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VAYA HEALTH AND PARTNERS HEALTH MANAGEMENT ANNOUNCE MERGER

Managed care organizations join to bring strength and stability to North Carolina's public system of behavioral healthcare

Asheville/Gastonia, N.C. – Today, North Carolina Department of Health and Human Services Secretary Devdutta Sangvai approved the consolidation of Vaya Health and Partners Health Management, contingent upon completion of a successful readiness review. The merger brings together two established Local Management Entity/Managed Care Organizations (LME/MCOs) with decades of service to North Carolina communities. Secretary Sangvai's approval follows formal action by the Boards of Directors of both Vaya Health and Partners Health Management to adopt consolidation resolutions.

The consolidation will be effective Oct. 1, 2026, creating North Carolina's largest publicly governed behavioral health organization dedicated to integrated, whole-person care for North Carolinians with complex needs related to mental health, substance use disorders, intellectual/developmental disabilities (I/DD), and traumatic brain injuries (TBI).

The new organization will operate under the name Vaya Partners, reflecting complementary capabilities, shared values, and a joint commitment to continuing their decades of service to members, families, providers, counties, and communities.

Vaya Partners will serve more than 222,000 members across 47 counties, creating a balanced and sustainable regional model that supports the long-term viability of North Carolina's public behavioral health system. The consolidation also establishes a more connected and cohesive region that better reflects how care is delivered and how communities function, positioning the public system to more effectively meet the needs of those it serves.

"Our highest priority is and always will be the health, safety, and well-being of the members and recipients we are privileged to serve," said Tracy Hayes, Area Director and Chief Executive Officer of Vaya Health. "This merger represents a shared vision of a stronger health plan that will bolster North Carolina's public behavioral health/IDD/TBI system, support our county partners, and serve even more North Carolinians on their journey toward health and wellness."



The combined organization will be led by an experienced executive team drawn from both Vaya Health and Partners Health Management, ensuring continuity, stability, and deep expertise across the region. Tracy Hayes, current Area Director and Chief Executive Officer of Vaya Health, will serve as Area Director and Chief Executive Officer of Vaya Partners. Libby McCraw, Chief Executive Officer of Partners Health Management, will assume the role of Senior Deputy CEO. Rachel Porter, Deputy CEO of Partners Health Management, will continue as Deputy CEO.

“This consolidation brings together the strength, experience, and shared commitment of both organizations to better serve members and communities across North Carolina,” said Libby McCraw, Chief Executive Officer of Partners Health Management. “At the center of that work are our employees, whose dedication and expertise are the driving force behind the care and support we provide every day. We will build on that foundation, broaden our reach, and deliver even greater impact for members, families, providers, and communities. Together, we are advancing our shared commitment to Improving Lives and Strengthening Communities.”

Individuals who receive services through Vaya or Partners will not experience changes to their benefits or providers. Contracted providers will continue to operate as they do today, with no immediate changes to participation, billing, or administrative processes. Leadership from both organizations will work closely with the North Carolina Department of Health and Human Services, as well as state and local partners, to ensure continuity of care and a successful transition that puts member, provider, and community needs at the forefront.

About Vaya Health

Vaya Health is a specialty managed care organization and local government agency that oversees publicly funded health care services across a 32-county region of North Carolina for people with significant behavioral health needs, intellectual/developmental disabilities, and traumatic brain injuries. Vaya manages Medicaid, federal, state, and local funding to meet member and community needs while advancing whole-person health. Together with members, contracted providers, and local partners, we’re moving forward to a healthier North Carolina. Vaya Health can be found online at vayahealth.com, on Facebook at facebook.com/VayaHealth/, on X (formerly known as Twitter) [@VayaHealth](https://twitter.com/VayaHealth), on Instagram at instagram.com/vaya.health, and on LinkedIn at linkedin.com/company/vaya-health.

About Partners Health Management

Partners Health Management plays a critical role in ensuring access to comprehensive, high-quality care for Medicaid beneficiaries and uninsured/underinsured individuals across 15 North Carolina counties. We strategically manage Medicaid, state, and local funds to support whole-person, integrated physical and behavioral health care for individuals receiving mental health, intellectual and other developmental disability, substance use disorder and traumatic brain injury services. Partners is widely recognized across North Carolina for our innovative Partners Community Model, which is rooted in localized, person-centered care shaped by the voices of the individuals and families we serve. Our enduring



partnerships with providers, community organizations, and stakeholders reflect our unwavering commitment to fostering collaboration and delivering measurable results. Together, we are advancing our mission of Improving Lives and Strengthening Communities, one member at a time. Partners can be found online at partnersbhm.org, on [Facebook](#), [Instagram](#), [X](#) (formerly Twitter), [LinkedIn](#), and on [YouTube](#).