



NEWS RELEASE

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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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Vaya Health executive leadership member appointed to statewide developmental disabilities council

ASHEVILLE, N.C. – Gov. Roy Cooper has appointed Rhonda Cox, chief population health officer at Vaya Health, to the N.C. Council on Developmental Disabilities (NCCDD).

Vaya, based in Asheville, manages Medicaid and other public funds for mental health, substance use disorder and intellectual/developmental disability (IDD) services in 22 western North Carolina counties. At Vaya, Cox is responsible for all complex care management and integrated care functions, member services, provider network operations and utilization management.

Cox has more than 20 years of experience in managing behavioral health and IDD services. She is a firm believer that individuals with an IDD – disabilities that include Down syndrome, autism and cerebral palsy – should be able to live in and take part in our local communities.

People of all abilities, she said, have individual rights of privacy, dignity and respect.

“I believe strongly in supporting persons with disabilities having individual autonomy in making life choices, where they live, what they choose to do and with whom they choose to spend their time both personally and with regards to services,” Cox said. “I also want to design a sustainable service and support system that allows these options and provides real choices and opportunities for individuals and their families.”

Vaya CEO Brian Ingraham said, “Rhonda’s leadership has benefited countless individuals and families throughout our region by championing a team-based approach to care that puts the person at the center of the planning process. We’re excited to see her take her expertise and advocacy to the statewide level.”

The NCCDD works on behalf of more than 185,000 North Carolina residents who have an IDD to help communities become more inclusive of people with disabilities. The council includes individuals with an IDD, their families, healthcare providers and community stakeholders.

The governor, in announcing his most recent appointments to state boards and commissions, noted that these organizations make important decisions that impact people's lives. “I’m grateful that these dedicated North Carolinians are using their expertise to serve our state,” Cooper said.

Cox holds a bachelor's degree in biology and psychology from the University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill and a master's degree in psychology from Appalachian State University. She resides in Candler.

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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