

SOUTH CENTRAL REGIONAL ADVISORY BOARD MEETING MINUTES

Meeting Date: March 24th, 2026, **Meeting Time:** 3:00pm-4:30pm

Meeting Location: Virtual | Click the following Webex
Link: <https://room.webex.com/meet/lauren.oxendine>

Or You may call: 1-415-655-0001 | **Meeting ID:** 2633 252 9564

Board Members Attendance:

Name	In-Person	Virtual	Absent
Joe Democko , Wayne County		X	
June Cummings , Lenoir County		X	
Jesse Dowe , Duplin County		X	
Charlie Dunn, Jr. , Jones County		X	
Justin Edwards , Duplin County			X
Crystal Foster , Carteret County		X	
Shevel Hunt , Craven County		X	
Robin Knapp , Onslow County		X	
Lethia Lee , Sampson County			X
Janice Nichols , Pender County		X	
Suzanne Nix , Lenoir County			X
Steve Eaton , Onslow County			X
JW Simmons , Sampson County		X	
Kyle Smith , Jones County		X	
Marianne Waldrop , Carteret County		X	
Lea Wolf , Carteret County		X	
Carli Woolard , Craven County			X

Staff:

Victoria Jackson, South Central Regional Vice President
Lauren Oxendine, Executive Assistant/Regional Advisory Board Clerk

Guest:

Holly Connor, South Central CFAC Chair/Governing Board Member
Andrea Freile, Executive Director LatinxEd

Agenda:

1. Call to Order
2. Roll Call
3. Oath of Office
 - a. Joe Democko
 - b. Andrea Freile
 - c. Steve Eaton
4. Approval of November 18, 2025; January 27, 2026; Minutes
5. Adoption of the Agenda
6. Public Comments (3 minutes per comment)
7. Provider Network Council Comments
8. CFAC Report
9. Gaps and Needs Discussion
10. Regional Vice President Report
11. Regional Board Member Comments
12. Governing Board Member Comments
13. Chair Comments
14. Adjournment

Minutes:

1. Call to Order	South Central Regional Advisory Board Chairperson, Shevel Hunt, called the meeting to order at 3:02PM. Chair leadership acknowledged the importance of respecting attendees' time and officially opened the meeting once quorum was confirmed.
Motion	N/A
2. Roll Call	Lauren Oxendine performed the roll call. Quorum was verified.
Motion	N/A
3. Oath of Office	The Oath of Office was administered to Commissioner Joe Democko by Lauren Oxendine.
4. Approval of November 18, 2025, January 27, 2026, Minutes	Due to restrictions regarding virtual voting procedures, the Board was unable to formally approve prior meeting minutes. A motion was made and accepted by consensus to table the approval until the next meeting.
Motion	N/A
5. Adoption of the Agenda	The agenda for the South Central Regional Advisory Board meeting of March 24 th , 2026, was reviewed. No objections or modifications were raised.
Motion	The agenda was adopted by unanimous consent.

6. Public Comment	None presented.
Motion	N/A
7. Provider Network Council Comments	No council representative is present. Provider Council September 11, 2026, minutes provided in board packet. presentations or formal comments were offered during this portion of the meeting.
Motion	N/A
8. CFAC Report	Presenter: Holly Connor Topics: South Central CFAC Updates and Data Request <u>Accountability, Data, and Legislative Advocacy</u> Crystal Foster and Holly discussed ongoing efforts through Management Accountability Committee (MAC) meetings to improve transparency and accountability related to service denials, provider reductions, and system-wide challenges. CFAC members highlighted alarming reductions in Private Duty Nursing services for children under 21 and stressed the importance of data-driven advocacy efforts. Discussion then transitioned to legislative advocacy initiatives, including: State CFAC Legislative Day Direct engagement with lawmakers Collaboration with county commissioners Advocacy surrounding Medicaid policies and funding allocations June Cummings commended the thoroughness of the CFAC report and emphasized the importance of elevating these concerns through Trillium governance channels and to the General Assembly.
Motion	N/A
9. Gaps and Needs Discussion	Presenter: Crystal Foster and Holly Connor The report Crystal Foster and Holly presented a detailed CFAC report outlining significant service gaps and unmet needs identified across Trillium's five regional areas. The report was compiled from feedback

gathered through all regional CFAC groups and was intended to support statewide recommendations to the North Carolina General Assembly and the Department of Health and Human Services (DHHS).

Major Service Gaps and Needs Identified

Transportation

Transportation was identified as one of the most significant barriers affecting consumers throughout the region, particularly in rural counties where public transportation infrastructure and funding remain limited.

Housing

Members discussed the severe shortage of affordable housing options, including:

Transitional housing

Independent living opportunities

Subsidized housing

Residential placements for individuals with complex behavioral health and IDD needs

Intermediate Care Facilities (ICFs) and Day Programs

CFAC highlighted the ongoing shortage of high-level Intermediate Care Facilities and structured day programs. Craven County was specifically referenced as experiencing substantial difficulty securing appropriate local placements for individuals requiring higher levels of care.

TBI Services and Funding

Traumatic Brain Injury services and funding limitations were discussed extensively. Crystal Foster shared concerns regarding the lack of accessible funding for families despite the existence of state TBI funding. Members noted that many care managers remain unfamiliar with the TBI funding process, eligibility requirements, and navigation procedures.

Provider Network Adequacy**Members discussed critical shortages of:**

Direct Support Professionals (DSPs)

Nurses

Certified Nursing Assistants (CNAs)

Psychologists

Behavioral health specialists

Rural counties were identified as being disproportionately impacted by workforce shortages, with some counties losing provider agencies entirely.

Durable Medical Equipment (DME)

Additional concerns included restricted access to:

Continuous glucose monitors

Incontinence supplies

Wheelchairs

Shower chairs

Other medically necessary equipment

Members discussed state vendor limitations and approval barriers impacting families and consumers.

Dual Diagnosis and Crisis Services

Board members discussed challenges associated with locating providers equipped to serve individuals experiencing co-occurring:

Mental health disorders

Substance use disorders

	TBI diagnoses Intellectual and developmental disabilities The need for expanded crisis services and recovery programs, particularly for women, was also emphasized. Lauren Oxendine was tasked with preparing the formal endorsement submission.
Motion	A motion was made by June Cummings requesting that the South Central Regional Advisory Board formally endorse and elevate the CFAC gaps and needs report to the governing board. The motion received unanimous support through consensus from commissioners and board members present.
10. Regional Vice President Report	Presenter: Victoria Jackson Victoria Jackson provided the Regional Vice President report and reviewed key operational, financial, and strategic updates included in the meeting materials. Tailored Plan Operations Update Mrs. Jackson reported that overall performance remains stable across key operational areas, including: • Member eligibility • Service delivery operations • Quality and compliance indicators Medicaid Enrollment Data The Medicaid Enrollment Data Report was reviewed, highlighting county-level trends across the region. • Approximately 70% of members remain enrolled in Standard Plans • Approximately 30% of members are enrolled in Trillium's Tailored Plan Statewide Strategic Initiatives Mrs. Jackson provided an update on the North Carolina Department of Health and Human Services (NCDHHS) Year One Strategic Plan Report. Key focus areas include:

- Mental health services
- Substance use services
- Intellectual and developmental disabilities (IDD)
- Traumatic brain injury (TBI) services

Trillium was recognized within the report for innovative programming and community-based initiatives supporting members.

Health Plan Overview

Mrs. Jackson reviewed the four primary plans managed by Trillium:

1. Trillium Whole Health (Tailored Plan): Integrated plan covering behavioral health, physical health, pharmacy, and long-term services and supports
2. Medicaid Direct: Covers services outside of Standard Plan benefits
3. Trillium Access (State-Funded Plan): Provides services for uninsured or underinsured individuals
4. ThriveLocal (County-Funded Initiatives): Flexible funding model supporting community-specific needs

THRive Local Luncheons

Ms. Jackson reminded board members of the upcoming THRive Local luncheon for the South-Central Region to be held on March 27, 2026, at 12pm. She thanked Jones County for their partnership and co-hosting the luncheon at the Jones County Civic Center. Ms. Jackson encouraged members to attend and said that they will be recognized as one of the award winners.

Ms. Jackson provided a Medicaid rebase rate reduction update indicating as of this update no new funding has been allocated although Governor Stein in March proposed a \$1.37 billion ‘critical needs’ budget which, along with other items, includes funding for the Medicaid rebase to avoid further service or payment disruptions. NC General Assembly action is required on any possible funding allocation. The 2026 NC General Assembly short session is scheduled to begin April 21, 2026, although bill drafting is already underway for the upcoming session.

Rural Health Transformation Program

Victoria also discussed Trillium’s participation in the federal Rural Health Transformation Program application process. The initiative focuses on:

	• Chronic disease management • Behavioral health expansion • Workforce development • Community-rooted care networks • Technology and innovation improvements Trillium was actively applying to serve as a regional hub within several designated North Carolina regions. She reminded the board of Trillium's upcoming annual report presentations to the county commissioners. In addition, review community events and training updates. A detailed RVP report including: (Tailored Plan Operations Report, CEO Report, Finance Report) included within board members' packet.
Motion	N/A
11. Governing Board Member Comments	Janice Nicholas shared observations - Transportation challenges remain widespread. - Housing shortages continue to impact service access and stability. - High-level care facilities (ICFs) are limited, requiring out-of-county placements. - Rural counties face severe provider shortages. - Workforce and childcare limitations contribute to staffing challenges
Motion	N/A
12. Chairman Remarks	Veteran Services and Community Discussion The Chairperson Hunt presented veteran population statistics demonstrating the significant veteran presence throughout the region, particularly within Onslow County and several surrounding counties. Members discussed: • Veteran suicide prevention • Access to VA services • Mental health outreach • Veteran-specific screening initiatives

	Community partnerships supporting veterans Discussion also included new VA mental health clinic resources and opportunities for future collaboration surrounding veteran outreach efforts.
Motion	N/A
13. Adjournment	Chair Hunt asked for further business to be brought before the board. As there was none, she requested a motion to adjourn. The Chair reminded members that the next meeting would be held on May 26th in Beulaville and thanked attendees for their continued service, advocacy, and collaboration on behalf of the region.
Motion	The meeting adjourned at 6:00 PM.

Shevel K. Hunt

16 June 26

Shevel Hunt, South Central Advisory Board Chairperson

Date

Lauren Oxendine, Clerk to the Board

Date