

**Durham County Board of Social Services**  
**Regular Session Minutes**  
**March 17, 2021**

The Durham County Board of Social Services monthly meeting was held on Wednesday, March 17, 2021 at 3:00 p.m. The DSS Board Meeting was virtual due to COVID-19.

The following DSS Board members were in attendance:  
Chair Commissioner Wendy Jacobs, Vice-Chair Dr. Monique Holsey-Hyman  
Board members: Janice P. Paul, Jacqueline Beatty-Smith, and  
Charles I. Mitchell.

The DCDSS Department was represented by the following:  
Director William Rose, Deputy Director Catherine Williamson-Hardy,  
Chief Operations Officer Kelly Inman, Assistant Directors: Krystal Harris,  
Jovetta Whitfield, Rhonda Stevens and Janeen Gordon. DSS staff attending  
included Latoya Chambers, Meghan Russ, Kalindra Ellerbe, Candice Leathers,  
Lee Little, Quannah Jackson-Brown, Sharyn Flood, Quanesha Archer, Pamela  
Purifoy, Elizabeth Granby, Shontelle Smith, Lynn Thomas, Darlene Whitfield,  
and Montrella R. Springfield.

James Hart from Durham County Human Resources attended the meeting.

Danielle Briggs, Senior Assistant County Attorney was present.

Also attending the meeting were Private Health Providers representatives:

**Matt Abbott**, Community Relations, Region 4 DSS Liaison WellCare of NC

**Kendra Hinton**, Community Educator Region 4  
AmeriHealth Caritas

**Assandra Baysah**, Region 4 Healthy Blue

**Dr. Faith Samples**, Carolina Complete Health

**Delana Epps-Avery**, Community Collaboration Advocate United Healthcare

Deborah Dolan and Constancita Nieves.

Chair Commissioner Wendy Jacobs called the March 17, 2021 regular meeting to order.

**Public Comments**

No public comments

**Approval of the Agenda**

Chair Commissioner Wendy Jacobs asked the board members to review and approve the agenda. Board member Janice P. Paul moved to approve the agenda as written and Board member Charles I. Mitchell seconded.

The agenda was unanimously approved by voice vote.

<b>Board member</b>	<b>Yes</b>	<b>No</b>	<b>Abstained</b>
Chair Commissioner Wendy Jacobs	Yes		
Vice-Chair Dr. Monique Holsey-Hyman	Yes		
Board member Janice P. Paul	Yes		
Board member Jacqueline Beatty-Smith	Yes		
Board member Charles I. Mitchell	Yes		

**Approval of Minutes**

The minutes from the regular meeting on February 17, 2021, were approved by the DSS Board. Board member Charles I. Mitchell offered a motion to approve the minutes and Board member Jacqueline Beatty-Smith seconded.

The minutes were unanimously approved by voice vote.

<b>Board member</b>	<b>Yes</b>	<b>No</b>	<b>Abstained</b>
Chair Commissioner Wendy Jacobs	Yes		
Vice-Chair Dr. Monique Holsey-Hyman	Yes		
Board member Janice P. Paul	Yes		
Board member Jacqueline Beatty-Smith	Yes		
Board member Charles I. Mitchell	Yes		

Chair Commissioner Wendy Jacobs moved forward with the Medicaid Transformation Forum.

Director William Rose informed attendees Medicaid Transformation began on March 15, 2021. Beneficiaries started enrolling in health care plans. There are five health care plans. Provider's names were drawn to establish the order of the presentations. Assistant Director Krystal Harris will manage the PowerPoints. Each Provider was given seven minutes to present and then a round robin question and answer segment.

Director Rose thanked Shonda Green and Brenda Raeford with AmeriHealth for coordinating the forum with the providers. DSS will meet with the Providers to continue building partnerships and look into Facebook live to educate beneficiaries. DSS is planning outreach for the community.

### **Providers**

A copy of the PowerPoints will be attached to the DSS Board minutes.

### **Matt Abbott, Community Relations, Region 4, DSS Liaison, WellCare of NC**

WellCare's Mission, Vision and Core Values are listed below:

#### **Mission**

Our members are our reason for being. We help those eligible for government-sponsored healthcare plans live better, healthier lives.

## Vision

To be a leader in government-sponsored healthcare programs in collaboration with our members, providers, and government partners. Currently, providing services in fifty states. We foster a rewarding and enriching culture to inspire our associates to do well for others and themselves.

## Core Values

- Partnership
- Integrity
- Accountability
- One Team

WellCare's approach is being present in the communities with partnerships, integrated care model and community advocacy.

WellCare's integrated care model members and caregivers provide integrated care management and coordination of care. They look at the immediate need and proactive to meet the care of beneficiaries.

WellCare is available in 100 counties on North Carolina. There are six regions, and each include a Welcome Room for individual to come in and receive assistance and training. Regional pop-up is used to setup special events. Community Relations Specialist are available in all regions and liaisons. WellCare Days are provided to meet with partners and communicate any concerns or issues.

Member Benefits include youth programs, education, assistance with families with young children, healthy rewards and specific diagnosis.

Matt Abbot thanked the DSS Board for the opportunity to present.

## **AmeriHealth Caritas**

### **Kendra Hinton, Community Educator Region 4**

AmeriHealth Caritas North Carolina is part of the AmeriHealth Caritas Family of Companies founded in 1984. The AmeriHealth Caritas Family of Companies is a national leader in Medicaid managed care.

- Mission: We help people get care, stay well, and build healthy communities.
  
- Vision: To be a national leader in empowering those in need, especially the underserved and the disabled, across their full life journey, from wellness to resilience, in order to achieve their American Dream.

AmeriHealth Caritas Family of Companies resides in 13 states and the District of Columbia, there are 4 million members and 7.3 thousand associates. They are in all NC counties.

The federal government requires certain mandatory benefits for Medicaid beneficiaries; however, additional benefits are provided which includes dental, vision and hearing, prescriptions, and other services.

Value-added Benefits include Boys and Girls Club, GED test prep, cell phone and Weight Watchers.

Each Medicaid region will have wellness centers, health education, health screening, community health educators and care managers.

### **Healthy Blue NC – Assandra Baysah**

Healthy Blue has rewards to help you stay healthy which involves:

1. \$75 yearly rewards for doctor visits
2. 3 months of fresh fruit and vegetables
3. 13 weeks voucher Weight Watchers
4. Fitness coach
5. Two healthy aids.

There is value added service for kids which include gift cards, online tutoring, after-hour school activities and other services. Value added services for moms and housing assistance.

### **Carolina Complete Health – Dr. Faith Samples**

Carolina Complete Health does not serve all the regions. Carolina Complete Health is the only physician-led Medicaid plan. This is a joint venture between Centene Corporation, the North Carolina Medical Society (NCMS), the North Carolina Community Health Center Association (NCCHCA) and the individual practitioner shareholders in the CCH Network. The collaboration is patient-focused, provider-led approach to Medicaid Transformation.

Carolina Complete Health will provide an integrated solution which include care coordination, benefit management, IT systems and person-centric programs.

Carolina Complete Health is committed to establishing and maintaining partnerships with a variety of providers, as well as, the community. Health valued added services involve wellness, youth, and education. Transportation, home-delivered meals, behavioral health, alternative healing, phone programs and other entities are part of value-added services.

### **UnitedHealthcare – Delana Epps-Avery, Community Collaboration Advocate**

UnitedHealthcare mission is to help people live healthier lives and help make the health system work better for everyone.

Their values are Integrity - Compassion - Relationships - Innovation – Performance.

UnitedHealthcare Community Plan is part of the UnitedHealthcare family. They have been providing benefits and support to our members for more than 27 years in communities across the United States.

Services are provided for families, pregnant women, children, and people with disabilities.

LaTasha Bennett will serve as DSS Liaison for the UnitedHealthcare Community Plan of NC.

UnitedHealthcare will provide the following to DSS Offices:

- Provide guidance and training on UHC tools
- Provide education on benefits and value-added services
- Serve as point of contact for NEMT
- Provide regular communications through newsletters and news bulletins
- Escalate issues to appropriate UHC contact for resolution
- Develop best practices guide for member engagement
- Include DSS offices into all community roundtables, Advisory Boards, and 1115 waiver consultation sessions
- Collaborate with local office to create targeted outreach events
- Provide regular updates on member returned mail due to incorrect mailing addresses

Enhanced services for Medicaid members will include care management, disease management, member services line, nutrition coaching, member rewards and other services.

Medicaid recipients will receive the same benefits along with extra benefits.

Quick reference guides will be provided to DSS with telephone numbers and other information to utilize when customers have questions. A customer service support center will be located in Winston-Salem, NC.

DSS can help by encouraging clients obtain their NCID, and update contact information along with educating staff. UnitedHealthcare can assist through outreach, learning sessions for staff and community events.

UnitedHealthcare has assisted during COVID-19 and provide \$1.5 billion in direct customer and consumer support through premium credit. Waive all cost sharing for COVID-19 diagnosis and treatment along with no cost telehealth visits. No-cost community testing event held across the State.

Director William Rose acknowledged the presenters for providing information and thanks to the support available to the beneficiaries.

Chair Commissioner Wendy Jacobs thanked all the providers for their presentations. Chair Commissioner Jacobs stated with all the great benefits the choice will be hard for the beneficiaries. Chair Commissioner Jacobs emphasized the need for Medicaid Expansion to help many people.

Vice Chair Dr. Monique Holsey-Hyman indicated holistic approach of information and the beneficiary's choices are great.

Board member Jacqueline Beatty-Smith expressed gratitude for the great information and inquired about tracking data and trends.

Board member Charles I. Mitchell inquired about the availability of plans for residents in the East/West the same.

According to the presenter's comparison sheets are available from the five management care providers. Information is located on DHHS website. Beneficiaries are encouraged to speak with current primary care physicians regarding the plans. Welcome packets are given during enrollment with support services, member service 24/7 and other vital information.

### **Director Report**

Director William Rose submitted a written report.

Director William Rose highlighted several items.

1. Re-opening Plans

DSS never closed due to the pandemic.

The County requested department re-opening plans. The plan was crafted in June and will be re-evaluated. Safety is the first priority for re-opening the agency.

2. The EOC was activated for March 18<sup>th</sup> due to inclement weather.
3. Child Care Pandemic waiting for approval  
A waiver will be provided by the State. This will provide pandemic EBT to any child 6 and under receiving SNAP benefits. A child does not have to be in Child Care. Arrears back to October and run to May. Changes from Federal level
4. Low Income Energy Assistance – Another supplement due to COVID could supply an extra \$80-100 to assist with utilities.
5. America Rescue Act – More information next month. Durham will receive \$63M. Funding valid through 2024.
6. Families First legislations moving forward, working on surveys for congregate case population.
7. Budget Retreat  
Home program to assist with property tax payments, currently implemented by Mecklenburg County. DSS maybe a potential place for this program. We are advocating for the need of a new program manager in Aging and Adult Services, the AD and PM are overwhelmed with the current programs. This will come up in budget discussion.

Federal Treasury Emergency Rental Assistance Program (ERAP). DSS entered an agreement with the City in the amount of \$9.6M. An additional \$9M from the State. This program will be from front to end. The problem is purchasing the large software system needed for the program. The software is the portal entry for the program and will be shared with partners the City and non-profits for applications. The software is critical and DSS has mentioned to the City that March 29<sup>th</sup> will not be a realistic start date, looking at early April. DSS is under the microscope with Housing Advocates, therefore, would like to make sure the implementation is correct. Director Rose is advocating to get this approved. The focus to those 50% to 80% AMI suffering from COVID-19 pandemic and help with rent and utilities. Assistant Director Janeen Gordon expressed looking at long term, spoke with the Department of Treasury there perhaps will be an ERAP II larger than ERAP I. There is a need for a data management tool that will support the community, data and reporting that will make the process efficient and fast for clients. Provide all the data local, state, and federal officials need to help them understand what is going on. Now that DSS understand Dept of Treasury vision is to change affordable housing. Now need to take a step forward to make sure case management is in place. DSS will be required to provide training to non-profits as well. Director William Rose acknowledge Contessa Sawyer, supervisor in Aging and Adult for her positive attitude to succeed with the program. Program Manager Lee Little conveyed the work, which is happening behind the scenes, not waiting for services now for implementation meetings are being held with landlords and



others. IST and CATD staff have been involved with getting the software in place. Commend them for supporting AAS with the program.

Director Rose hope the BAA will be worked out to move forward. Kelly Inman, Chief Operations Officer reported the packet has been submitted to stakeholders and working internal to implement the tool. The kick-off meeting was sent to DSS with requirements to begin focus on the program. Director Rose thanked leadership for supporting ERAP.

Chair Commissioner Wendy Jacobs thanked staff. Chair Commissioner Wendy Jacobs explained more detail on the Home program relating to tax payments. The community is excited about this tax relief especially in the historic areas.

### **Vacancy Report**

Human Resources Analyst James Hart provided a report.

### **Family Economic Independence (FEI) – Rhonda Stevens, Assistant Director**

Assistant Director Rhonda Stevens submitted a written report.

Rhonda Stevens highlighted a meet and greet scheduled for March 18, with PHPs, supervisors and other leadership.

On page 4 in the FEI report the number of people receiving Medicaid was not correct. A ticket has been submitted for correction. There is a significant difference from February. Should be updated next month. Chair Commissioner Jacobs asked about no families on wait list for Child Care. Assistant Director Stevens said families are changing due to the pandemic with children learning from home and unemployment. Individuals have been invited in to apply to increase spending.

### **Customer Accountability and Talent Development – Krystal Harris, Assistant Director**

Assistant Director Krystal Harris submitted a written report.

Chair Commissioner Wendy Jacobs inquired about the National Association of Black Journalist. According to Assistant Director Krystal Harris, Pamela Purifoy is the co-chair and took on the role of NABJ Diversity and Inclusion Ambassador.

### **Child and Family Services – Jovetta Whitfield, Assistant Director**

Assistant Director Jovetta Whitfield submitted a written report.

Director William Rose stated Child Welfare is busy with cases. Assistant Director Jovetta Whitfield informed the DSS Board about March is Social Work Month. Assistant Director Whitfield thanked Chair Commissioner Jacobs for support the proclamation at the BOCC meeting. There will be a virtual recognition on March 24, 2021 for the division. Board members are welcome. Assistant Director Whitfield will send information to the DSS Board. Revolve Church will be recognizing CFS staff with a mug with dessert.

Chair Commissioner Jacobs inquired about reports increasing when students return to school. Assistant Director Whitfield conveyed it will probably take a few weeks before they see any changes in reports.

Vice Chair Dr. Monique Holsey-Hyman communicated donating gift cards in recognition of social workers. Jovetta emphasized including social workers in other areas. Director Rose and Chair Commissioner Jacobs will recognize social workers and the Board will pull items together.

## **Aging and Adult Services – Janeen Gordon, Assistant Director**

Assistant Director Janeen Gordon submitted a written report.

Assistant Director Janeen Gordon mentioned other programs in Aging and Adult Services. Additional funding from Home Development Block Grant.

In-Home Services are unable to take additional clients because there are not enough aids to provide the service. Working with Triangle J to come up with a plan to come to the County Commissioners to allow the cost to be in more line with Medicaid and other providers in the community. That will be a recommendation this year that payment will be in line with what is going on in the community. This will be a part of the budget process.

## **Business Operations – Kelly Inman, Chief Operations Officer**

Chief Operations Officer Kelly Inman submitted a written report.

Chief Operations Officer Kelly Inman shared expenditures through February are at 59%. Revenues delayed by one month are at 62%, however, the target at 7 months is 58%. This is due to rental assistance.

Chair Commissioner Wendy Jacobs commended staff for their commitment through all that is going on in the community.

## **Unfinished Business**

**COVID-19 Updates** – previously covered in the meeting.

## **Board Action Items**

No additions

Director William Rose will keep the Board abreast on new legislative priorities going on at the State level. American Rescue Act in the General Assembly should be kept on your radar.

Chair Commissioner Wendy Jacobs attended NCACC meeting that covered DHHS goals and there was a discussion about Medicaid Expansion.

**Adjournment**

Chair Commissioner Wendy Jacobs adjourned the meeting.

Respectfully submitted

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Chairperson Date

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Secretary to the Board Date