



**Southern Regional Advisory Board (SRAB)
Meeting Minutes from September 25, 2025 - Approved
Meeting: In-Person/WebEx
Trillium Office-3809 Shipyard Blvd, Wilmington**

Members Present

In Person: Chair Commissioner Rob Zapple, Commissioner Marty Cooke, Mary Ann Furniss, Commissioner Kirk Smith, Julie Varnam

Virtual: Marie Britt, Steven Later, Commissioner Wixie Stephens,

Members Absent: Commissioner Lavern Coleman, Commissioner Ray Britt, Walter Ferguson, Dr. Mollie Glenn, Commissioner James Leach, Carol McCall, Jerome McMillian, Jackie McLean, David Stanley, Commissioner Duke Williams

Trillium Staff: Cecelia Peers-Regional Vice President (Southern), Sandra Dunlap-Administrative Coordinator/Recorder (Southern)

NCDHHS Staff: None present.

Guests: Megan Burruss

I. Call to Order: Chair Zapple called the meeting to order at 4:39 p.m. and welcomed members to the Southern Regional Advisory Board meeting and administered the roll call.

II. Adoption of the Agenda: Tabled (no quorum).

III. Approval of March Minutes: Tabled (no quorum).

IV. Public Comment: None

V. Presentation – Safe Babies Court (New Hanover County): Megan Burrus-Safe Babies Court Coordinator, shared a presentation on Safe Babies Court. Presentation attached.

- ACES-Informed Courts Task Force is made up of Judicial Branch Stakeholders who looked at the impact of children exposed to ACES at an early age whose goal is to develop strategies for addressing adverse consequences with the NC court system.
- Vision and mission review.
- Pilot programs in New Hanover and Brunswick counties.
- Children's brain development.
- Cost savings.
- Eligibility and parent voluntary participation.
- Family Teams meetings.
- Current data trends.

Ms. Burriss answered questions from board members.

VI. Presentation – Trillium Strategic Plan Overview: Cindy Ehlers-Chief Innovation Officer shared an overview of the Trillium Strategic Plan for 2025/2028. Presentation attached.

- Trillium timelines today and tomorrow.
- Securing a public health plan for members and families.
- Provider and stakeholder engagement.
- Competitive Tailored Plan.
- S.W.O.T. (Strengths Weakness Opportunities Threats) analysis.
- Vision, purpose, values, and objectives.

Ms. Ehlers answered questions from board members.

VII. Board Comments/Concerns:

- Marie Britt received a message regarding Medicaid rate reduction for providers and shared concern for those who rely on services. She also wanted to share her gratitude for the MAC (Member Advisory Committee) and the willingness of executive staff to listen and working to improve services.
- Commissioner Kirk Smith commented that Cecelia Peers brought in Southeastern Integrated Care team to meet with Lee County officials regarding decreasing emergency room visits. He also shared kudos to Anne Kimball for the meeting suggestion.

- Commissioner Wixie Stephens offered gratitude towards Cecelia Peers for being a point of contact and being effective in her response.
- Julie Varnam shared her gratitude for Trillium's education resources.
- Commissioner Rob Zapple offered his gratitude for Trillium's work with the Safe Babies Court.

VIII. Governing Board Report: On behalf of Walter Ferguson, Cecelia Peers gave the latest report.

- The Governing Board had discussions on terms and seat appointment protocols.
- The Finance Committee met during the Governing Board meeting and received an overview 2025-2026 budget.
- CEO report was given by Joy Futrell.

IX. Southern Region CFAC Report: Mary Ann Furniss reported on the August SR-CFAC meeting.

- CFAC now has 14 members. We have members now from Lee (1), Moore (3), Brunswick (3), Robeson (4), Bladen (1), New Hanover (1), and Hoke (1), but are missing representation from Scotland and Columbus. We will be actively recruiting new members from those counties. Our membership now represents 5 SU, 4 MH, 3 IDD, 2 TBI.
- Kelly Baker presented a Finance overview.
- Vivian Ojimadu-Customer Success Consultant, shared a presentation about the CHESS Health Connections App for those in recovery and their families, friends, service providers, and caregivers.

X. Trillium Regional Vice President Report: Cecelia Peers reported on organizational and regional efforts.

- Tailored Plans are working with DHHS and legislature to avoid members being adversely impacted by budget changes.
- The mini budget that passed with the Medicaid rebase at 600 million the department reported that was a shortage and would impact provider rates. A 3% rate reduction to all services and higher rate cuts for long term care and PRTF at 8% and ICFs at 10% and will go into effect October 1.
- Technologies are being implemented into the strategic plan to help alleviate reduction challenges.
- Trillium receives full NCQA (National Committee for Quality Assurance) accreditation.

- Trillium sponsorship of events in the Southern region are 2 in the first quarter and 9 second quarter.
- Trillium has contracted with Southeastern Integrated Care as part of the Crisis Continuum to provide mobile crisis response teams, and a BHUC.
- RHA working with New Hanover County to open a facility-based crisis center that will have a re-entry component run by LINC. The Star Center facility will open in 2026.
- Crisis Collaborative meetings for the Southern region occurred in August and September.
- Southeastern Integrated Care are hiring staff and are providing services in Moore. They will be serving Lee and Hoke starting November 1, and will rollout services to Robeson, and Scotland counties soon after.
- September is Suicide Awareness and Recovery month, and related information is available on the Trillium website. Trillium's blog is highlighting support (Save Schools Healthy Kids) to kid's mental health as they resume school.
- The Community Resilience Model is being implemented with staff training and will eventually be offered to the community.
- Violence prevention has been a focus in New Hanover and Robeson counties, and they had representation at the NC Office of Community Violence Prevention Summit in August.
- Trillium will continue to fund the Robeson Family Treatment Court.
- A Family Treatment Court in Scotland is being funded with opioid settlement funds.
- ABC funds are used towards prevention efforts such as substance use and health education. Education for nurses and support staff with onsite class sessions for students that reveal the impact of vaping on health cells.
- Benchmarks conference is being held October 14-17 in Cherokee, NC.
- i2i Winter Conference for the second week in January.
- A PSR program opened in Wilmington a day program for adults with serious mental illness.
- Trillium's BH network is partially open. We will post for needed service providers where there are gaps.
- Beaufort County October 2 will host a post disaster simulation.
- Conflict of Interest forms will need to be completed by October 1.
- Meeting date for November and possibly have SR-CFAC join and provide a holiday dinner.
 - Wednesday, November 12 @ 4:30 p.m. was a suggested meeting date.
- Terrell Alston-Associated Vice President has accepted the position of Chief of Staff with Trillium.

XII. Adjournment: Chair Commissioner Zapple motioned to adjourn the meeting. The meeting adjourned at 6:56 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,


Sandra Dunlap, Administrative Coordinator


Commissioner Rob Zapple, Chair