

Bio

Dr. John Johnson's innovative approach to serving embraces the philosophy and values held within psychiatry and his lifelong commitment to learning integrated with a less traditional synthesis of business administration. Dr. Johnson artfully blends his true curiosity about what really works in helping others to optimize their overall quality of life with his experience of how practicing solely as a psychiatrist placed artificial limits on his capacity to have the greatest impact on overall community wellness. Dr. Johnson believes all individuals have the ability to reach optimal health through the delivery of quality treatment and community supports and that all communities have the potential to become environments where all their members not only survive but thrive.

Born and educated in Southern (Kerala) India Dr. Johnson has over 30 years of experience as a practicing board-certified psychiatrist with international residencies in both primary and behavioral healthcare. Moving to Ireland in 1988, he served as the Chief Psychiatry Resident at St. Otteran's Hospital in Waterford, specializing in providing psychiatric services to individuals with co-occurring mental illness and developmental disabilities. Arriving with his family to the United States in 1993 while continuing his work as a psychiatrist Dr. Johnson obtained his MBA in 1998. From 1998-2006 Dr. Johnson held the positions of Clinical Assistant Professor and Consulting Neuropsychiatrist at The Ohio State University's Nisonger Center. At this Center of Excellence for Developmental Disabilities, he provided specialty psychiatric services as part of a strong and dynamic team of researchers, clinicians, teachers, staff and trainees. Concurrently from 2000 – 2005 Dr. Johnson served as the Medical Director at a large community mental health agency where evidence-based practices were integrated within the delivery of community-based behavioral health services. It was through these experiences that Dr. Johnson first identified what he perceived as a gap in quality opportunities for individuals with co-occurring mental health and development disabilities to live productive lives within communities. As the driving force behind his desire to add value on a larger scale Dr. Johnson recognized that through the fusion of business ownership and practice he would be able to multiply his capacity to serve more people.

Founded in 2006 Access Ohio shaped Dr. Johnson's ability to hire and train staff to provide behavioral health results-based care with compassion and respect for human dignity and rights. When asked what keeps him energized, Dr. Johnson describes his role as CEO/Owner as an amalgamation of his abilities to build sustainable programs, to continue to see individual clients up to 3 days per week and to obtain positive results for the individuals and communities served by Access Ohio. Operating a for-profit business enables Dr. Johnsons to directly reinvest a portion of his profits into expanding services that help fill existing service gaps and create new job opportunities. Unfortunately operating as a for-profit business often comes with community misperceptions, the largest being that for profits are only money-motivated and are not client-centered or quality-driven. "My goal for all of Access Ohio is to identify a need, fill the need and create something of lasting value for the community".

Access Ohio provides personalized inpatient, residential and outpatient/community-based behavioral healthcare services to adults, adolescents, children and families who are poor and/or living in poverty in Columbus, Central and Southern Ohio, and neighboring states.

“Committed to continuous quality improvement of our services and professionalism of our staff, Access Ohio is focused on quality, innovation, teamwork and research that uphold the dignity and worth of every human life. Access Ohio has multiple sites located on bus lines throughout Columbus to promote accessibility for those we serve. In addition we offer early evening and Saturday hours at most locations.”

Dr. Johnson works to bring the best people together to meet whatever needs there are in the community. He looks for distressed situations naturally manifesting themselves in physical structures and/or in underserved populations. Dr. Johnson continually looks at what can be accomplished that is bigger and better to help people with behavioral healthcare needs. He is always thinking ahead to what is next. He embraces innovation and change.

In 2014 Ohio’s Telepsychiatry Project, a specialty Community Mental Health program operated in conjunction with Wright State University’s Boonshoft School of Medicine that provides psychiatric and supportive services across the state to children and adults with mental illness and intellectual disabilities, approached Dr. Johnson about partnering to help expand services statewide. Dr. Johnson embraced the opportunity and simultaneously agreed to become an Associate Professor of Psychiatry at Wright State University in order to fulfill the requirements of the partnership. He is currently working with Wright State University to develop his own Center of Excellence for Developmental Disabilities at Access Hospital Dayton, a freestanding psychiatric hospital, in an effort to also provide this unique population with improved access to quality inpatient care.

Also in 2014 Dr. Johnson expanded both his community collaborations and his funding sources when the Community Shelter Board, Central Ohio’s Homeless Continuum of Care lead, chose Access Ohio to operate its new Navigator Program in partnership with Columbus Area Integrated Health Services (CAIHS) and Goodwill Industries of Columbus. The Access Ohio Navigator program, which is entirely grant-funded and community based, is a unique 3-month rapid re-housing program designed to serve and quickly re-house single adults experiencing homelessness living shelter in permanent housing. “The program is unique because we work to help individuals to rapidly obtain housing and provide them the supportive services needed to successfully maintain that housing. We provide intensive home/community-based supportive services. We connect those we serve to ongoing community services and supports that are intended to assist them in maintaining their housing long-term. Our services include tenant education (responsibilities and rights), budgeting, benefits/employment assistance, and crisis intervention.”

Over the past 34 years, Dr. Johnson has leveraged his clinical expertise, business intelligence and love for knowledge to develop innovative solutions that provide some of the most vulnerable populations with access to quality care. Today Dr. Johnson owns and operates several healthcare organizations, creating a behavioral service continuum of care from community-based to outpatient to inpatient services stretching across the lifespan. Access Ohio provides care to over 15,000 Ohioans and employs over 400 staff.

When asked where he wants to go from here, Dr. Johnson states he is looking internally and externally. “I want to reach back into Access Ohio after a period of rapid start-up and growth to ensure that all staff have access to the training they need to be help our

clients be successful. In 2017 we will begin Access University (an ongoing training program for all Access Ohio staff). We will focus both on the implementation and infusion of evidence-based practices throughout all aspects of our care. I recognize that this is an area of needed attention and growth for us organizationally. We will set up an ongoing training curriculum to ensure all staff remains relevant in their fields. Together we will look externally for new opportunities to expand our services. My goal is to start 8 new programs in 2017. I want to explore opportunities for new partnerships, research opportunities, physical healthcare integration and the possibilities that exist for non-Medicaid/levy funding in the local board areas where Access Ohio provides services. While I get excited at the thought of creating something new, Access Ohio is also willing to serve as a place of referral when the prevailing demand for services in existing community programs is greater than current staffing capacity, thereby placing people in critical need on waitlists. When I started Access Ohio I wanted to provide services and needed to be able to cover costs, so I elected to become a Medicaid-only provider. I believe that Access Ohio and the leadership team I have in place, and am continuing to build, is able to provide the structure needed to diversify both our services and funding streams to address the existing and emerging unmet needs in our communities.”