

**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**

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**Rockingham County, Vaya Health Working Toward Change in Behavioral Health Care Plans in Early 2024**

**ASHEVILLE, NC** – Vaya Health and Rockingham County leaders are working collaboratively to prepare for management of public mental health, substance use, intellectual/developmental disabilities (I/DD), and traumatic brain injury (TBI) services to transition to Vaya effective Feb. 1, 2024.

Rockingham County leaders, including County Commissioner Mark Richardson, County Manager Lance Metzler, and Department of Health and Human Services Director Felissa Ferrell, have been meeting with Vaya leadership, including Vaya Area Director and CEO Tracy Hayes, to prepare for the change.

“Our conversations with Vaya have been thorough and impactful,” Richardson stated. “We feel confident in Vaya's abilities to care for our residents because they've been open and fully engaged ahead of this changeover.”

The realignment from Sandhills Center to Vaya Health follows N.C. Department of Health and Human Services Sec. Kody Kinsley's decision Nov. 1 mandating a realignment of the state's local management entities/managed care organizations (LME/MCOs) as directed by the North Carolina General Assembly in the latest budget bill. The move is intended to improve delivery of care, stabilize the public service system, and prepare for the launch of Behavioral Health and I/DD Tailored Plans in 2024.

“Vaya is excited to welcome Rockingham County to our service region,” said Hayes. “Our aim is to make this change as seamless as possible for members and families, providers, the county, and other stakeholders. Our experience with prior consolidations and county realignments, as well as our existing operations in Stokes, Caswell, and Alamance counties, will ease the transition with Rockingham County.”

"We've seen the work Vaya has done in connecting those in need of medical attention," said Metzler. "We will work closely to ensure more of our residents are connected to Vaya's services. I feel this will be a smooth transition and we look forward to the work ahead of us."

Nearly 6,000 Medicaid members in Rockingham County will move from Sandhills Center to Vaya Health. Medicaid eligibility is not affected by the change. Impacted residents will receive a Vaya welcome packet by mail in early 2024.

Find out more about Vaya and the change from Sandhills Center to Vaya at [www.vayahealth.com/get-to-know-us/realignment/](http://www.vayahealth.com/get-to-know-us/realignment/)

### **ABOUT VAYA**

Vaya has more than 50 years of experience in the public behavioral health system, including over 10 years as a Medicaid managed care organization. Vaya is part of North Carolina local government and currently serves 31 counties. In 2024, Vaya will launch Vaya Total Care, a BH I/DD Tailored Plan awarded by the NC Department of Health and Human Services.

### **ABOUT ROCKINGHAM COUNTY**

Rockingham County is located above Guilford County on the Virginia border. We cover 573 square miles and more than 91,000 people call us home. The County Government’s vision is to provide the best quality of life educationally, economically and environmentally. This is achieved by focusing on the following areas: Economic Development, Organizational Efficiency & Effectiveness, Public Safety, Citizen Engagement and Communication, County Appearance and Environmental Enhancement, Quality of Life and Education. For more information, visit our website at [rockinghamcountync.gov](http://rockinghamcountync.gov).

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