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Vaya Health Names Tracy Hayes as CEO in Advance of New Medicaid Health Plan Launch

Brian Ingraham will continue as President of the managed care organization serving 31 counties throughout North Carolina

ASHEVILLE, NC – Vaya Health, the public managed care organization (MCO) that oversees public funding for behavioral health services in 31 North Carolina counties, today announced that its Board of Directors has appointed Tracy Hayes as the organization’s new Chief Executive Officer, effective July 1. Hayes will succeed Brian Ingraham, who has served as President and CEO since 2009. Ingraham will continue in his role as President and strategic advisor for the organization.

Also on July 1, Rhonda Cox, current Chief Population Health Officer, will become Chief Operating Officer, and Steve Martin, current Deputy General Counsel, will become General Counsel and Chief Compliance Officer. Chief Financial Officer Larry Hill, Chief Information Officer Robert Webb, and Chief Medical Officer Dr. Richard Zenn will continue in their current roles.

“I am humbled by the faith placed in me by the Vaya board of directors and executive team. Vaya has the great privilege and responsibility to help members live a meaningful life in the home and community of their choice,” said Tracy Hayes. “I believe that the public system is the best approach for delivering care to the populations we serve, even as it continues to change.

As CEO, I want to help shape that evolution to ensure the new model best serves the interests of Vaya members and communities.”

“At Vaya, we measure success based on our ability to meet the needs of the individuals and communities we serve,” said current President and CEO Brian Ingraham. “That requires proactive strategic planning to adapt and grow in the changing public health care landscape. The board’s appointment of Tracy as CEO ushers in the next chapter of Vaya’s history as a person-centered, recovery-focused leader in managed care. Her experience demonstrates the skill, ability, intelligence, and influence necessary to lead the organization boldly into the future.”

As President and CEO, Ingraham implemented systematic provider network corrections to increase access to care for members, create greater service delivery options, and improve clinical and financial viability for providers. He led the organization to be awarded its first Medicaid managed care contract in 2011 and successfully launch the 1915(b)/(c) combined Medicaid Waiver in 2012. He also led Vaya through two successful consolidations with neighboring managed care organizations, the most recent happening in 2021 with Cardinal Innovations Healthcare.

Recognized as a statewide health policy leader, Brian has served on the Statewide LME/MCO Provider Steering Committee on Standardization and the N.C. Department of Health and Human Services Waiver Advisory Council. In 2015, Gov. Pat McCrory appointed Brian to the N.C. Mental Health and Substance Use Task Force, where he co-chaired the Subcommittee on Prescription Opioid Abuse, Heroin Resurgence, and Special Topics.

Ingraham’s vast experience will continue to help position Vaya as a first-in-class leader in healthcare in North Carolina. As President, he will shift to a more external focus and collaborate with the board and Vaya leadership on strategic planning, public policy, and government relations. Vaya’s executive team will continue to benefit from his wisdom, guidance, and

longstanding partnerships with counties, providers, and state policy leaders before his eventual retirement.

As CEO, Hayes will lead the executive team, manage the general administration and day-to-day business activities of the organization, focus on continued operational excellence, and collaborate with Ingraham on strategic policy and government relations efforts. She brings almost 20 years of experience with the North Carolina Medicaid program to the role. As a former beneficiary of public welfare and Medicaid assistance, she also has a unique perspective that drives her commitment to the people Vaya serves. After earning a juris doctorate from Tulane Law School and practicing law in New Orleans for more than five years, she and her family moved to North Carolina in the wake of Hurricane Katrina.

Prior to joining Vaya in 2013 as General Counsel, she served as a Special Deputy Attorney General at the N.C. Department of Justice. In that role, Hayes represented the N.C. Department of Health and Human Services, gaining valuable experience on the intricacies of Medicaid managed care and strengthening relationships with stakeholders throughout the state. She also served as the first General Counsel for Alliance Health, an LME/MCO operating out of the Raleigh/Durham area. Since joining Vaya, she has led multiple complex initiatives and progressively larger business units, culminating in her current responsibility for the legal, compliance, quality management, learning and development, regulatory affairs, Board operations, and communications/ public affairs teams. As Vaya's General Counsel and Chief Compliance Officer for nearly 10 years, she has extensive knowledge of health policy, business operations, and the distinctive strengths and challenges of the organization's 31 counties.

"From executive leadership to front line staff, the talent and dedication at Vaya is unparalleled," said Ronnie Beale, chairman of the Vaya Health Board of Directors. "We are deeply grateful for Brian's remarkable vision and leadership over the past 14 years that has well-positioned Vaya for this transition to a leader who shares similar values. I know I speak for the entire board when I congratulate Tracy on her selection as Vaya's next CEO. This transition

truly represents the right people doing the right things for the right reasons, and the 31 counties across North Carolina that Vaya serves will benefit.”

Steve Martin will begin his duties as General Counsel on July 1. Before joining Vaya Health in September 2022, Martin worked as in-house counsel at Cardinal Innovations, serving as its Deputy General Counsel from 2016 to 2022. Prior to joining Cardinal, he was a partner in the Raleigh office of the Nelson Mullins Riley & Scarborough LLP law firm, where he represented several LME/MCOs in a wide range of matters, in addition to other individual and business clients in healthcare and complex business litigation.

“Steve is an outstanding lawyer who has a wealth of experience in both legal and healthcare policy matters related to LME/MCOs,” said Hayes. “I respected him for years when he was with other organizations, and it has been a privilege to work alongside him once he came to Vaya.”

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About Vaya Health

Vaya Health is a specialty managed care organization that oversees publicly funded behavioral health and intellectual/developmental disability services across a 31-county region of North Carolina. Vaya manages Medicaid, federal, state, and local funding to meet member and community needs while advancing whole-person health. Together with our members, provider network and local partners, we’re moving forward to a healthier North Carolina. Access to crisis assistance is available 24/7 at 1-800-849-6127. Learn more at vayahealth.com.