



NEWS RELEASE

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Vaya Health crisis hotline available, operations continue during coronavirus response

Resources available to help adults, children stay mentally well during a disease outbreak

ASHEVILLE, N.C. – Vaya Health’s 24/7 Access to Care Line remains available to western North Carolina residents experiencing a mental health or substance use crisis while the agency responds to the novel coronavirus. For specific physical health questions or concerns, please continue to call your primary healthcare provider or public health department.

Anyone with a behavioral health crisis can call 1-800-849-6127, toll-free, day or night, for help from trained professionals. Call center staff are also available to provide information about local mental health, substance use and intellectual/developmental disability (IDD) services, as well as answer member questions.

Vaya, a public managed care organization, contracts with the N.C. Department of Health and Human Services (DHHS) to manage Medicaid and other publicly funded behavioral health and IDD services in 22 counties in western North Carolina. On March 10, Gov. Roy Cooper issued an executive order declaring a state of emergency as part of the state’s coronavirus (COVID-19) preparedness plan. DHHS has also issued a series of recommendations to slow the spread of the virus and reduce the overall number of infections.

Vaya has begun implementing our established Continuity of Operations Plan. In accordance with the plan, and per social distancing recommendations from the state and Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC), we have started the process to transition the majority of staff to home-based work. Vaya operations continue, with staff performing all functions in accordance with DHHS guidance. Again, these changes do not affect the availability of the Access to Care Line.

For more information, visit <https://www.vayahealth.com/coronavirus-updates>. This page is frequently updated and includes prevention tips, guidance from trusted public health agencies and information for Vaya members, providers and the general public.

Vaya recognizes the COVID-19 outbreak may be stressful for people and communities. For strategies to cope with anxiety and overwhelming emotions in yourself or your child, visit <https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/about/coping.html>. For tips to help stay mentally well during social distancing or isolation due to a disease outbreak response, visit the Vaya page listed above and click “Taking Care of Your Behavioral Health (SAMHSA)”.

Member health and safety is Vaya's top priority. The outbreak is an evolving situation, and we will continue to provide updates to members and the public. As always, we remain committed to supporting individuals and communities throughout our region.

About Vaya Health

Based in Asheville, N.C., Vaya Health manages public funds for mental health, substance use disorder and intellectual or developmental disability services in 22 western North Carolina counties: Alexander, Alleghany, Ashe, Avery, Buncombe, Caldwell, Cherokee, Clay, Graham, Haywood, Henderson, Jackson, Macon, Madison, McDowell, Mitchell, Polk, Swain, Transylvania, Watauga, Wilkes and Yancey. Access to care and crisis assistance are available 24/7 at 1-800-849-6127. Learn more at www.vayahealth.com.

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