



**Southern Regional Advisory Board (SRAB)  
Meeting Minutes from March 27, 2025  
Meeting: In-Person/WebEx**

**Members Present**

**In Person:** Chair Commissioner Rob Zapple, Commissioner Marty Cooke, Commissioner Kirk Smith, Carol McCall

**Virtual:** Marie Britt, Walter Ferguson, Mary Ann Furniss, Steven Later, Jackie McLean, David Stanley, Commissioner Wixie Stephens, Commissioner Duke Williams

**Members Absent:** Commissioner Lavern Coleman, Commissioner Ray Britt, Dr. Mollie Glenn, Commissioner James Leach, Jerome McMillian, Commissioner Nick Picerno, Julie Varnam

**Trillium Staff:** Cecelia Peers-Regional Vice President (Southern), Terrell Alston-Associate Regional Vice President, Sandra Dunlap-Administrative Coordinator/Recorder (Southern), Megan Nelligan-Director of Trillium Ultimate Living Assistant (TULA), Ana Caicedo-TULA Deployment Manager, Tori Derks-TULA Regional Manager, Sean Kenny-Head of Social Services Engagement

**NCDHHS Staff:** None present.

**Guests:** None present.

**I. Call to Order:** Chair Commissioner Zapple called the meeting to order at 4:00 p.m. and welcomed members to the Southern Regional Advisory Board meeting and took roll call.

**II. Adoption of the Agenda:** Chair Commissioner Zapple asked for a motion to approve the March agenda. Commissioner Smith motioned to accept the agenda; Carol McCall seconded the motion. The motion carried.

Member & Recipient Services — 1-877-685-2415

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[TrilliumHealthResources.org](https://TrilliumHealthResources.org)

450 Country Club Road, Lumberton, NC 28360



**III. Approval of January Minutes:** Chair Commissioner Zapple asked for a motion to approve the January minutes. Carol McCall motioned to accept minutes with noted typo corrections; Commissioner Cooke seconded the motion. The motion carried.

**IV. Public Comment:** None

**V. TULA (Trillium Ultimate Living Assistant):** Megan Nelligan shared a presentation on the innovation offered through TULA.

- Supporting individuals to live safely and independently.
- TULA specialized touchscreen with cognitive assistance (to-do lists, health and wellness, remote monitoring, and engagement with others).
- Real life testimonials of enhanced independence.
- Live demonstration of the TULA technology for advisory board members to experience.

**VI. Bylaws Update:** Cecelia Peers shared bylaws update with the advisory board.

- At the first meeting of the Governing Board in January the board approved their bylaws. Senitria Goodman-General Counsel and Chief Compliance Officer of Trillium reviewed the regional bylaws to assure they aligned with the Governing Board bylaws.
- A verbiage suggestion to be added to the Regional Advisory Board Bylaws Section 1:3 Regional Advisory Board Composition reads, “additionally the Chair or designee of the regional CFAC for each defined region serves as the member of the Regional Advisory Board”
- Revision of the attendance language in the bylaw’s was highlighted and reads “absences shall only be approved by the Chair upon showing good cause. Members who have three or more unexcused absences in a fiscal year shall be removed from the advisory board.
- An updated draft will be sent prior to the next meeting for advisory board members’ review.

**VII. Governing Board Report:** No report

**VIII. Southern Region CFAC Report:** Mary Ann Furniss reported on the recent SR-CFAC meeting.

- The Southern Regional CFAC now consists of 13 members (1 Bladen, 3 Brunswick, 1 Hoke, 1 Lee, 3 Moore, 1 New Hanover, 3 Robeson).
- Joy Futrell-CEO of Trillium share updates at the State and local level with the committee.

**IX. Trillium Regional Vice President Report:** Cecelia Peers – Regional Vice President, and Terrell Alston-Associate Regional Vice President gave a report on regional happenings.

Mr. Alston:

- State mandate was set in place for a Member Advisory Committee, made up of members and caregivers throughout the catchment area. The MAC will consist of a quarterly meeting with the operations team.
- A recruitment charter strategy is being developed.
- The committee sends a cumulative regional gaps and needs report to State CFAC to help with legislation.

Ms. Peers:

- Member and recipient call line volumes have seen a decreases in January and February. The call center time to answer is around 12 seconds and is within the State's expectation.
- Mental Health Parity Initiative – Trillium continues its work around parity for Mental Health Services. The state has provided a MH parity table removing treatment limitations for certain services. To support providers in continuing to provide treatment at the appropriate levels of care, Trillium is creating clinical pathways for each population and a quality assurance review tool to guide initial and ongoing treatment. There is an open comment period for both sets of guidance.
- Kellie Crosbie-Director MH/DD/SUS presented at the Governing Board regarding the public system and updates on priorities and initiatives. Governing Board will meet again in April.
- Cindy Ehlers-previous Chief Operating Officer rescinded her retirement and has moved into the Chief Strategy and Innovation Officer position. Christy Edwards was the chosen applicant for Chief Operating Officer.
- Annual updates for county Commissioners are underway. Columbus County received an update on March 17 and presentations for Bladen, Brunswick, Lee, and Moore counties are scheduled. Hoke, New Hanover, and Scotland were sent

a request to appear and will be scheduled according to the Commissioners agendas.

- Sequential Intercept Mapping – Trillium's Training team recently completed SIM Workshops in New Hanover County and Robeson County is April May 3/4. SIM is an analysis of how people with mental health concerns interact with the legal system, with the goal of identifying areas where treatment interventions can be offered.
- Ms. Peers is participating in Carolinas Across 100 initiative, an 18-month commitment around housing options/access. Other counties in Trillium's region also have teams that are part of this initiative.
- NCACC Overdose Prevention Conference was attended by Trillium's Regional Vice Presidents March 18-20 in Raleigh. Highlights for Ms. Peers include:
  - Reducing Stigma presentation focused on changing the language and to see past the drug use and see the person.
  - Evidence based curriculum options around prevention.
- NC TIDE Conference will be held March 31-April 2 and several CFAC and RAB members will attend.
- Benchmarks "Destination 2025" Conference 10/14-10/17 in Cherokee NC.
- DHHS funding was received for Child First 0-5 early intervention for children and families, facility-based crisis, transitional housing for those who have substance abuse, and the Coastal Horizons LEAD program.
- Trillium network is open for specific services as part of the Mental Health Parity.
- Open recruitment TBI (Traumatic Brain Injury) that has produced 27 provider responses in anticipation of the TBI waiver expansion.
- A Health Equity and Innovative Development RFP for inclusive playgrounds was issued. Scotland County and the Town of Raeford are in the final stages of the grant process.
- Victory Junction inclusive camp that Trillium partners with for family weekends will be held on April 4-6 and April 11-13. March deadline dates for families to request participation. Trillium has provided staff for volunteer time to assist community partners at Victory Junction and Food Banks.

🌱 Commissioner Zapple asked about the Medicaid bonus dollars.

- Ms. Peers replied that states that applied to expand Medicaid received federal dollars, and NC is using those funds to support hospitals and behavioral health services, particularly crisis services such as facility-based crisis and behavioral health urgent care centers.

**X. Board Comments/Concerns:**

- Commissioner Smith voiced concern over NC DHHS is cutting back staff and funding. Lee County had a ribbon cutting for an accessible playground in March.
- David Stanley is interested in knowing the impacts of funding will have on Brunswick County.
- Mary Ann has concerns over the impact of funding cuts and the care of members.
- Chair Commissioner Zapple remarked concerns over budget season and fully coming of the ARPA funds, school funds and taxation.

**XI. Adjournment:** Commissioner Smith motioned to adjourn the meeting; Commissioner Cooke seconded the motion. All in favor, none opposed. The meeting adjourned at 5:37 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

  
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Sandra Dunlap, Administrative Coordinator

  
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Commissioner Rob Zapple, Chair