



## NEWS RELEASE

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**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**

### **Mental health kiosk screenings now available in Avery County**

Nov. 29, 2017 – Avery County now hosts a MindKare mental health screening kiosk, a touchscreen device that allows residents to learn about behavioral health conditions, participate in confidential assessments and find local treatment resources.

Vaya Health, a public managed healthcare organization, and community partners unveiled the kiosk Wednesday afternoon at the Sloop Medical Office Plaza, located at 436 Hospital Drive in Newland. The kiosk also offers telephone access to Vaya’s 24/7, toll-free Access to Care Line at 1-800-849-6127.

Since January 2017, Vaya has placed MindKare kiosks in 22 of the 23 western N.C. counties the organization serves. The kiosks, part of Vaya’s ongoing community-focused initiatives, are located in public spaces such as local health departments and public libraries.

One in four Americans has a diagnosable mental health condition, yet the vast majority does not seek treatment. A leading deterrent for seeking help is fear and stigma. MindKare kiosks are designed for use in community environments and aim to reduce stigma by making learning about and screening for treatable conditions like depression or anxiety as commonplace as a blood pressure screening.

“Avery County’s MindKare kiosk is an innovative part of our larger efforts to encourage people to seek help if they have concerns about their mental health or substance use,” said Vaya CEO Brian Ingraham. “This kiosk makes it easy for residents to connect with local treatment resources. It also reinforces the message that mental health is an important part of overall health, and that seeking help is a sign of strength, not weakness.”

Western North Carolina residents can also take confidential assessments online at [www.vayamindful.org](http://www.vayamindful.org).

#### **About Vaya Health**

Vaya Health manages public funds for mental health, substance use disorder and intellectual or developmental disability services in 23 North Carolina counties: Alexander, Alleghany, Ashe, Avery, Buncombe, Caldwell, Cherokee, Clay, Graham, Haywood, Henderson, Jackson, Macon, Madison, McDowell, Mitchell, Polk, Rutherford, Swain, Transylvania, Watauga, Wilkes and Yancey. Access to services and crisis help are available 24 hours a day, 7 days a week at 1-800-849-6127. Learn more at [www.vayahealth.com](http://www.vayahealth.com).

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