of CHWs, the program continues to be an essential resource for Ottawa County.

Client Demographics



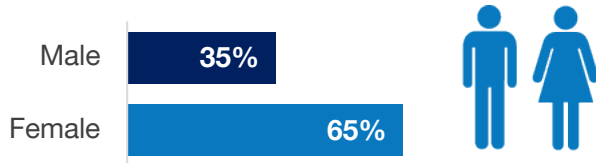
In 2023, the 317 OPBH clients were **MORE** likely:

- Female
- English speaking
- Earn less than \$10,000
- Live in the SW quadrant

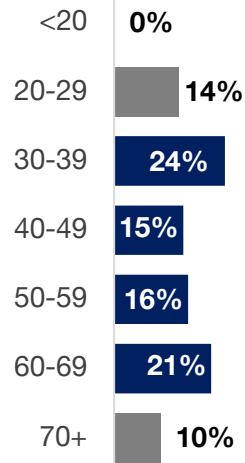
They were **LESS** likely:

- Younger than age 20
- Older than age 70
- A college graduate

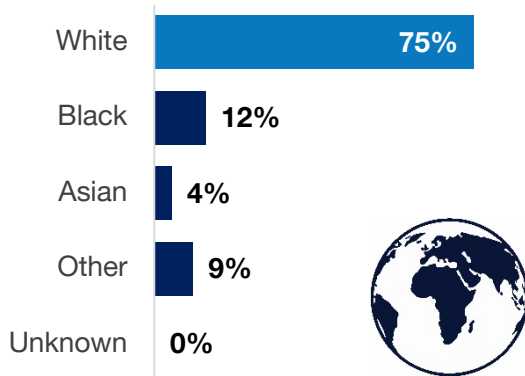
Gender



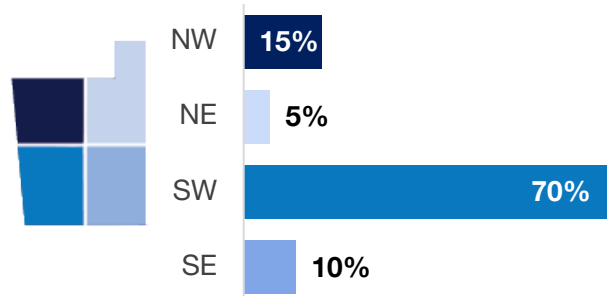
Age



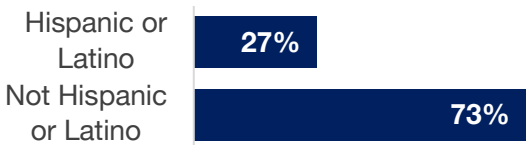
Race



Location*



Ethnicity



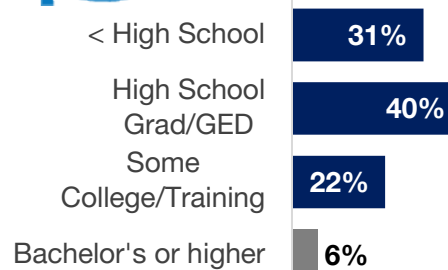
*The highest proportion of Ottawa County residents lived in the SW quadrant of the county (34.8%) in 2022 followed by the SE quadrant (29.3%), NW quadrant (19.9%), and the NE quadrant (16.0%). In addition to the SW quadrant having the highest proportion of people, according to the CDC the SW quadrant also has the most areas with the highest overall social vulnerability, supporting the need for more resources. **Source:** [CDC/ATSDR Social Vulnerability Index 2020](#).

Client Demographics (continued)

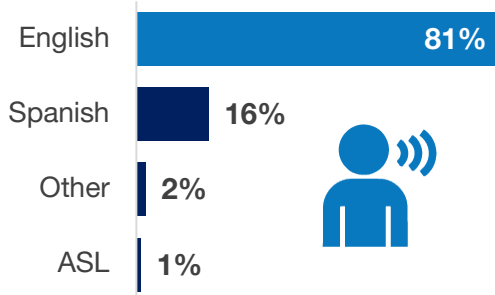
Children <18 in Household



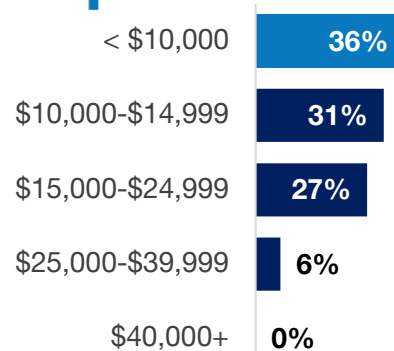
Education



Language



Income



Adverse Childhood Experiences (ACEs)

Health is influenced by more than genetics, biology, and personal decisions – it’s also impacted by social factors, now and in the past. Adverse Childhood Experiences (ACEs) are events that happened during childhood that have been shown to directly impact health. People with more ACEs have an increased risk for experiencing poor health outcomes.

Pathways clients report far more ACEs than most Ottawa County residents, indicating the needs of this population. Pathways is finding and helping the people that need it most.

Average Number of ACEs Reported

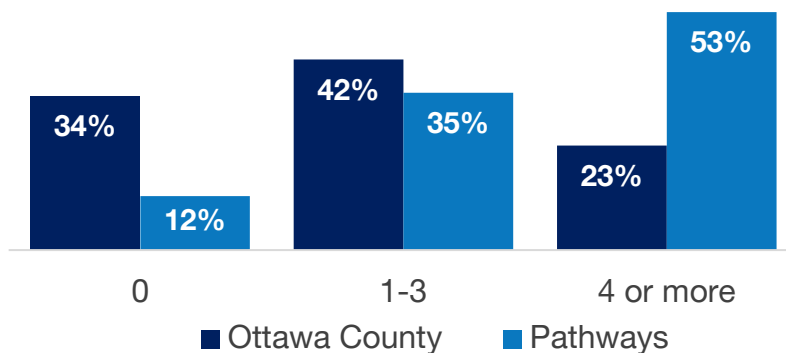
Ottawa County
Adults

2.3

Pathways
Clients

4.2

Pathways clients are two times as likely to report 4+ ACEs

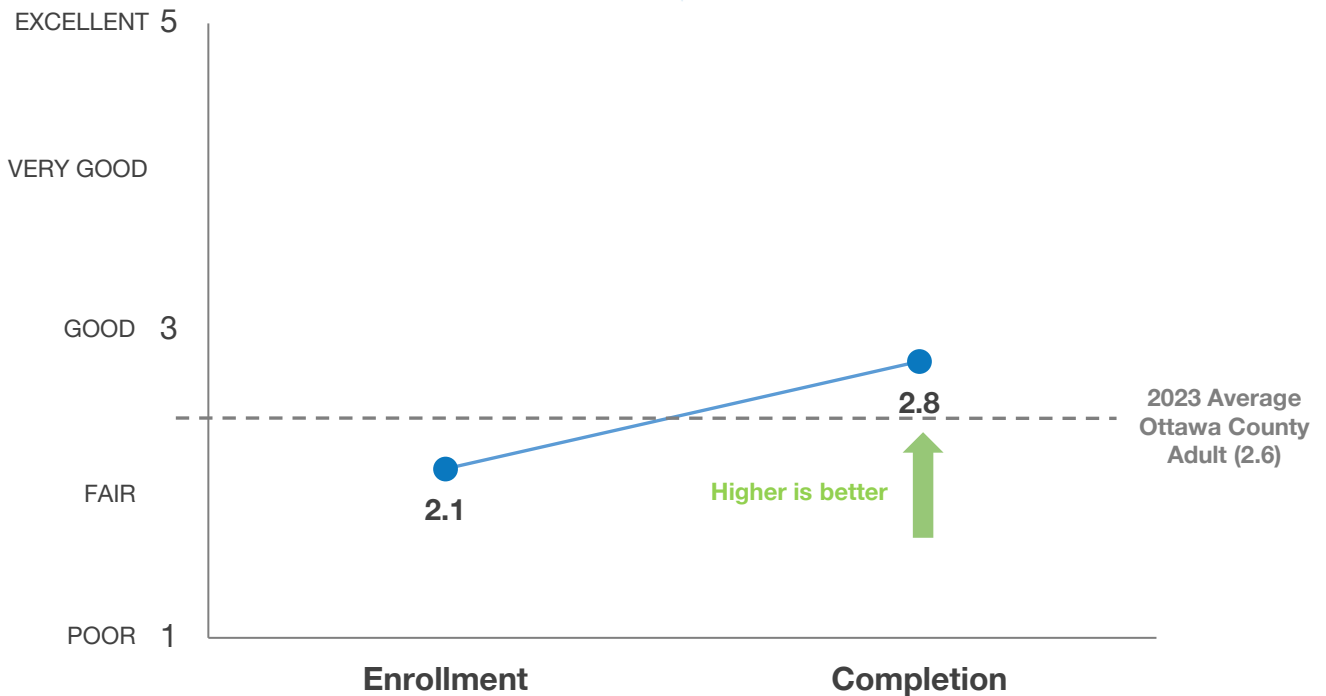


Source: Ottawa County adult average from 2023 Ottawa County Behavioral Risk Factor Survey (BRFS)

Overall Health Status

Clients report a statistically significant increase in their overall health.

On average, clients report a small but significant **improvement** in their perceived overall health. It is important to note that at enrollment, the average OPBH client rates their health as between “fair” and “good” – lower than the 2023 average Ottawa County adult’s rating as “fair”. This is indicative of the challenges faced by incoming OPBH clients and the importance of communication in the referral network.



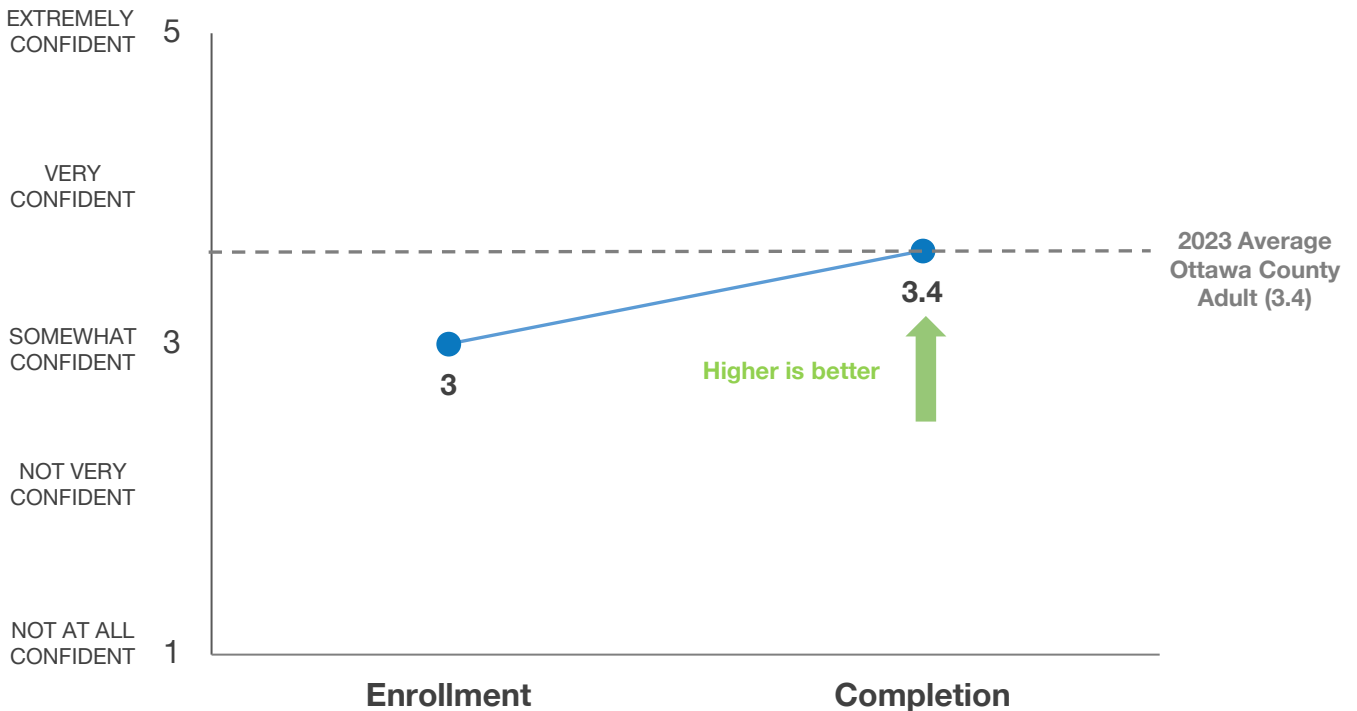
Question: Would you say in general that your health is.... Excellent (5), Very good (4), Good (3), Fair (2), Poor (1)

Sources: Results from 66 OPBH clients who completed both the enrollment and completion questionnaires between January 2023 and December 2023. The Ottawa County adult average (2.6) is from the same question asked in the 2023 Ottawa County Behavioral Risk Factor Survey (BRFS).

Navigating the Health Care System

Clients report a statistically significant increase in their confidence navigating the health care system.

Clients **gained confidence** in their ability to successfully navigate the complicated health care system. In fact, after program completion, the average OPBH client reports as much confidence as the average Ottawa County adult – between “somewhat” and “very” confident.



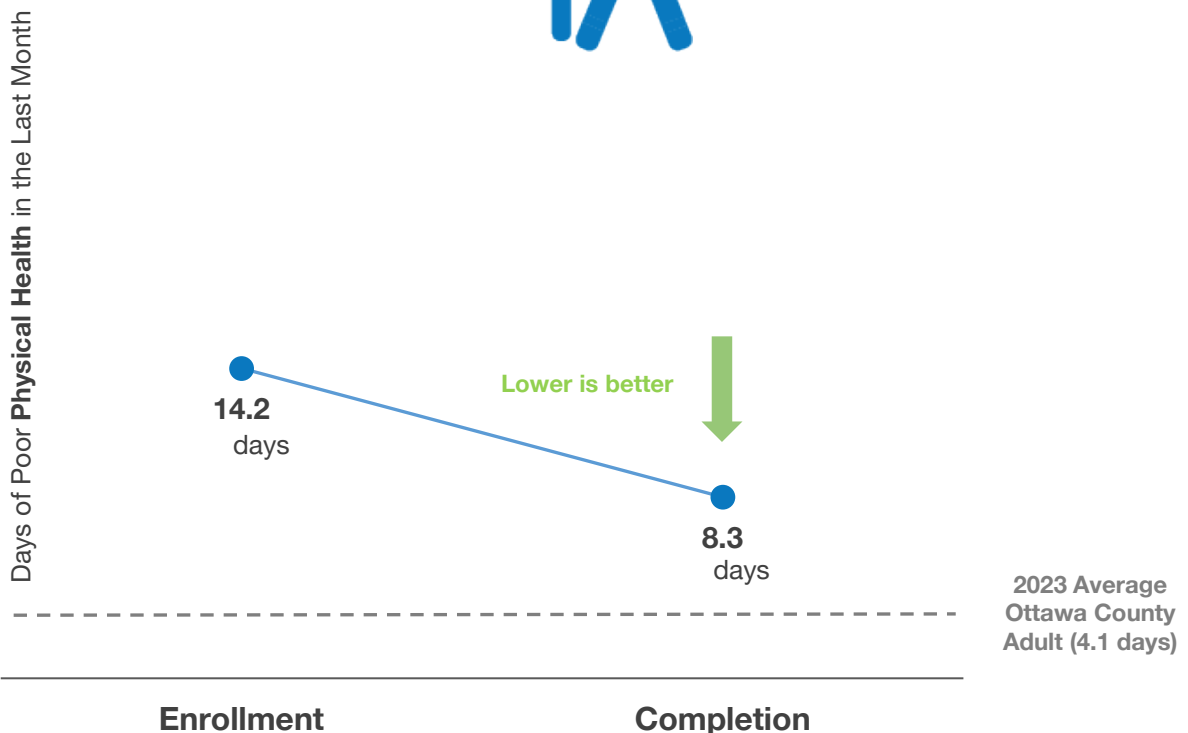
Question: How confident are you that you can successfully navigate the health care system? Not at all confident (1), Not very confident (2), Somewhat confident (3), Very confident (4), Extremely confident (5)

Sources: Results from 66 OPBH clients who completed both the enrollment and completion questionnaires between January 2023 and December 2023. The Ottawa County adult average (3.4) is from the same question asked in the 2023 Ottawa County Behavioral Risk Factor Survey (BRFS).

Poor Physical Health

Clients report a statistically significant decrease in days impacted

by poor physical health. At program completion, the average client experienced six fewer days of poor physical health each month than before the program – a **42% improvement**. Though this is a significant gain, OPBH clients report many more days a month of poor physical health than the 4.1 days reported by the average adult in Ottawa County, indicating that referrals are reaching the desired population for this program.



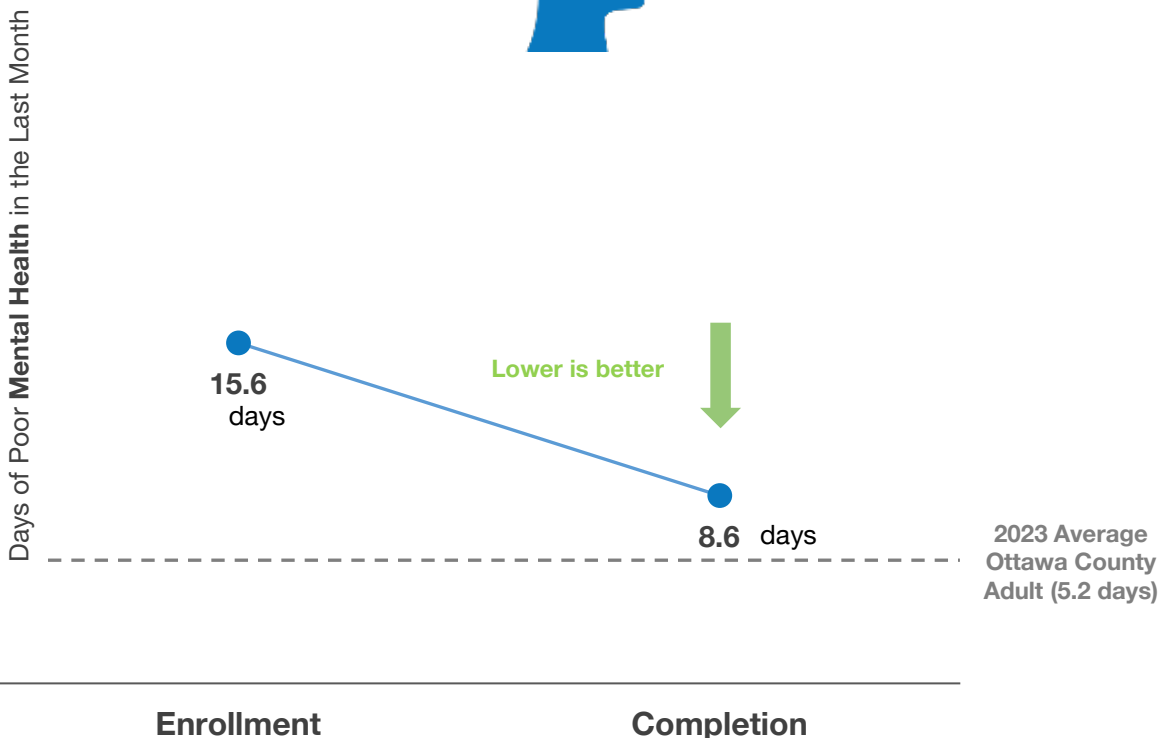
Question: Now thinking about your physical health, which includes physical illness or injury, for how many days during the past 30 days was your physical health not good? (0 – 30 days)

Sources: Results from 66 OPBH clients who completed both the enrollment and completion questionnaires between January 2023 and December 2023. The Ottawa County adult average (4.1 days) is from the same question asked in the 2023 Ottawa County Behavioral Risk Factor Survey (BRFS).

Poor Mental Health

Clients report a statistically significant decrease in days impacted

by poor mental health. After OPBH, the average client experienced seven fewer days of poor mental health per month than they reported before the program – a **45% improvement**. Gaining a week of improved mental health each month is a significant outcome for a population with more poor mental health days than the 5.2 days/month of the average Ottawa County adult.



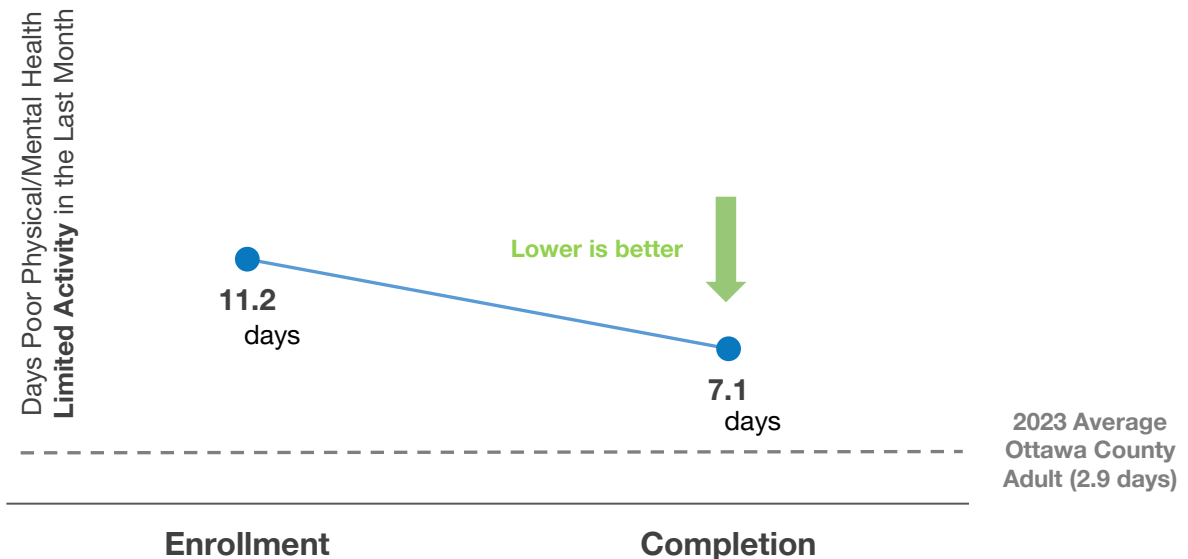
Question: Now thinking about your mental health, which includes stress, depression and problems with emotions, for how many days during the past 30 days was your mental health not good? (0 – 30 days)

Sources: Results from 66 OPBH clients who completed both the enrollment and completion questionnaires between January 2023 and December 2023. The Ottawa County adult average (5.2 days) is from the same question asked in the 2023 Ottawa County Behavioral Risk Factor Survey (BRFS).

Activity Limitations

Clients report a statistically significant decrease in days

when poor physical/mental health limited their activities. The number of days per month when daily activities were limited due to physical or mental health declined by 4 days – a **37% improvement** for the average OPBH client. At enrollment, clients experienced activity limitations on four times more days than the 2.9 days/month the average Ottawa County adult reports. The progress reflected by these results suggests that CHWs are effective and trusted partners in their communities as one by one they work with clients to improve their health and their lives.



Question: During the past 30 days, for about how many days did poor physical or mental health keep you from doing your usual activities, such as self-care, work or recreation? (0 – 30 days)

Sources: Results from 66 OPBH clients who completed both the enrollment and completion questionnaires between January 2023 and December 2023. The Ottawa County adult average (2.9 days) is from the same question asked in the 2023 Ottawa County Behavioral Risk Factor Survey (BRFS).

Thank you

Ottawa Pathways to Better Health
program past and present supporters:



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WEBSITE:

<https://www.miottawa.org/opbh/>