FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE
November 4, 2026

MEDIA CONTACT:
Karen Cimino
Media Relations Specialist, Vaya Partners
karen.cimino@vayapartners.org | 704-689-2416

Vaya Partners, Insight Human Services, NCDHHS Celebrate New Adolescent Substance Use Treatment Center in Marion

Partnership brings nine-bed residential program closer to home for McDowell County families

MARION, N.C. (Nov. 4, 2026) – Vaya Partners joined Insight Human Services and the North Carolina Department of Health and Human Services (NCDHHS) today to celebrate the ribbon cutting of a new adolescent residential substance use treatment center in Marion, a partnership that brings intensive treatment for young people closer to home in McDowell County.

Vaya Partners is a North Carolina local management entity/managed care organization (LME/MCO) that manages Medicaid, federal, state, and local services and supports for individuals with serious mental health, severe substance use disorder (SUD), intellectual/ developmental disability (I/DD), and traumatic brain injury (TBI) in 47 counties across North Carolina.

The nine-bed program in Marion, N.C., will provide clinically managed, 24-hour residential treatment (Clinically Managed High-Intensity Residential Services, or ASAM 3.5) for adolescents ages 13 to 17, serving both males and females in a structured, home-like setting. Developed in partnership with the NCDHHS Division of Mental Health, Developmental Disabilities and Substance Use Services (DMH/DD/SUS) and Vaya Partners, and operated by Insight Human Services, the center is expected to open in January, pending state licensure.

Vaya Partners allocated $500,000 toward the project and financially supported the program's development through Single Stream and Cross-Area Service Program (CASP) funds.

“This is what partnership is all about,” said Larry Hill, Executive Vice President and Chief Financial Officer of Vaya Partners, who represented the organization at the event. “The state identified the need, an experienced provider stepped forward to answer it, and Vaya Partners invested in making it real. For a family in McDowell County and throughout our region whose child needs this level of care, having it here in Marion — instead of hours away — means parents can be part of the treatment, and a young person can recover connected to home, school and community. That connection is part of what makes treatment work."

Hilary Beeler, Assistant Director of the Substance Use Prevention, Treatment, and Recovery Services Section of the Division of Mental Health, Developmental Disabilities and Substance Use Services of the NCDHHS also spoke at the event. “I began my career working with adolescents, so I have seen firsthand how impactful it can be when an adolescent can access services at the right time,” Beeler said. “Early

intervention can change the trajectory of an adolescent's entire life — and not just for them, but for their families and for their futures."

The project has been in development since 2022, when NCDHHS determined that Swain Recovery Center in Black Mountain had to close and asked Insight Human Services to open a new adolescent ASAM 3.5 program. The Marion center is a new service under the Substance Use Waiver implemented earlier this year, restoring and relocating a level of care that western North Carolina families have needed within reach of their homes and communities.

For Vaya Partners members in Marion, across McDowell County, and beyond, the center adds a critical step to the local continuum of care. Vaya Partners' care teams with members, families, and providers to connect young people to the right level of care and to support them before, during, and after a residential stay. The new facility includes family involvement, school connection, and transition planning so each adolescent returns home set up to succeed.

"What I'm looking forward to are the celebrations that are still to come — when we see a young person come here, make positive decisions in their lives, and their lives are changed," said Jim Harner, Chief Executive Officer of Insight Human Services, in remarks at the event. "This is going to be a place of hope for them."

ABOUT VAYA PARTNERS

Formed through the consolidation of Vaya Health and Partners Health Management, Vaya Partners brings together Partners Health Management and Vaya Health, building on decades of service to more than 225,000 members in 47 North Carolina counties. As the state's largest specialty managed care organization and local management entity, Vaya Partners oversees publicly funded care for individuals with mental health, substance use disorders, intellectual or developmental disabilities (I/DD), and traumatic brain injury (TBI) needs. Vaya Partners manages Medicaid, federal, state, and local funding to meet member and community needs while advancing whole-person, integrated physical and behavioral healthcare.

Vaya Partners is one of three local management entities/managed care organizations (LME/MCOs) in North Carolina's public healthcare system. The North Carolina General Assembly expanded the LME/MCO model statewide in 2011, building on a 50-year legacy of county-area programs rooted in community-based, person-centered care. Together with members, families, providers, and community partners, Vaya Partners is advancing its shared commitment to Improving Lives and Strengthening Communities.