

**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**

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## **Vaya Health Joins Healthy Opportunities Pilot (HOP) Program in 16 North Carolina Counties**

**ASHEVILLE, NC** - Vaya Health joins partner Health Plans across North Carolina as access to the Healthy Opportunities Pilot (HOP) Program reaches the NC Medicaid Direct population. The HOP is a critical initiative that aims to address the link between social determinants of health and the overall physical and mental well-being of individuals across the state.

“A person’s health is not solely determined by what happens within the walls of a doctor’s office. Our health is deeply influenced by the conditions in which we are born, grow, live, work, and age,” said Sarah Frei, HOP Director at Vaya Health.

“The HOP program goes beyond acknowledging the correlation and aims to help communities, and the people within them, address the root causes of common health disparities by ensuring that communities have the tailored support and resources they need.”

The HOP Program is a collaborative effort between Health Plans, designated “Network Leads”, the North Carolina Department of Health and Human Services (NCDHHS), and community organizations available to Medicaid beneficiaries to decrease health risks and promote healthy living surrounding four main areas:

- **Housing:** A variety of housing support services will be available through the HOP Program to help members identify, secure, and transition into a healthy living space. HOP will cover the cost of an array of services, such as a one-time deposit and first month's rent, housing safety inspections, accessibility and safety modifications, and short-term post-hospitalization housing.

- **Food:** Nutrition is a critical piece to healthy living and the overall well-being of individuals. Through the HOP Program, eligible members can receive services such as: healthy food boxes, medically tailored meal plans, and group nutrition classes.
- **Transportation:** In rural counties, accessible public transportation can be hard to come by. The HOP Program works with community partners and organizations to help find, coordinate, and reimburse for public and private transportation options as well as mileage reimbursement for gas to ensure enrollees can remain engaged in their community, their health, and their well-being.
- **Personal Safety & Healthy Relationships:** Stressful life events can impact a person's quality of life and well-being. Through the HOP program, eligible members can receive support services such as parenting classes, in-home support, and violence intervention services.

Vaya Health is partnering with Network Lead, Impact Health, to ensure HOP services are available to eligible Medicaid Direct Enrollees in 16 of Vaya's westernmost counties.

To learn more about the HOP Program, the communities it's currently piloting in, and an in-depth list of services beginning offered, visit - <https://www.vayahealth.com/get-help/local-resources/hop/>

### **About Vaya Health**

Vaya Health is a specialty managed care organization that oversees publicly funded behavioral health, intellectual/developmental disability, and traumatic brain injury services across a 32-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](http://vayahealth.com).

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