



# NEWS RELEASE

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**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**

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## **Treatment for trauma, PTSD available in WNC**

*June is PTSD Awareness Month*

ASHEVILLE, N.C. – Posttraumatic Stress Disorder – known as PTSD – can affect anyone, at any age. Commonly associated with combat veterans, PTSD can result from experiencing or witnessing any traumatic event, such as a physical or sexual assault, a serious accident or a natural disaster.

Up to 8 percent of Americans will develop PTSD at some point in their lives, according to the National Center for PTSD – nearly one out of every 12 people. The good news is that effective treatments are available, including in western North Carolina.

Vaya Health, an Asheville-based public managed care organization, joins agencies and other groups nationwide in recognizing June as PTSD Awareness Month. Even though PTSD treatments work, most people who have PTSD don't get the help they need, said Vaya Chief Medical Officer Dr. Craig Martin.

“People may consciously or subconsciously attempt to avoid dealing with trauma, or wish to ‘fight the battle’ on their own,” said Martin, who formerly served as chief psychiatrist of the TBI/PTSD Program at Naval Health Clinic New England. “It’s important to keep in mind that while we may have had no control over past traumatic events, we do have a say in how we respond moving forward.

“Many trauma survivors have found that seeking professional help – which may include counseling or use of non-addictive medications – lessened their symptoms and allowed them to live better alongside past experiences, rather than having the trauma control their lives,” Martin said.

It's normal to have upsetting memories, feel on edge or have trouble sleeping after a traumatic event. If symptoms last more than a few months, it may be PTSD. Individuals with PTSD may find themselves reliving or re-experiencing the traumatic event, avoiding things or places that remind them of the event, experiencing negative changes in beliefs and always feeling ‘on guard’.

Only a mental health care provider can diagnose PTSD, which is the first step toward finding effective treatment. Western North Carolina residents who receive Medicaid or are uninsured can call Vaya’s toll-free, 24/7 Access to Care Line at 1-800-849-6127 for information on nearby treatment options.

Additionally, anyone in western North Carolina, regardless of insurance carrier or status, can call Vaya day or night for help in a behavioral health crisis.

Learn more about PTSD from the National Center for PTSD at [www.ptsd.va.gov](http://www.ptsd.va.gov). For more information on local treatment services, visit [www.vayahealth.com](http://www.vayahealth.com).

### **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](http://www.vayahealth.com).

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