

# Hurricane Helene Disaster Recovery Touchpoint Webinar for All Providers

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Friday, October 11, 2024



VAYAHEALTH

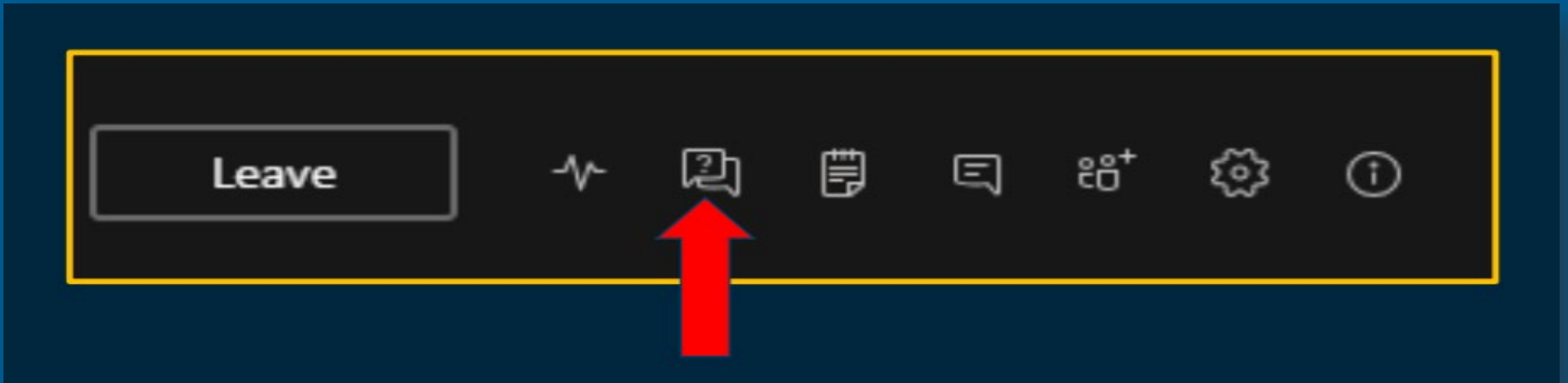
# How does the Q&A work?

- You may ask questions at any time during the broadcast through the Q&A feature.
- Questions can be seen by all attendees after they are published by the moderators and will be addressed during the Q&A session of this webinar.
- If multiple similar questions are received, the Q&A moderators may combine the questions into one before posting or post the questions with the most detail.

# How does the Q&A work?

- When asking a question, please include as much detail as possible so that our subject matter experts (SMEs) on the webinar can answer your question accurately.
  - **PLEASE NOTE:** Attendees are seeing this webinar on a 20 second delay. By the time your question is posted, we have likely moved on to another topic. The SMEs may not understand your question without context.
- If you need to ask a question that is specific to your agency or the services you provide, please contact your provider network contract manager or email [provider.info@vayahealth.com](mailto:provider.info@vayahealth.com).

- The moderated Q&A is available in the controls bar on your screen.
- Look for the bubble with the question mark.
- The Q&A feature will close at **11:50 a.m.** to allow us to respond to all questions before the end of the webinar.



# Where can I find ...

Provider Touchpoint recordings and  
resources:

[Provider Central](#) > [Resources](#) >  
[Provider Touchpoint](#)

Provider Communication Bulletin sign-  
up and archive:

[Provider Central](#) > [Resources](#) >  
[Communication Bulletins](#)

# Today's Vaya Participants

**Donald Reuss**, VP of BH Provider Network

**George Ingram**, VP of PH Provider Network & Value Based Contracting

**Kurt Boldt**, AVP of PH Provider Network

**Utilization Management, Claims, and Care Management teams**

## Production Team

**Breonna Martin**, Provider Educator (*Producer*)

**Monica Thomas**, Administrative Support Professional (*Co-producer Q&A Moderator*)

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**WELCOME**  
**Vaya Health Providers**

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# On Your Radar

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# Dogwood Health Trust Announces More Than \$30 Million for Initial Hurricane Helene Relief

Dogwood Health Trust has announced more than \$30 million in initial relief funding for the devastation across western North Carolina from Hurricane Helene. In this initial relief funding, Dogwood is prioritizing support for local organizations that will help local people and organizations now and in the days to come.

Dogwood's initial support is organized in three areas: (1) Supporting organizations that can quickly deploy resources and respond to urgent needs of people and geographic areas most affected; (2) supporting assessment, navigation, and legal services associated with FEMA response; and (3) maintaining critical health services across the region. [Learn more.](#)

# Ways to Donate to Relief Efforts

As response to Hurricane Helene continues and recovery intensifies, countless local donation drives have been organized to provide donations to western North Carolina residents in need. [Learn how you can best help](#) from the NC Department of Public Safety.

# SAMHSA Disaster Distress Helpline

The U.S. Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration offers immediate crisis counseling through its [Disaster Distress Helpline](#) at 1-800-985-5990. This toll-free, multilingual, crisis support service is available 24/7 to all residents in the United States who are experiencing emotional distress related to natural or human-caused disasters. [Learn more.](#)

# Hurricane Helene Resources: Vaya Health Service Lines

Disasters are a time when mental health requires additional care. Anyone who needs someone to contact for support can reach out to the following resources shared by the NC Division of Mental Health, Developmental Disabilities, and Substance Use Services (MHDDSUS):

- Call **911** for emergency assistance.
- Call **211** for local resources (non-emergency).
- Call or text **988** for mental health support from a trained mental health professional.
- Call NC's **Peer Warmline** (**1-855-PEERS NC**) to speak to a peer living in recovery from behavioral health issues.

# Operating Pharmacies in Counties Affected by Hurricane Helene

- North Carolina Board of Pharmacy staff have received notice of pharmacies in western North Carolina that are operating and serving patients. Staff will continue posting updates as they receive them.
- **Learn more:** [Operating Pharmacies in Counties Affected by Hurricane Helene](#)

# NC Medicaid Hurricane Helene Flexibilities

- NC Medicaid announced temporary flexibilities last week for both NC Medicaid Direct and NC Medicaid Managed Care in connection with the [State of Emergency](#) due to Hurricane Helene. NC Medicaid will reimburse providers for medically necessary drugs, services, equipment, and supplies provided during the emergency without prior authorization through Oct. 2, 2024 (unless otherwise communicated by NCDHHS).
- Medical documentation must support medical necessity. Review the [NC Medicaid Bulletin](#) for full details.
- For helpful information and resources, visit the [Emergency and Disaster](#) page of our Provider Central website

# Legal Deadline Flexibilities

- On Sept. 29, 2024, the Chief Justice of the Supreme Court of North Carolina issued an amended order extending all legal deadlines, criminal and civil, in the counties impacted by the hurricane.
- To support people with legal deadlines in impacted counties: [Read more](#)

# Hurricane Helene Recovery Regional Resources

- The following resources are available in Alleghany, Ashe, Avery, Mitchell, Watauga (outside of Boone), and Yancey counties:
  - **Resources for Individuals who are Blind, Hard of Hearing, or Deaf:** If an individual needs a mobile phone or assistive technology to replace a device damaged or lost in flooding or relocation, email [becky.rosenthal@dhhs.nc.gov](mailto:becky.rosenthal@dhhs.nc.gov) or call the Recovery Information Line at **919-605-8105**.
  - **Resources for Medically Complex/Fragile Children:** Advocates for Medically Fragile Kids – North Carolina is coordinating medical supply delivery individual medically complex/fragile children. Complete the [WNC Medically Fragile Kids Needs](#) form to make a request.



# Side By Side Addresses Hurricane Helene Response

The Area Directors/Chief Executive Officers of North Carolina's LME/MCOs joined Kelly Crosbie, Director of the NC Division of Mental Health, Developmental Disabilities, and Substance Use Services, on Oct. 7, 2024, to discuss ongoing actions in response to Hurricane Helene. Crosbie also talked about ways to take care of yourself during challenging times. Watch the [video recording](#) and [view the presentation](#) online

# Operational FastMed Locations in North Carolina

The North Carolina Association of Health Plans has shared a [list of operational FastMed locations](#).

The list current as of Oct. 3, 2024.

# Reminder: Temporary Flexibilities in Place for Medicaid Beneficiaries Due to Hurricane Helene Devastation

- NCDHHS continues to work with state, federal, and local partners to help North Carolinians impacted by Hurricane Helene access needed care. Visit the [NC Medicaid Virtual Bulletin Board for Hurricane Helene Recovery Resources](#) for the latest updates and key resources.
- Federal flexibilities are active statewide for NC Medicaid from Sept. 25, 2024, through the end of the state's Hurricane Helene Public Health Emergency declaration. The flexibilities are intended to support hospitals, psychiatric hospitals, critical access hospitals (including cancer centers), and long-term care hospitals to ensure:
  - People can receive emergency medical treatment.
  - There are places to provide hospital care to people.
  - There are people to provide health care.
  - Telemedicine is available.

# Reminder: Temporary Flexibilities in Place for Medicaid Beneficiaries Due to Hurricane Helene Devastation

- Hospitalized patients have continuity of care.
- People can get the care they need in a long-term care or skilled nursing facility.
- Acute care patients can stay longer.
- Patients get the care they need in the best environment.
- People with intellectual disabilities being cared for in facilities continue to receive services.
- People have the medical equipment and medicine they need.

For more information, review [Additional Temporary Flexibilities in Place for Medicaid Beneficiaries Due to Hurricane Helene Devastation](#) and the NC Medicaid Bulletin [Reminder to Providers on Hurricane Helene Approved Waivers for North Carolina](#).

# Federal Emergency Prescription Assistance Program to Open for Certain Helene-Impacted Counties

The Emergency Prescription Assistance Program, or EPAP, helps people in a federally identified disaster area who do not have health insurance get the prescription drugs, vaccinations, medical supplies, and equipment they need. This program helps people and communities better cope with a disaster and reduces stress on the health care system.

People who are eligible for EPAP can file a claim at more than 72,000 retail pharmacies across the United States and its territories for prescription items that were lost, stolen, or destroyed because of a disaster. EPAP will open soon for certain Helene-impacted North Carolina counties.

For more information, including how to sign up, visit the [U.S. Department of Health and Human Services website](#).

# NC Innovations Waiver DCW Expense Reporting Form

- Vaya is sharing a [Sample Innovations DCW Expense Reporting Form](#). Per legislation, the form was due to Vaya by Sept. 30, 2024. To give providers ample time to accurately complete forms, Vaya will extend the due date to Oct. 25, 2024.
- If you have already submitted this information for State Fiscal Year 2023-24 to Vaya, no further action is required. If you have questions, please email [provider.info@vayahealth.com](mailto:provider.info@vayahealth.com)

# Hospital Impact Updates

Vaya continues to coordinate with western North Carolina health systems on response protocols, sites, and resources to support hospital staff in accessing help for patients. For most current and evolving updates, we encourage providers to visit the hospitals emergency websites:

- **UNC Health System:** [Hurricane Helene Resources and Updates](#)
- **Mission Health:** [Helene | Mission Health](#)
- **Atrium:** [Location Closings and Updated Hours of Operation | Atrium Health](#)

# Hospital Impact Updates cont.

Vaya continues to coordinate with western North Carolina health systems on response protocols, sites, and resources to support hospital staff in accessing help for patients. For most current and evolving updates, we encourage providers to visit the hospitals emergency websites:

- **DLP Rutherford:** [Hurricane Helene Update | Rutherford Regional Health System](#)  
[\(myrutherfordregional.com\)](#)
- **DLP Harris:** [Hurricane Helene Update | Harris Regional Hospital \(myharrisregional.com\)](#)
- **DLP Haywood:** [Hurricane Helene Update | Haywood Regional Medical Center](#)  
[\(myhaywoodregional.com\)](#)
- **Advent Health (Hendersonville):** [Hurricane Impact](#) and [Community Resource](#)



# Open Shelters & Disaster Relief Services

- The American Red Cross is offering emergency shelter and other services to western North Carolinians affected by Hurricane Helene.
- [Find shelter locations and learn about other services](#) for individuals who were forced to evacuate their home or lack access to essential services.

# State Emergency Operations Center Update

- North Carolina's State Emergency Operations Center has shared the following updates related to the aftermath of Hurricane Helene:
  - Please continue to use **211** for information, to report lost friends and relatives, or to request welfare checks.
  - Western North Carolina residents should turn their cell phones on and off occasionally to reconnect to the cellular network.
  - NC National Guard ground forces, currently at 800 and growing, are pushing into the more heavily damaged and remote counties; and should be in every county now.

# State Emergency Operations Center Update

- Transportation assets, including temporary bridge materials, are coming into the region; the NC Department of Transportation (NCDOT) is setting up a long-term headquarters in Flat Rock.
- [NCDrive.gov](https://ncdrive.gov) is the best resource for road closures.
- Travel for non-emergency personnel is hindering response efforts.
- All acute care hospitals in the region have had their power restored, although many hospitals are still on temporary water - and many long term care facilities are also on temporary power and water.
- Federal emergency medical teams are in place at Mission and Blue Ridge hospitals.

# State Emergency Operations Center Update

- There is a significant need for oxygen—three large shipments are on the way.
- NCDHHS is working on a program to help with private water system testing; trust only bottled, boiled, or treated water for drinking, cooking, and bathing.
- Supplemental Nutritional Assistance Program (SNAP) benefit flexibilities and NC Medicaid flexibilities are in effect.
- Price gouging laws are in effect due to emergency declaration. Call 1-877-5-NO-SCAM to report.

# State Emergency Operations Center Update

- Longer-term recovery is easier if people can remain in their communities, getting resources in is more effective than evacuating people out.
- Search-and-rescue teams continue to work throughout the impacted areas.
- Commodity lift operations out of Asheville are also surveying areas for search and rescue efforts.

For more information, please refer to the Department of Public Safety (DPS) website: [Rescue, Relief and Recovery Operations Continue in Western North Carolina](#)

# Help Available for Providers, First Responders

Help is available for providers, first responders, and volunteers who are experiencing stress, emotional fatigue, or a mental health crisis or who just need someone to talk to due to the impact of Hurricane Helene. Call the [Hope4NC Helpline](tel:1-855-587-3463) at 1-855-587-3463. Hope4NC is free, confidential, and available 24/7.

# Food and Nutrition Services Updates

**Benefits to purchase hot foods:** Effective Oct.4 through Nov. 3, 2024, North Carolinians enrolled in the **Food and Nutrition Services (FNS)** program can use their **benefits to purchase hot food** from authorized Electronic Benefits Transfer (EBT) retailers. Additionally, NCDHHS is working with the U.S. Department of Agriculture (USDA) to receive federal authority to operate a Disaster Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program.

# Food and Nutrition Services Updates

**Work First/Child Protective Services Substance Use Initiative Food and Nutrition Services:** NCDHHS has shared the following information regarding questions on flexibility or interim alterations that have been made to FNS policy for applicants/recipients in counties impacted by Hurricane Helene. Work First/Child Protective Services (CPS) caseworkers will enter good cause for these individuals in the following counties: Alexander, Alleghany, Ashe, Avery, Buncombe, Burke, Caldwell, Catawba, Clay, Cleveland, Gaston, Henderson, Lincoln, Macon, Madison, McDowell, Mitchell, Polk, Rutherford, Transylvania, Watauga, Wilkes, and Yancey, plus the Eastern Band of Cherokee Indians.



# Hurricane Helene & Healthy Opportunities Pilot (HOP) Services

- Due to the aftermath of Hurricane Helene, HOP Human Service Organizations (HSOs) in the Vaya region are currently unable to accept new service referrals and will likely pause HOP services for an undetermined period.
- Per NCDHHS, Vaya's Network Lead, Impact Health, is prioritizing the capacity of HSOs that provide food services to help coordinate ongoing food services for members where possible.
- NCDHHS and Impact Health remain in communication with Vaya and will provide us with a list of HSOs that are available to provide HOP services as soon as they are able.

# Hurricane Helene & Healthy Opportunities Pilot (HOP) Services

- Until HOP network adequacy is re-established, please route newly identified unmet health-related resource needs to **NC 211**, unless otherwise communicated by NCDHHS and Impact Health.
- For more information, email SDOH Network Development Director Sarah Frei at [sarah.frei@vayahealth.com](mailto:sarah.frei@vayahealth.com).

# Disaster Unemployment Assistance

The NC Division of Employment Security (DES) issued a news release about the availability of Disaster Unemployment Assistance (DUA) to eligible residents of 25 counties and the Eastern Band of Cherokee Indians (EBCI). [Read more.](#)

Additional resources include:

- [How to File a Disaster-Related Claim brochure](#)
- [DUA flyer](#)
- [Hurricane Helene DUA webpage](#)
- [DUA FAQs](#)

# Disaster Unemployment Assistance

- DUA benefits are available for residents of the following counties:
- Alexander, Alleghany, Ashe, Avery, Buncombe, Burke, Caldwell, Catawba, Clay, Cleveland, Gaston, Haywood, Henderson, Jackson, Lincoln, Macon, Madison, McDowell, Mitchell, Polk, Rutherford, Transylvania, Watauga, Wilkes, and Yancey, as well as Eastern Band of Cherokee Indians (EBCI) members.
- For more information, email [laura.leonard@commerce.nc.gov](mailto:laura.leonard@commerce.nc.gov) or call **984-236-5641**.

# Helpful Resources

- ReadyNC.gov: [Emergency Information](#)
- NCDHHS: [Hurricane Helene Recovery Resources](#)
- NC Department of Environmental Quality: [Storm Response](#)
- American Red Cross - [Reunification After Hurricane Helene](#)
- [FEMA Disaster Assistance](#)
- [Hurricane Helene State Press Release #4](#)
- NC Medicaid Resource Newsletter ([English](#)) ([Español](#))

# Safe water Usage Resource

NCDHHS urges safe water usage following Hurricane Helene. [Find ways to ensure your water is safe](#) and to prevent waterborne disease or illness.

# Donations

- We will be accepting cases of bottled water at our ***Vaya Health Ridgefield office*** if any providers want to drop off supplies:

**Vaya Health**  
***200 Ridgefield Court***  
***Suite 218***  
***Asheville, NC 28806***

# #VayaStrong

At Vaya Health, *we believe working together* makes us stronger. **We are committed** to the *wellness, fitness and overall health* of our staff and the community.





**Questions, Thoughts, Comments**

# Thank You

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## Our Next Provider Touchpoint:

Provider Touchpoint webinar for **Physical Health** Providers

**\*\* Friday, October 18, 2024, 11 a.m.-12 p.m. \*\***



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