



# Who Is SUN Behavioral Health Kentucky?



**WE BELIEVE IN SAFETY, TEAMWORK, INTEGRITY, AND COMPASSION.**

SUN Behavioral Health Kentucky is dedicated to helping the community it's a part of. We address those who are facing acute and chronic mental health challenges or those who need help recovering from substance use. In Kentucky, our hospital is located in Erlanger and Intensive Outpatient programming is offered at our satellite Lexington location.

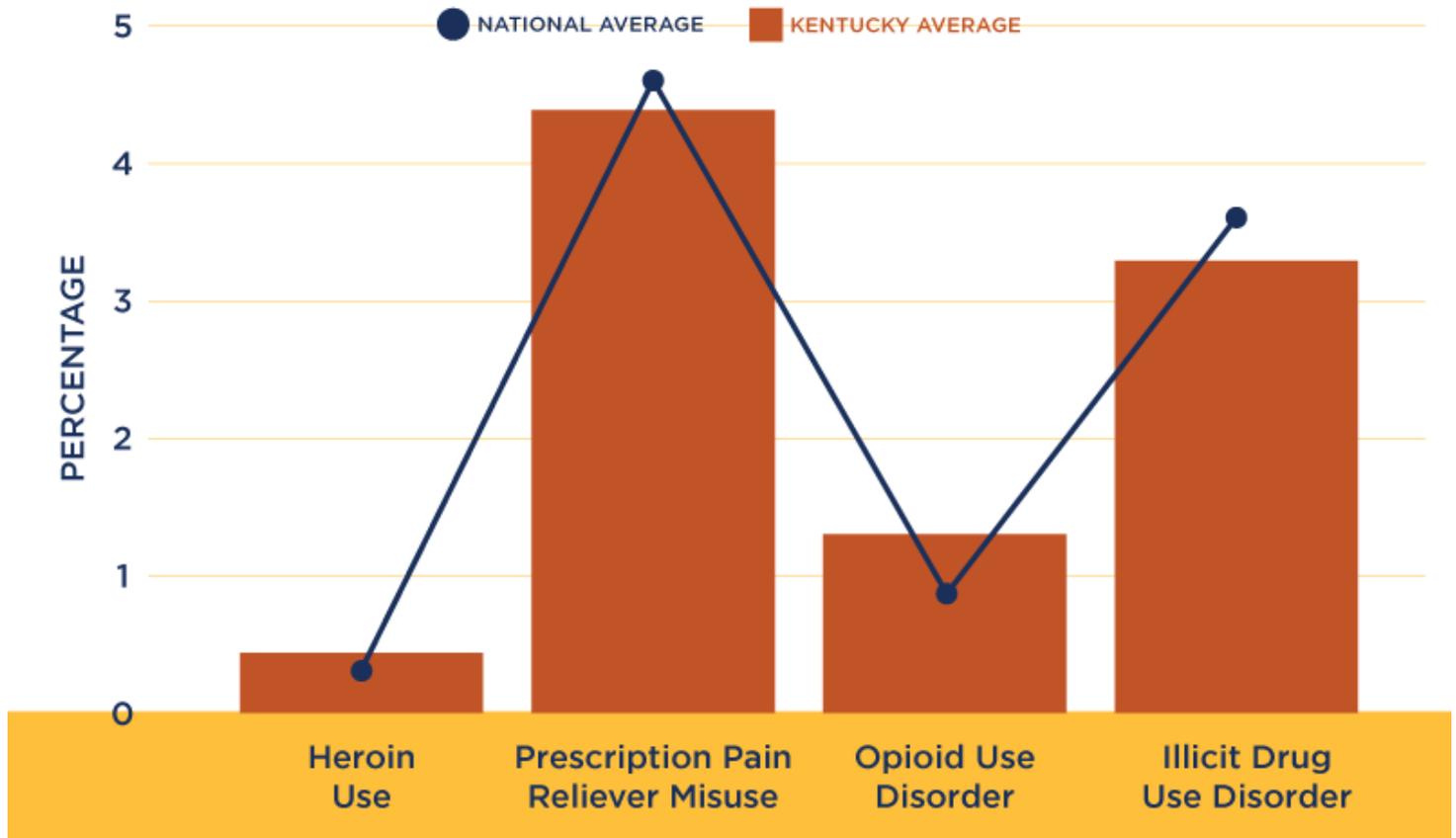
Our values are reflected in what we do, no matter which facility you're at. We believe in safety, teamwork, integrity, and compassion. Our Erlanger, Kentucky location serves a wide range of patients. Our hospital's units offer levels of care from outpatient to ASAM 4.0 hospital detox. We also serve those experiencing mental health problems as well as those who have a substance use disorder (SUD). From acute crisis care to the lowest level of ongoing treatment, SUN Behavioral Health Kentucky has a level of care that is clinically appropriate for any SUD or mental health challenge.

## Solving Unmet Needs - the Meaning Behind SUN

Here in Kentucky, there is a strong need for care and rehab facilities geared toward substance use disorders (SUD). Studies have shown that the **number of people who are using substances is far higher than the number of people that are receiving treatment.** On a statewide level, we're seeing that at least 30.7% of young adults (age 18-25) have binge alcohol within the past month and 10.3% reported having a substance use disorder within the past year. These two numbers equal about 142,000 and 48,000 respectively. In 2019, approximately 28,400 people in Kentucky were enrolled in substance use treatment. That number doesn't even cover a quarter of the young adults who've participated in binge drinking, let alone those who reported having a substance use disorder.

Here are some of the areas where Kentucky has a higher substance use rate than the national average.

# Kentucky Substance Use Rate VS. National Average



Kentucky is our home, and we like to make sure our communities are supported. What about those closest to us? Let's take a closer look at Kenton county, in particular.

Here in Kenton county, we're seeing that 19% of adults are binge drinking and 30% have had issues with alcohol-impaired driving. As a whole in Northern Kentucky, there's been an increase in overdose deaths from 2020 to 2021. 2,250 overdose deaths occurred in 2021, which was a 14.5% increase from the previous year. As you can see, the need for substance treatment is there, and yet the enrollment numbers don't match up. How is SUN trying to help?

We're strong supporters of our community. We try to reach our community on many levels, from social media to free and informative blog posts – we want them to know that we're here. As one of the only ASAM 4.0 facilities with 24-crisis care, we're here when they need it most. We also offer things beyond inpatient and outpatient, like medication management services. We understand that substance use doesn't start and stop because of one treatment program. Having those additional tools and support is what makes long-term recovery possible, and that's our goal here. We care about Kentucky.

Our goal is to make it easier for our community to access the care they need. Here in Erlanger, the amount of care available to our community is limited to a certain number of facilities. Not only can facilities limit the number of patients able to seek adequate care, but so can other things such as insurance, education on rehab, and even just the stigma around substance use.

In Kenton county

**19%**  
— of adults are —  
**BINGE DRINKING**

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**30%**  
have had issues with  
**ALCOHOL-IMPAIRED DRIVING**

Many patients come to us when they are in acute crisis, and turning them away can be detrimental to their health and future. With a bed count of 197 here at SUN Behavioral Health Kentucky and an average stay of about 14 days, we do our best to help as many as we can so that they can receive the proper care they're looking for.

At SUN Behavioral Health Kentucky, we go beyond treatment to address social determinants of health and other unmet needs that often underly mental health and SUDs. Some of the other solutions and services we offer to make the healing process easier and more accessible for our community include:

- ☀️ Helping patients get the transportation they need
- ☀️ Offering informative blogs on SUDs to help lower the stigma
- ☀️ Providing important resources for how to help in emergency situations, like overdoses
- ☀️ Helping to increase support for patients by helping them find the right support groups

Many of our programs, such as our Pathways Program, are geared specifically toward helping adults who are wanting to work on recovering from SUDs. Our Pathways Program, in particular, has been built to help patients start seeing results faster. We work hard to make our programs accessible while still making sure to meet the recovery goals of our patients.

We always point patients in the right direction whether that's financial aid, additional education, or step-down and wraparound care. We want what's best for our community, both before they walk in and after they leave.

## Our Staff Makes the Difference

When it comes to ensuring we're offering the highest quality treatment that our patients deserve, we immediately look to who we're hiring. Making sure that we bring the right people in to help our patients along in their recovery is important. Having enough of the right people is a big deal, too. Our staff is our biggest asset, and we're proud of who we hire.

One thing that sets our staff apart from other facilities is our full-time, medical psychiatrists. Not only are they on the units every day, helping our patients along their recovery road, but they know our facility and values and represent them during the treatment process. In addition, our group sessions are run by master's-level clinical social workers.



Another advantage is these mental health professionals are also in our SUD units. That is not common among SUD treatment providers in Kentucky.

Studies highlighted by the American Psychology Association show that when **therapists and patients collaborate to establish goals** for recovery, the outcomes for the patient are enhanced. Starting at assessment, we establish goals and timelines to make sure our patients know what's to come and so we know what they have in mind. We even have specific discharge planners who help patients continue their recovery journey even after they leave our facility.

Our specialized staff does not stop there. At SUN Behavioral Health Kentucky, we also have therapeutic specialists. These specialized therapists and staff are invaluable in making sure our patients can receive the top-quality, well-rounded care they deserve to have for their recovery. Some of our specialized staff include:

- ☀️ Licensed art therapists
- ☀️ Recreational therapists
- ☀️ Teachers for our adolescents
- ☀️ Nurse practitioners for our geriatrics
- ☀️ On-site chefs who prepares nutritious meals

Having a team as dedicated and experienced as ours elevates patient care and ensures they receive the medical attention and compassion they deserve.

## Treating the Whole Person

In 2021, SAMHSA's survey concluded that over **9 million adults in America had a co-occurring disorder**. Another study done by the National Institute on Drug Abuse shows the sad truth about people getting the treatment they need. **34.5% of people received only mental health treatment, 3.9% received only substance use treatment, and a whopping 52.5% didn't receive any treatment at all.** Many times, facilities don't offer treatment options for both SUDs and mental health. Untrained staff can also miss a mental health condition while treating an SUD, and vice versa.

**When it comes to co-occurring disorders, treating one without addressing the other does not lead to long-term, positive change.** One of the ways we strive to make sure our patients get the right treatment is through our co-occurring disorders program.

Another part of the process we utilize is our initial assessment with our licensed counselors to ascertain the unique needs of each patient. Not only does this assessment process help us better determine the specific things a patient might want to address, but also helps us make sure we're all on the same page. We want our patients to feel just as comfortable with their treatment plan as we do. You're probably getting a good grasp of why we call the program Pathways – we help patients navigate the various paths that lead to recovery.



We diversify our treatment program by offering more than just 12-step, individual therapy, and group therapy. We have options such as recreational and art therapy, as well as other programs to help make our treatment process more well-rounded. Teaching new skills and offering new hobbies alongside traditional treatment can better prepare our patients for the life they'll lead outside of treatment.

## Your Patients Are in Good Hands -Referral Programs and More

Here at SUN Behavioral Health Kentucky, we're no strangers to the referral process. Many of our patients come to us directly from other facilities, whether this is another hospital, incarceration, or even a nursing home. We know the referral and transfer process into a new program can be stressful for both the patient and the facility they're coming from, and we like to make this process as easy as possible. Our goal is to make sure incoming patients are comfortable, and we work to make this process easier for each and every patient. Here are just a few of the ways we help make this process easier for our patients:



### **Electronic medical record transfers -**

this means our patients don't have to worry about their medical information getting to us or potentially another place.



### **24-hour admissions -**

making sure patients can get help when they need it is a huge deal.



### **Both telehealth and in-person assessments -**

this way we can allow patients to choose the option that's most convenient for them without slowing down the admissions process.



### **Multiple levels of care, all under one roof -**

with less stress about having to find a new facility or building between levels of care, they can continue to come to a place they became familiar with during the course of their recovery.



### **24-hour phone availability -**

ensuring that patients can have access to answers and help no matter what hour it is.

We know many patients are referred to us for different reasons. One of the common ones we see is because of insurance. Not only do we accept Medicaid and Medicare, but we also accept commercial and private pay as well.

Of course, the referral process is only the beginning. When new referrals come in, we immediately get them an assessment to ensure they are placed in the right program and level of care. We work with them to ensure the treatment plans they're on are what they're looking for in their recovery plan. This process also occurs with our licensed counselors to ensure they're getting the correct information they need so the patient and our team can make an informed decision regarding their continued care.

Ensuring the patient's stay here is beneficial doesn't just hinge on the intake process. Our facility offers many safety measures, such as having staff check in to ensure well-being every 15 minutes, anti-ligature throughout the facility, and safety locks implemented where needed. These features, while important, are just a small portion of the larger scale here at SUN Behavioral Health Kentucky. The majority of a patient's time here is spent in programming. Let's take a look at that.



# All Levels of Care for All Stages of Life

Our programming at SUN is suited to fit our patient's specific needs. We tailor our patient's recovery plans on an individual level, and our programs come in a variety of different forms. From detox to IOP, to age-based care and programs tailored to different timelines, we make sure our patients have options in order to best ensure they meet their recovery goals.

We are certified at an ASAM 4.0 level of care. This means we have the highest level of clinical care and providers available to patients when they need it. The ASAM scale (or American Society of Addiction Medicine) takes into account more than just a patient's needs. It also considers what obstacles they may need to overcome, as well as their resources, assets, and support systems. With a 4.0 being the highest rating, this means we offer care across all levels of need, from prevention to intensive inpatient care.

## ASAM CONTINUUM OF CARE

### ► ADULT



- .5 Early Intervention
- 1 Outpatient Services
- 2.1 Intensive Outpatient Services
- 2.5 Partial Hospitalization Services
- 3.1 Clinically Managed Low-Intensity Residential Services

- 3.3 Clinically Managed Population-Specific High-Intensity Residential Services
- 3.5 Clinically Managed High-Intensity Residential Services
- 3.7 Medically Monitored Intensive Inpatient Services
- 4 Medically Managed Intensive Inpatient Services

### ► ADOLESCENT



- .5 Early Intervention
- 1 Outpatient Services
- 2.1 Intensive Outpatient Services
- 2.5 Partial Hospitalization Services

- 3.1 Clinically Managed Low-Intensity Residential Services
- 3.5 Clinically Managed Medium-Intensity Residential Services
- 3.7 Medically Monitored High-Intensity Inpatient Services
- 4 Medically Managed Intensive Inpatient Services

Image sourced from: <https://www.asam.org/asam-criteria/about-the-asam-criteria>

## Our Pathways Program

One of the ways we make treatment more accessible for our patients is by giving them flexibility and choices. Sometimes, the idea of committing a month or more toward care can scare patients away. This is where our Pathways program really shines. It takes about 20 days on average, with both detox and inpatient occurring in this period. The detox portion normally lasts 3-5 days, and the inpatient treatment following takes about 14 days. This program still offers the same high-quality level of treatment and care, and if patients find they need more time after, we also offer a stepping-down program at our Lexington location.

## Support the Whole Way Through - Stepping Down Care

Having a transitional program from inpatient back to the “real world” can help ensure longevity in terms of recovery. Many of our Pathways graduates step down into IOP or OP levels of care. They can attend outpatient with SUN Behavioral Kentucky at either our Lexington or Erlanger locations. At our Lexington facility, we offer both intensive outpatient services and a partial hospitalization program. In IOP they normally receive 3 hours of treatment 3 days a week, and in PHP they receive 5 hours for 5 days a week. These different levels of need can help us make sure our patients get the continued treatment that works best for them as they continue to recover.



## The Pathways Program Intake Process

Part of making substance use and behavioral healthcare effective is **making sure help is easily and immediately accessible**. At SUN Behavioral Health Kentucky, patients can call to request an SUD assessment at all hours of the day and night. They are then directed to a simple form online that they can fill out to schedule an assessment, and most assessments are scheduled within the hour.

Assessments take place in-person or virtually and typically only take 10-20 minutes. If patients come to us directly from a hospital, we're able to skip the screening process. If not, they will also receive a basic medical screening during this assessment. The intake nurse gathers the information and reviews it with the physician on staff. After the review is completed, patients are notified about how to proceed. **At SUN Behavioral Health Kentucky, we don't believe in wasting time between the assessment and admission.** We know that the patient likely needs immediate treatment. **They're often asked to come in within minutes or hours of their initial assessment.** We then work with them on any transportation needs.



We also take walk-in assessments. We want patients to know that, when they're ready to get help, it will be instantly available. Fax referrals for assessments can also be made from another prescribing physician or mental health facility.

**Our goal is to provide admission within 2 hours of the assessment –** no matter the method in which the assessment or referrals were conducted. If a patient receives a virtual assessment offsite from one of our staff, they do not need to complete another assessment upon presentation, which can save an additional 40 minutes.

When a patient has been admitted, the process is fairly quick as well. They'll fill out consent forms, have their photo taken with permission, complete a survey, go over our handbook, and receive an access code. The patient will then meet with a nurse or treating clinician to ask any questions. Once that's completed, they're immediately transferred to their unit.



**Patient calls  
859-429-5188  
to request SUD  
assessment**



**10-20 minute  
in-person or virtual  
assessment  
takes place**



**Patient receives  
medical screening**



**Nurse and physician  
review information**



**Patient is notified  
about results**



**Patient is asked  
to come in**



**We work with  
transportation needs**

**ONCE ADMITTED:**



**Fill out  
consent  
forms**



**Have photo  
taken (with  
permission)**



**Complete  
a survey**



**Go over  
our  
handbook**



**Receive  
access  
code**



**Meet with  
nurse**



**Transferred  
to unit**

To refer a patient to SUN Behavioral Health Kentucky, it just takes one phone call to 859-429-5188. Patients can also fill out a telehealth assessment form on our website. Using this form they can submit all the relevant information needed and schedule a virtual assessment appointment. The telehealth consultation form can be found at this URL: <https://sunkentucky.com/telehealth-consultation/>

# Referral Sources and Their Processes

The referral process for our Pathways Program varies depending on who's referring the patient to SUN Behavioral Health Kentucky. Whether it's another clinician, therapist, or facility – they're usually the ones working with the patient and will guide them through the process until SUN Behavioral Health Kentucky can reach out. On average, no matter where the referral is coming from, our goal is to have a patient admitted within two hours of the initial assessment. Here are some of the most common sources for referrals and their referral processes:



## Hospitals

Hospitals typically fax information to SUN Behavioral Health Kentucky on the referred patient. SUN Behavioral Health Kentucky will send confirmation within the hour, assess the information, and send another fax back to let the hospital know where to take the patient. This is a fairly quick process. Like with any other community referral partner, you can also call us. We answer our phones 24/7.



## Case Managers and Social Workers

They communicate directly with SUN Behavioral Health Kentucky's business development representative (BD) to see if space is available. The SUN BD representative rep will confirm where the patient can go. The case manager or social worker will then drive the patient directly to SUN Behavioral Health Kentucky and stay throughout the initial assessment.



## EMTs, Firefighters, and Law Enforcement

If the referral is coming from one of these departments, it's usually due to an emergency situation. SUN Behavioral Health Kentucky has an ambulance bay and a 24/7 psychiatric emergency room, so they'll likely bring the patient straight here. The ambulance will notify SUN Behavioral Health Kentucky when they're on the way and one of our clinicians or intake specialists will meet the patient at the door. We then perform an immediate assessment, and if they're a good fit, they're admitted. We stay in communication with the person who referred the patient so they're aware of any future needs.



## Court System: Probation and Parole

The court system works directly with our business development representative (BD) representative, who confirms whether or not a bed is available. The BD representative will then immediately contact our intake team to notify them of a new potential patient and their need for assessment. The probation or parole officer then sends us the patient's report and we ask for an ROI (release of information) to gain access to their health and counseling records. This helps the process along. After this is completed, the patient can choose a virtual or in-person assessment, and we move quickly from there.



## Schools

Our business development representative takes calls from local schools when adolescent referrals are needed. We can work to give school counselors advice and encouragement, but ultimately, the choice is up to the child's parents. Parents need to be the ones to take their children to SUN Behavioral Health Kentucky for an assessment.

## Contact Information:

**Address:**

Sun Behavioral Health Kentucky  
820 Dolwick Drive  
Erlanger, Kentucky 41018

**Email:** [info@sunkentucky.com](mailto:info@sunkentucky.com)**24/7 admissions:** 859-429-5188**Schedule a telehealth consultation 24/7:** <https://sunkentucky.com/telehealth-consultation/>

## Advice for Referral Sources: How to Get the Best Patient Outcomes and Speed the Admission Process Along

The number one piece of advice we can give to referral sources is to prioritize getting a release of information (ROI) signed between the patient and the referring agency. This helps the admission and assessment processes. It saves time for our providers, clinicians, and nurses, and it helps them prepare for their new patients.

The person or agency who's referring the patient should also collect and complete as much information about the patient in as much detail as possible before sending the individual to us. It helps us to know details about the patient's drug use (when they last used, what they used, how much they used, what withdrawal symptoms they're experiencing, and more) or mental health concerns. If any thoughts of suicide or self-harm are present, notifying us allows us to better help the patient.

Details describing the patient's symptoms are also incredibly helpful to SUN Behavioral Health Kentucky. Sending this information along by fax is the quickest way to get the process moving.

# Crisis Care and Safety Protocols

Emergencies can be panic-inducing on their own, but not having a place to go for help with your emergency makes it that much worse. That's why SUN Behavioral Health Kentucky offers a crisis unit to help intake and stabilize patients 24 hours a day, 7 days a week. Patients can come in at any time to receive help with mental health, substance use, homicidal ideation, the threat of self-injury, erratic behavior, suicidal ideation, and other challenges. There's no need for them to call or make an appointment ahead of time. The only exception is if a person has a physical injury, they must first go to a medical hospital for treatment. However, we also often accept patients directly from the St. Elizabeth emergency room as well.

Our crisis department also has two other services within it: crisis debriefing and crisis counseling. These both serve to help treat people after a traumatic event.

Our team here at SUN Behavioral Health Kentucky is well-equipped to help our community during their times of need. Our licensed and trained medical professionals know how to handle a myriad of situations in order to ensure the well-being of our patients. In addition to our 4.0 rating on the ASAM scale for the treatment options we provide, we also consistently meet the standards outlined by SAM-HSA for what defines proper crisis care. These standards include:

- ☀ Offering 24-hour crisis receiving and stabilization
- ☀ Having a dedicated drop-off area for first responders
- ☀ Having additional support for patients beyond intensive care
- ☀ Having beds in the regional bed registry system connected to our crisis call center
- ☀ Support efficient connection to needed resources
- ☀ Coordinating connection to ongoing care for patients

We also have certain safety measures in place to especially help our patients who are managing behavioral and mental health. This includes making sure the environment is ligature-resistant as well as harm resistant. Some of the ways we do this are by ensuring there is no access to high-risk areas, ensuring patients can't barricade themselves in our facility, reducing and eliminating hanging points, and more. We implement these practices throughout our facility to make sure our patients have a safe stay while under our care.

**We're proud of the work and support we offer to our community and we will continue to offer this emergency service as long as it's needed.**

## Supporting Our Community - the SUN Way

We want to continue to foster our values as we keep expanding to better serve our community. Upholding these values of safety, teamwork, integrity, and compassion helps us not only care for patients to the best of our ability but their families and our staff as well. The healing process impacts more than just the individual. It's easy to forget how many lives a single person can touch. Being there for them and giving them what they need to heal can cause a domino effect, improving more lives.

While supporting the people around us, we plan to continue to provide the best-in-class services. Starting the healing journey can already be a monumental step for our patients, no matter where they started originally. Whether they came to us directly or transferred in from another hospital, we plan to make sure they reach their goals.





# Behavioral Health

*Solving Unmet Needs*