



Transforming Lives. Building Community Well-Being.

Mid-State Regional Advisory Board September 24, 2024

The Trillium Health Resources Mid-State Regional Advisory Board met in person at the Asheboro Office, 938 New Century Drive, Asheboro, NC, and via Web-Ex at 6:00 p.m.

Members Present: Commissioner David Allen, Commissioner Skip Alston, Kishia Dunlap, Commissioner Carlvena Foster, Commissioner Mary Hassell (virtual), Leann Henkel, Dr. Tommy Jarrell, Commissioner Priscilla Little-Reid, Ann Shaw and Commissioner Rick Watkins

Staff Present: Anthony Ward, Anne Kimball, and Sherry Bynum (recorder)

I. **Call to Order**

Chair David Allen called the meeting to order at 6:00 p.m. and welcomed everyone.

II. **Certification of Quorum**

Sherry Bynum certified a quorum

III. **Adoption of Agenda**

Chair Allen called for a motion to adopt the agenda. Commissioner Rick Watkins made a motion to adopt the agenda. Commissioner Priscilla Little-Reid seconded the motion. The motion was unanimously approved.

IV. **Approval of July 23, 2024 Meeting Minutes**

Chair Allen called for a motion to approve the July 23, 2024 meeting minutes. Commissioner Priscilla Little-Reid made a motion to approve the minutes. Ann Shaw seconded the motion. The motion was unanimously approved.

V. **Public Comments**

There were no public comments

VI. **North Carolina Health Plan**

Anthony Ward, Regional Vice President presented *North Carolina Health Plan – Public care for Medicaid members* – PowerPoint, outlining the different health plans.

- ▲ Standard Plans – background information on the Standard Plans, services available to individuals, and eligibility requirements
- ▲ Eastern Bank of Cherokee Indians Tribal Option – services available and eligibility requirements
- ▲ Tailored Plans – background information on the Tailored Plans, services available to individuals enrolled in a Tailored Plan, and eligibility requirements
- ▲ Medicaid Direct – services available and eligibility requirements
- ▲ Mr. Ward reviewed a chart that showed the percent of Medicaid eligibility by Plans enrolled in the Mid-State Region, noting that 6% are enrolled in the Trillium Tailored Plan, 18% are enrolled in Medicaid Direct, and 76% of the members are enrolled with the Standard Plans.



Mr. Ward took the opportunity to answer questions from the Mid-State Regional Advisory Board members.

VII. Regional Vice President Report

Anthony Ward, Regional Vice President, reported on the following:

A. Tailored Plan Launch Update

- ▲ Member & Recipient Service Line has been experiencing high call volume.
- ▲ The Average Speed to Answer required performance measure was not met, while the Blockage and Abandonment Rate were within the required performance measures.
- ▲ Other Trillium Health Resources call lines, including Behavioral Health Crisis, Provider Services Support, Nurse Help, Pharmacy and Non-Emergency Transportation have met the required performance thresholds.

B. 1915 (i) Services and Ending of 1915(b) services

Mr. Ward stated that over the past months, Trillium has worked to transition members who received 1915(b)(3) services to the 1915(i) Home and Community Based Services (HCBS) State Plan Option. HCBS provides opportunities for Medicaid beneficiaries to receive services in their own home or a community setting instead of an institutional setting.

Effective January 1, 2025, 1915(b)(3) services will no longer be available to NC Medicaid members. To ensure members do not experience a disruption in services, Care Managers/Care Coordinators are working with the providers of 1915(i) and 1915(b)(3) services to have members who received 1915(b)(3) services assessed for 1915(i) services and update their Care Plan/ISP. Members who remain in NC Medicaid Direct and are currently receiving 1915 (b)(3) services have until November 30, 2024 to transition to 1915(i) services to avoid any disruption in services.

C. School-Based Therapy Services Update

Trillium issued a RFI (Request for Information) and a RFP (Request for Proposal) for School-based therapy services. School-based therapy services offers Outpatient Therapy for children experiencing mental health issues, intellectual or developmental disabilities or substance use disorders in each designated school district to Medicaid members. After a selection of the proposals received, the following was updated for the Mid-State Region included:

- ▲ Anson County – Anson County Schools declined participation in the program indicating they would manage their own program.
- ▲ Guilford County – Guilford County Schools did not respond to outreach about the program; the RFP resulted in no applications for Guilford County Schools; outreach will continue.
- ▲ Montgomery County – Montgomery County Schools declined participation in the program indicating they would manage their own program.
- ▲ Randolph County – Pinnacle Family Services applied and was selected to offer the service.
- ▲ Richmond County – Richmond County Schools indicated two providers were already in place offering the service, Sandhills Alternative Academy and Sandhills Best Care; School-Based Therapy codes are being added to those provider contracts to continue the work.

Mr. Ward took the opportunity to answer questions from the Mid-State Regional Advisory Board members.

D. SB425

Mr. Ward gave an update on SB425, providing the following:

- ▲ A hearing on Guilford County's Amended Motion for Temporary Restraining Order and Preliminary Injunction was heard in Wake County Superior Court on Wednesday, August 21, 2024 and the three (3) judge panel denied the Motion. The case is still pending in Wake County Superior Court. No other court dates have been scheduled as of this report. The next step is hearing a Motion to Dismiss as requested by the Counsel for Trillium Health Resources. Each party must file their response to that Motion over the next two (2) months.
- ▲ In accordance with the mandate of the legislation, on Friday, July 19, 2024, Trillium CEO Joy Futrell submitted to NC DHHS Secretary Kinsley Trillium's proposed alternative Board structure. That proposal includes:
 - One (1) member appointed by each of the five (5) Regional Advisory Boards (RABs)
 - One (1) member appointed by each of the five (5) Consumer and Family Advisory Committees (CFACs)
 - Five (5) at-large members appointed by the Governing Board
 - Two (2) (non-voting) members that are healthcare providers
 - One (1) (non-voting) member appointed by the Health Equity Committee
- ▲ The next step outlined in the legislation is approval of the new alternative Board structure from Secretary Kinsley and his appointment of initial Board members.

Mid-State Regional Advisory Board members took the opportunity to discuss SB425.

Mr. Ward explained that appointments made by the RABs and CFACs are after the appointment of the initial Board members by Secretary Kinsley.

Commissioner Skip Alston asked to add to Mr. Ward's report, stating that he feels Secretary Kinsley is moving forward with appointing the new Board structure. He is not aware of any appointments yet made by Secretary Kinsley.

Commissioner Alston stated that Guilford County had requested a meeting with Secretary Kinsley and his staff to work out a compromise; however, they declined. He noted that the meeting was requested before the temporary injunction was submitted.

Guilford County is still in the process of moving forward with the lawsuit. A date has not been set for the hearing. Guilford County has been asked to prepare a brief, which is due November 4.

Commissioner Alston stated that the selection of the Board will be made by Secretary Kinsley. He stated that an individual from Guilford County was asked to serve but it was neither Commissioner Alston nor Commissioner Foster. Guilford County declined that appointment. Their preference is for the current structure to stay in place.

Commissioner Alston shared that his belief that the legislation was drafted because of questions he was asking about contract review/approval. He indicated asking about a budget ordinance delegating signatory authority to the Trillium CEO shortly before the legislation was presented. He indicated having received an answer that there is no ordinance delegating authority to sign contracts. He suggested that an audit be conducted to ensure that the contracts were legitimately signed and authorized by the Board.

Commissioner Alston encouraged any Mid-State Regional Advisory Board member that may become a part of the Trillium Governing Board to ask question and hold the Trillium staff accountable.

E. Child and Families Specialty Plan

NC DHHS announced that Blue Cross Blue Shield NC was selected as the health plan to offer the Children and Family Specialty Plan. The Children and Families Specialty Plan is a single statewide plan designed to support Medicaid-enrolled children, youth and families served by the child welfare system in receiving seamless, integrated, and coordinated health care.

The Plan will cover a comprehensive array of physical health, behavioral health, pharmacy, long term services and supports and Intellectual/ Developmental Disability (I/DD) services and will address unmet health-related resource needs. Benefits include all basic services offered by NC Medicaid and most services covered by Behavioral Health I/DD Tailored Plans, including 1915(i) home and community-based services. While multiple dates have been announced, the news release about the Plan indicated it is set to begin no sooner than July 1, 2026.

F. Town Halls

For the 18 counties that realigned with Trillium in the consolidation, Trillium hosted an in-person Town Hall to hear about each community, introduce staff and answer questions from the attendees. Now that all 18 Town Hall meetings have been completed, a summary will be developed identifying common themes that emerged from the events.

Mr. Ward stated that some of the responses have already started. Several providers at the Guilford County Town Hall had questions about billing and direct support professionals. Provider communication bulletins have been sent out to providers outlining steps that have been taken by the State on raising reimbursement rates.

He indicated we are reviewing a plan about how best to have more direct conversations with consumer and family members.

G. Operations Report

Mr. Ward reviewed the August 2024 Operations Report which covered June and July data. He stated that other fields will be added to the data as available.

VIII. Governing Board Report

Governing Board member, Commissioner Priscilla Little-Reid, highlighted items from the Governing Board report:

- ▲ The Governing Board met August 27 in Greenville.
 - New Governing Board member, Ms. Lorraine Washington, Chair of the North Central CFAC, was sworn in as the new representative from that CFAC.
 - The CEO report and a Financial Summary were shared with the Governing Board during the meeting.
 - The next meeting is scheduled for Thursday, October 24, starting at 4:00 p.m., with the location to be determined.

IX. Consumer and Family Advisory Committee (CFAC) Report

Leann Henkel, CFAC Chairperson, provided a Consumer and Family Advisory (CFAC) report, highlighting:

- ▲ Meetings – are held the 3rd Tuesday of each month. Reports are provided by staff.
- ▲ Membership – currently have 11 members. Anson and Montgomery County representatives are still needed.
- ▲ Upcoming Activities –
 - Quarterly meetings of all CFACs with Trillium’s Leadership September 30.
 - New member orientation session to be held in October.
 - Hosting a Verbal De-escalation Skill training October 12.
 - Quarterly meetings of the five (5) Trillium CFAC Chair and Vice Chairs.

- Continue to participate on the Family Panel for Crisis Intervention Team (CIT) training for first responders.

X. Regional Advisory Board Comments

None

XI. November Meeting

Chair Allen discussed the November 26 Mid-State Regional Advisory Board meeting, asking Board members their thoughts on meeting the Tuesday prior to Thanksgiving. As there were no issues stated and with the difficulty of rescheduling the meeting, Mid-State Regional Advisory Board will meet November 26. Chair Allen stated to contact him and/or Mr. Ward if there is an issue with meeting November 26.

XII. Other Material

- ▲ Chief Executive Officer Report
- ▲ Financial Report
- ▲ Operations Report
- ▲ Behavioral Health Transformation Report

XIII. Adjournment

With there being no other business, Chair Allen called for a motion to adjourn the meeting. Commissioner Skip Alston made a motion to adjourn the meeting. Commissioner Priscilla Little-Reid seconded the motion. The motion unanimously approved. The meeting adjourned at 7:11 p.m.


Sherry Bynum, Clerk


David Allen, Chairperson

Packet Material:

- Tuesday, September 24, 2024 agenda
- Draft July 23, 2024 minutes
- *North Carolina Health Plan* PowerPoint
- Mid-State Regional Vice President Report
- Mid-State Regional Governing Board Report
- Mid-State CFAC Report
- Trillium Chief Executive Officer Report
- Trillium Financial Report
- Operations Report
- Behavioral Health Transformation Report