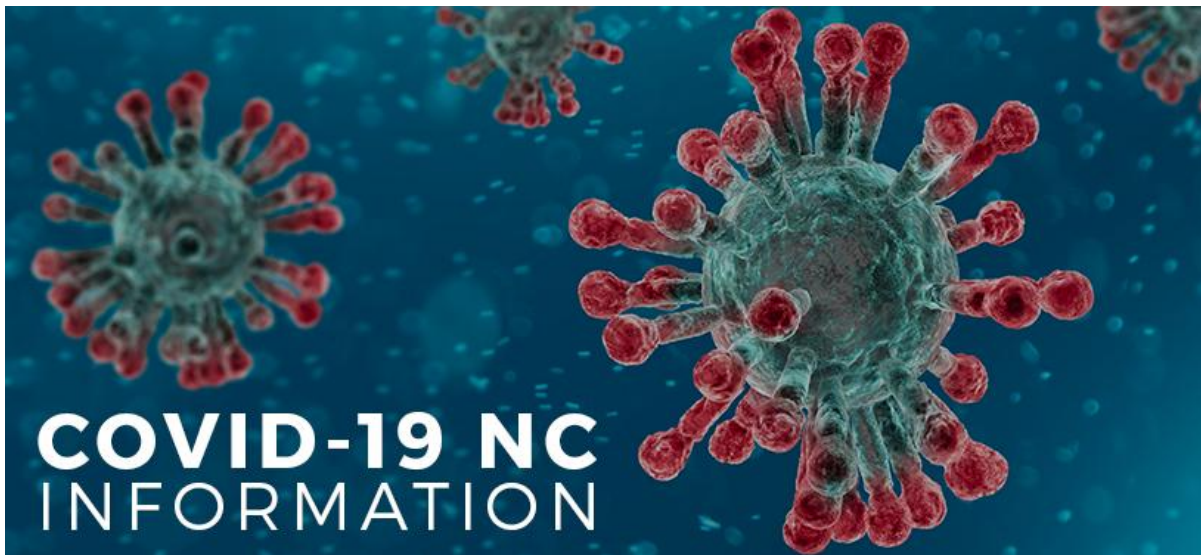


APRIL 14, 2020



## NEW: WNC COVID-19 REGIONAL REPORT

Vaya is proud to be a key partner in a new weekly publication, the WNC COVID-19 Regional Report, from the Mountain Area Health Education Center (MAHEC) in conjunction with other WNC health and social services organizations including Dogwood Health Trust, Mission Health Partners, NCCARE360, Pisgah Legal Services, the Western Carolina Medical Society and the N.C. Center for Health & Wellness at UNC Asheville. Together, we're committed to providing WNC's medical community with timely information on COVID-19 through weekly updates on regional trends, needs, resources and training opportunities.

Our goal is to foster collaboration and minimize duplication of effort to enhance our region's COVID-19 response efforts. To learn more, read the first [WNC COVID-19 Regional Report](#).

---

## N.C. INNOVATIONS APPENDIX K: RETAINER PAYMENTS

On April 6, 2020, the federal Centers for Medicare & Medicaid Services (CMS) approved the Appendix K Emergency Preparedness and Response Waiver Request submitted by N.C. DHHS on March 13, 2020, in response to the COVID-19 State of Emergency. Appendix K requested certain flexibilities and/or exceptions with respect to North Carolina's Home and Community Based Services (HCBS) waivers, including the Innovations Waiver managed by Vaya Health.

One of the temporary flexibilities permitted by CMS allows Vaya to provide retainer payments to provider agencies for direct care workers to address emergency-related issues. Retainer payments can be requested by Innovations Waiver service providers and Employers of Record (EORs) for your direct care workers who normally provide habilitation and personal care services to a Vaya plan member you serve only if:

1. The direct care worker was providing Innovations Waiver services to the member prior to March 13, 2020; and
2. The worker is currently unable to provide services to the member due to complications experienced during the COVID-19 pandemic because the member is sick due to COVID-19 or because the member is sequestered and/or quarantined based on local, state, federal and/or medical requirements/orders. **NC Medicaid stated the current "Stay at Home" order qualifies as "sequestered" for purposes of these retainer payments.**

Please note the following parameters for retainer payments:

- Retainer payments may be made only for Innovations Waiver services as authorized as of March 12, 2020, in the member's approved plan of care.
- These payments are for primary staff who provide regularly scheduled Innovations Waiver Community Living and Supports, Community Networking, Day Supports, Supported Living and/or Supported Employment services.
- Individuals who are identified as paid or unpaid back-up staff are not eligible for retainer payments.
- Primary staff currently receiving unemployment are not also eligible for retainer payments.

If you think you meet the Appendix K requirements to request a retainer payment for your direct care worker, please complete the [COVID-19 Appendix K Retainer Payment Request Form](#).

---

## BILLING AND DOCUMENTATION GUIDE FOR COVID-19 TELEHEALTH AND CLINICAL POLICY MODIFICATIONS

Vaya Health and N.C. DHHS have implemented numerous policy modifications that expand use of telemedicine (two-way audio/video) and telephonic contacts for services to ensure continuity of care during the COVID-19 State of Emergency. Vaya is providing the following guidance for contracted providers to ensure appropriate billing and documentation of services delivered under these policy modifications. Please note these requirements are effective retroactively for services delivered on or after March 10, 2020.

Read more: [Billing and Documentation Guide for COVID-19 Telehealth and Clinical Policy Modifications](#)

---

## HOPE4HEALERS NEEDS LICENSED MENTAL HEALTH PROFESSIONALS TO SUPPORT HEALTHCARE WORKERS

The Hope4Healers Helpline, a new N.C. DHHS initiative in partnership with the N.C. Psychological Foundation, is seeking volunteer licensed mental health professionals to provide pro bono mental health support for healthcare workers. The initiative aims to offer free, timely emotional support for healthcare professionals on the front lines of the coronavirus pandemic, as well as their families.

Learn more in a [letter from DHHS](#) and in the [DHHS volunteer guidelines](#).

The [Hope4Healers Helpline](#) provides mental health and resilience supports for healthcare professionals, emergency medical specialists, first responders and other staff who work in healthcare settings, and their families. Assistance is available 24/7 at 919-226-2002.

---

## VAYA PROVIDER ADVISORY COUNCIL MONTHLY MEETING

Wednesday, April 15, 2020, 10 a.m. – 12 p.m.

The Vaya Provider Advisory Council monthly meeting will be held via Webex with a call-in option. This month's agenda includes information regarding:

- **Federal and state legislation** (*Sarah Pfau, N.C. Providers Council*):
  - The Coronavirus Aid, Relief and Economic Security (CARES) Act
  - The Families First Coronavirus Response Act (FFCRA)

- U.S. Department of Labor Temporary Rule
- **Provider stability planning** (*Donald Reuss, Vaya Senior Director of Provider Network Operations, with PAC officers, members and participants*)

JOIN VIA WEBEX

Join by phone: 1-510-338-9438 (USA toll)  
Access code: 628 593 107

For more information about Vaya's Provider Advisory Council, email [provideradvisorycouncil@vayahealth.com](mailto:provideradvisorycouncil@vayahealth.com).

---

## JOINT N.C. DMHDDSAS, NC MEDICAID COVID-19 UPDATE FOR PROVIDERS

Thursday, April 16, 2020, 3 – 4 p.m.

Leadership from the N.C. Division of Mental Health, Developmental Disabilities and Substance Abuse Services and NC Medicaid invite you to participate in this week's webinar to discuss updates on the state's COVID-19 response. There is no dial-in option for this webinar.

REGISTER NOW

After registering, you will receive a confirmation email with information about joining the webinar.

---

## Q&A WEBINAR FOR VAYA HEALTH PROVIDERS

Friday, April 17, 2020, 11 a.m. – 12 p.m.

Registration is not required. There is no limit to the number of attendees who can join. Please note this will be a live broadcast. All attendees will be muted throughout the broadcast. Attendees will be able to submit questions for the presenters through the Q&A feature.

Q&A WEBINAR FOR VAYA HEALTH PROVIDERS

---

## Q&A WEBINAR FOR VAYA INNOVATIONS PROVIDERS

Thursday, April 16, 2020, 4 – 5 p.m.

Registration is not required. There is no limit to the number of attendees who can join. Please note this will be a live broadcast. All attendees will be muted throughout the broadcast. Attendees will be able to submit questions for the presenters through the Q&A feature.

Q&A WEBINAR FOR VAYA INNOVATIONS PROVIDERS

---

QUESTION, PERSUADE, REFER (QPR): WEB-BASED

# SUICIDE PREVENTION TRAINING

Suicide is a leading cause of death in the United States. During the global pandemic, when fear, anxiety and depression are heightened for many people, thoughts of suicide may be more common. It's important to know about available support strategies.

Vaya's Provider Education Team will offer three "Question, Persuade, Refer" (QPR) trainings on Thursdays in April. Each training is limited to 25 participants. To register, click on the specific training listed below

QPR WEBINAR: [April 16, 2020, 9:30 - 11:30 a.m.](#)

QPR WEBINAR: [April 23, 2020, 2:30 - 4:30 p.m.](#)

QPR WEBINAR: [April 30, 2020, 10 a.m. - 12 a.m.](#)

---

## TEN STEPS TO EFFECTIVELY RESPOND TO WORKPLACE EXPOSURE TO COVID-19

The Integrated Care Online resource "Ten Steps to Effectively Respond to Workplace Exposure to Covid-19" provides guidance on mobilizing a response when a client or team member tests positive and is known to have exposed other individuals on your team. The article covers risk communications and leadership best practices to help others and minimize risk.

To read more, [register for free](#) to become an Integrated Care Online Community member.

---

## EXPANDED ACCESS TO PAYCHECK PROTECTION PROGRAM

Mountain BizWorks, in partnership with Dogwood Health Trust, has announced an effort to provide increased access to the Small Business Administration Paycheck Protection Program. The effort is targeted toward nonprofits and small businesses in the region, with a focus on rural and minority- and women-led organizations. [Read the announcement](#) or learn more about [Paycheck Protection Program \(PPP\) Loans](#).

---

## FINANCIAL ASSISTANCE AVAILABLE TO SUPPORT PROVIDER TELEHEALTH NEEDS

On April 2, 2020, the Federal Communications Commission (FCC) released an order establishing the [COVID-19 Telehealth Program](#). The program will provide \$200 million in funding, appropriated by the CARES Act, to help healthcare providers provide telehealth services in response to the COVID-19 pandemic. This includes eligible community mental health and substance use treatment providers.

Learn more: [Guidance on the COVID-19 Telehealth Program Application Process](#)

---

## COVID-19: COMMUNITY RESOURCES FOR BUNCOMBE COUNTY AND WNC

Nationally and globally, there are shortages of Personal Protective Equipment (PPE) for healthcare providers and other organizations. Dogwood Health Trust is helping to source and coordinate the production of products locally and distribute them equitably across the

region. For more information, visit the [Dogwood Health Trust website](#).

Additionally, the United Way of Asheville and Buncombe County [maintains a list of resources](#) related to food distribution, utility, eviction/foreclosure, homelessness and other needs in the county. As conditions and resources change from day to day, check back often for the latest information.

828-225-2785 | [provider.communication@vayahealth.com](mailto:provider.communication@vayahealth.com) | [vayahealth.com](http://vayahealth.com)

STAY CONNECTED

