Vaya Health

Regional Board

MEETING MINUTES
January 29, 2026

The Vaya Health Regional Board for Region 2, representing Buncombe, Henderson, Madison, Mitchell, Polk, Transylvania, and Yancey Counties, conducted a regular meeting at 10:00 a.m. on January 29, 2026 via Teams; with PUBLIC ACCESS available *<u>via electronic communication only</u>* *(real-time two-way audio and/or visual communication, i.e., telephone and Microsoft Teams).*

In Attendance:	*Attending:*	*Apologies:*
Parker Sloan (Buncombe)		X
Ellis Matheson (Buncombe)	X	
William "Bill" Lapsley, Chair (Henderson)	X	
John Mitchell (Henderson)		X
Keith Hoek (Madison)	X	
Connie Harris (Madison)	X	
Wendy Boone (Mitchell)	X	
Stephen Pitman, Vice Chair (Mitchell)	X	
Robin Elliott (Polk)		X
Jennifer Hargett (Polk)	X	
Teresa McCall (Transylvania)		X (proxy to Amanda Vanderoef)
Amanda Vanderoef (Transylvania)	X	
David Grindstaff (Yancey)		X
Noah Worley (Yancey)		X (proxy to David Grindstaff)

<u>Also attending the Regional Board meeting for Region 2</u>*:*
Rhonda Cox, Executive Vice President & Chief Operating Officer; Danielle Wittekind, Chief Human Resources Officer; Brian Shuping, Vice President of Community Relations; Dr. Heather Cree, Vice President of Pharmacy Operations; Dustin Burleson, Community Relations Regional Director; Angela Garner, Community Relations Regional Director; Joseph Crowder; CFAC Representative; Ashley Logan, Chief of Staff and Secretary to the Board; McLean Moore, Chief of Staff - Business Integrity; and no additional members of the public.

A. <u>Welcome and Call to Order</u>

Mr. Bill Lapsley, Chair, called the meeting to order at 10:03 a.m. Ms. Ashley Logan, Chief of Staff and Secretary to the Board, facilitated roll call confirming a quorum of the Region 2 Board.

B. Approval of Agenda and October 30, 2025 Meeting Minutes

Mr. Bill Lapsley called for a motion to approve the agenda and Oct. 25, 2025, meeting minutes as presented.
Mr. Stephen Pitman made a motion to approve the Agenda and Minutes, as presented.
Mr. Ellis Matheson seconded the motion.
Motion unanimously approved.

C. Governing Board Report

Mr. Bill Lapsley, Chair, inquired whether anyone would like to take on the position of Chair; if not, he could commit to serving through the end of the calendar year. Ms. Ashley Logan confirmed that Mr. Stephen Pitman, Vice Chair, is not up for reappointment.

Ms. Ellis Matheson made a motion to reappoint Mr. Bill Lapsley as Regional Board Chair.
Mr. Stephen Pitman seconded the motion.
Motion unanimously approved.

At the request of Mr. Lapsley, Ms. Logan provided an overview of the changes to the Bylaws, noting the updates include the addition of language for a designee to present the Report of the Area Director and CEO, adding the Consumer and Family Advisory Committee report as part of regular business, and updating the annual meeting cadence.

Mr. Bill Lapsley made a motion to adopt the Region 2 Bylaws, as presented.
Mr. Stephen Pitman seconded the motion.
Motion unanimously approved.

Mr. Lapsley shared that he was not able to attend the annual Board Retreat, nor was Mr. Pitman. Mr. Lapsley called on Ms. Rhonda Cox, Executive Vice President and Chief Operating Officer, to provide a brief update. Ms. Cox shared a brief overview of the retreat, noting Kelsi Knick, NCDHHS Deputy Director, Behavioral Health I/DD Tailored Plans, and Michelle Merritt, NCDHHS I/DD Clinical Consultant, conducted required annual Board training.

Ms. Wendy Boone joined the meeting at 10:25 a.m.

D. Report of the Chief Executive Officer and Chief Operating Officer

Ms. Rhonda Cox, Executive Vice President and Chief Operating Officer, thanked Regional Board 2 members for their attendance and shared Ms. Tracy J. Hayes, Area Director and Chief Executive Officer, is unable to attend due to a meeting with Secretary Sangvai at the Governor's Office. Ms. Cox began the presentation by sharing recent advocacy updates, including the details from Vaya's CFAC Annual Retreat and i2i Winter Conference. Continuing the presentation, Ms. Cox welcomed new Regional Board 2 member, Robin Elliot, Polk County

HHSA Director, and presented an overview of the member roster and meeting schedule for Regional Board 2.

Next, Ms. Cox reported that SAMHSA issued a notice of grant termination on Jan. 14, 2026, which would have affected Vaya's System of Care Team. The grant termination notice was rescinded on Jan. 15, 2026. Ms. Danielle Wittekind, Chief Human Resources Officer, shared Hope4NC updates, highlighting the total number of contacts with survivors to date, approval for the Hope4NC program to continue through April 24, the opportunity for an additional no cost extension, and a Jan. 13 event attended by Hope4NC staff. Ms. Wittekind then presented training data from October to December 2025.

Continuing, Ms. Cox shared details of recent Spotlight Carolina segments, the Triangle Business Journal profile of Ms. Hayes and highlights of Vaya's Hurricane Helene recovery efforts, and various media coverage throughout Region 2. Mr. Brian Shuping, Vice President of Community Relations, shared Vaya's regional map, noting active involvement throughout Region 2 by Community Relations Directors, Mr. Dustin Burleson and Ms. Angela Garner.

Next, Ms. Cox presented updates on the Rural Health Transformation Program and details of community feedback received following the launch of the Children and Families Specialty Plan (CFSP), membership transitioned from CFSP by county, and reasons CFSP members transitioned as of Jan. 1, 2026. Mr. Lapsley noted that the Board of Directors opposed the decision of NCDHHS to award CFSP to BCBSNC and inquired if children could return to Vaya. Ms. Cox noted that under the statute, some populations can, but LME/MCOs have not received service or staffing funding to support this shift.

In closing, Ms. Cox presented crisis utilization data and details from the Jan. 2, 2026, Tailored Plan and Medicaid Direct scorecards.

E. <u>Community Relations Update</u>

Mr. Brian Shuping, Vice President of Community Relations, began the presentation by sharing metrics on Tailored Plan and Medicaid Direct eligible members by age group, Tailored Plan and Medicaid Direct penetration rate data, behavioral health service utilization, physical health service utilization, behavioral health emergency department admissions and readmissions, physical health emergency department admissions and readmissions, walk in center utilization, mobile crisis management utilization, facility-based crisis utilization, and behavioral health urgent care utilization from the period of July to September 2025.

Ms. Elias Matheson left the meeting at 10:56 a.m.

Continuing, Mr. Shuping shared details of the Member Moment event for Heart Month, taking place on Feb. 20, 2026, in Bakersville, NC, and an overview of community events for Region 2 from October 2025 through January 2026.

Next, Ms. Angie Garner, Community Relations Regional Director, presented Community Relations updates in Buncombe, Henderson, Transylvania and Polk Counties. Mr. Dustin Burleson, Community Relations Regional Director, shared details of a partnership with the Buladean Community Foundation which will support various initiatives, including the Buladean Braves after-school program, in Mitchell County, and upcoming MedAssist events in Mitchell and Avery Counties.

F. Pharmacy Operations Updates

The Chair welcomed Dr. Heather Cree, Vice President of Pharmacy Operations, to the meeting. Dr. Cree began by presenting plan paid spending and utilization trends. Dr. Cree shared high cost claims and care management data for October through December, GLP-1 utilization, and authorization summary details by volume and by denial. Dr. Cree continued by presenting details of the asthma management project, noting the project resulted in 68% improvement in health outcomes. Dr. Cree further presented a review of excessive Uzedy dosing with potential drug savings of $210,000, Hepatitis C project review, osteoporosis review, and future project considerations. Mr. Lapsley noted that these results are impressive. Dr. Cree shared that she would relay the appreciation to her team.

G. Consumer and Family Advisory Committee Report

Mr. Joseph Crowder, CFAC Representative, provided a CFAC activity summary, highlights from Vaya CFAC's annual retreat held on Nov. 12-14, 2025, recent events attended by Vaya CFAC members, including an Olmstead Community meeting in Asheville, NC, i2i Winter Conference in Winston-Salem, NC, and NC Council on Developmental Disabilities Council awards and Board meeting in Cary, NC. Mr. Crowder concluded by inviting all Regional Board members to attend the upcoming Region 2 CFAC meeting on Feb. 16, 2026.

H. Other Business

No other business was discussed.

I. Adjournment

The meeting adjourned by consensus.

Meeting adjourned at 11:44 a.m.

Ashley Logan

Ashley Logan
Chief of Staff and Secretary to the Board