



Transforming Lives. Building Community Well-Being.

**Southern Regional Advisory Board (SRAB)  
Meeting Minutes from January 23, 2025  
Meeting: Virtual Only - WebEx**

**Members Present**

**In Person:** None

**Virtual:** Chair Commissioner Rob Zapple, Marie Britt, Commissioner Marty Cooke, Walter Ferguson, Mary Ann Furniss, Dr. Mollie Glenn, Steven Later, Commissioner Kirk Smith, Commissioner Nick Picerno, Julie Varnam, Commissioner Duke Williams

**Members Absent:** Commissioner Lavern Coleman, Commissioner Dr. Danny Ellis, Jackie McLean, Commissioner James Leach, Carol McCall, Jerome McMillian, David Stanley, Commissioner Wixie Stephens

**Trillium Staff:** Joy Futrell–Chief Executive Officer, Senitria Goodman–General Counsel/Chief Compliance Officer, Cecelia Peers–Regional Vice President (Southern), Sandra Dunlap–Administrative Coordinator/Recorder (Southern)

**NCDHHS Staff:** None present.

**Guests:** None present.

**Call to Order:** Chair Commissioner Zapple called the meeting to order at 4:05 p.m. and welcomed members to the Southern Regional Advisory Board meeting and took roll call.

**Adoption of the Agenda:** Chair Commissioner Zapple asked for a motion to approve the January agenda. Commissioner Smith motioned to accept the agenda. Commissioner Cooke seconded the motion. The motion carried.

**Approval of December minutes:** Chair Commissioner Zapple asked for a motion to approve the December minutes. Commissioner Smith motioned to accept minutes with noted corrections. Walter Ferguson seconded the motion. The motion carried.

**Public Comment:** None

Member & Recipient Services — 1-877-685-2415

Provider Support Services — 1-855-250-1539

Administrative & Business Matters — 1-866-998-2597


[TrilliumHealthResources.org](https://TrilliumHealthResources.org)

450 Country Club Road, Lumberton, NC 28360



**CEO Updates:** Joy Futrell updated the board members on the following:

- Tailored Plan launch success and reduction in grievances.
- Transportation remains the top grievance.
- HOP (Healthy Opportunities Pilot) has over 2,000 people enrolled statewide. Food security and navigation of housing are the top resources accessed. The HOP has approval to go statewide. Funding from NC legislators is needed to begin serving other areas of the state.
- Trillium's new Governing Board was appointed by former Secretary Kody Kinsley on December 30 and became effective December 31.
  - The advisory board structure did not change. Two members from each county are appointed to the advisory board to assure the regional communities have representation.
  - One member from each advisory board is appointed to the Governing Board with 1, 2, and 3-year terms. Once a term expires for an advisory board seat on the Governing Board, that region's board will appoint a new member to serve on the Governing Board.
  - Walter Ferguson was appointed to represent the Southern Regional Advisory Board.
  - Regional CFACs will also have a representative on the Governing Board, Marie Britt was appointed for SR-CFAC.
  - There are 5 at large seats on the Governing Board and when their terms expire the Governing Board will appoint those seats.
  - Provider Council, ICF (Intermediate Care Facilities), and Health Equity Council will each have a non-voting seat on the Governing Board.

 Commissioner Picerno expressed a personal loss and the need for more guidance and crisis services such as ACT team in the region. He also mentioned the recently constructed office buildings (Legacy Sandhills Center) are mostly unoccupied, and that fleet vehicles are stationary.

- Ms. Futrell offered her condolences and shared her gratitude for the information and noted Commissioner Picerno's concerns regarding the office buildings and she stated that the agency vehicles are being deployed to care manager staff to utilize service to members.
- Cecelia Peers shared that a collaborative meeting with the Mental Health Specialist of the Moore County Sheriff's department and FirstHealth-Moore Regional had taken place regarding crisis services. Ms. Peers

gave an open invitation to Commissioner Picerno to attend a meeting on January 27 with Daymark Recovery Services who operates the ACT team and walk-in clinic to address the concerns in Moore County. She also informed board members that Trillium has an RFP (Request for Proposal) out for additional mobile crisis services to support individuals in avoiding hospitalization or involving law enforcement when possible.

- Ms. Futrell and Ms. Goodman thanked the board members for their continued service and contributions to the Regional Advisory and Governing Boards.
- Board members led a discussion around a collaborative approach to assist counties in the southern region and offered support to one another.

**SR-CFAC Report:** Mary Ann Furniss reported on the recent CFAC meeting.

- The Southern Regional CFAC consists of 12 members (1 Bladen, 3 Brunswick, 1 Hoke, 1 Lee, 3 Moore, 3 Robeson). There is no representation for Columbus, New Hanover, or Scotland and recruitment is underway. The disability area that members represent are 4 Substance Use, 2 Developmental Disabilities, 2 Traumatic Brain Injury, 4 Mental Health.
- The regional CFAC meeting with Cindy Ehlers, COO of Trillium is scheduled for January 23.
- Jackie McLean attended the i2i Conference and gave a report at the recent SR-CFAC meeting.
- The State CFAC call was held on January 22, Chair Mamie Hutnik and Vice Chair Mary Ann Furniss attended the call.
  - Kelly Crosbie, Director, DMHDDSUS updated those on the call on plans and activities at the state level and her interactions with the newly appointed Secretary Dr. Devdutta Sangvai and their recommitment on CIT (Crisis Intervention Team) training.
  - A State CFAC member expressed a rise in anxiety and depression in the immigrant community and the reluctance of reaching out for help.
- March 11 is Legislative Day in Raleigh.

**Trillium Regional Vice President Report:** Cecelia Peers, Regional Vice President (Southern)

- Member and recipient call line volumes have seen a decrease, however, continue to be high.

- No prior authorizations flexibilities for provider and/or pharmacy services related to Hurricane Helene and Tailored Plan launch will be in place until the end of January.
- MCOs are participating in a medical health parity initiative to ensure that services for people receiving mental health and substance use treatment mirror what is happening on the physical health side. The CEOs have a kickoff session on January 21.
- Hoke County is set to receive a mid-year update (February 3) on basic outpatient needs and what higher levels of care and connecting with LME/MCOs will look like versus a standard plan.
- Annual updates for county Commissioners will begin in late February or early March and will focus on yearly initiatives and county data of the Medicaid system.
- Lumberton playground ribbon cutting took place on January 8 and well attended. Trillium contributed \$100,000 along with other community donors to complete the project.
- Ms. Peers is participating in Carolinas Across 100 initiative, an 18-month commitment around housing options/access along with a group from Lee County. Other counties in Trillium's region also have teams that are part of this initiative.
- NC TIDE Conference will be in Wilmington March 31-April 2 and Trillium will cover the cost of SRAB and SR-CFAC members to attend.
- Legislative Breakfast on Mental Health is scheduled for Saturday, February 8 in Chapel Hill.
- NCAHEC Behavioral Health April 30-May 2 at Wrightsville Beach.
- NCACC Overdose Prevention Conference will be attended by Trillium's Regional Vice Presidents March 18-20 in Raleigh.
- RFA for mobile crisis management provider to cover Bladen, Columbus, Robeson, Scotland, Hoke, Moore, and Lee to provide another MCM option and reduce mobile response times.
- RFA for Rural Equity and Innovation and Integrated Care Pilot up to \$1 million dollars to provide six providers to pilot an integrated care model using value-based payment closed January 10.
- Human Trafficking Summit scheduled for January 31 in Edgecombe County Community College.
- MHFA (Mental Health & First Aid) online courses are being offered February 18 & 20 for adults and youth.
- Victory Junction inclusive camp that Trillium partners with for family weekends will be held on April 4-6 and April 11-13. March deadline dates for families to request participation.

- Expanding the Child First Service: Costal Horizons will expand the program into Scotland, Hoke, Moore, and Lee. A check presentation will take place at the West End office (1100 Seven Lakes Rd, West End 27376) on February 6. Easter Seals Port Health will cover Columbus, Bladen, Robeson, and other legacy East Pointe counties. The check presentation will be held at the Trillium Beulaville office (514 East Main St, Beulaville 28518) February 24 @ 11:00 a.m.

🌱 Commissioner Zapple asked the age of those in the Child First Service and if Trillium is partnering with Smart Start?

- Ms. Peers replied that the Child First teams participate in System of Care collaboratives that include Smart Start and Head Start to coordinate their efforts.

#### **Board Comments/Concerns:**

- Commissioner Cooke shared that Brunswick County received several inches of snow and schools are on distant learning and warming centers are open during frigid temperatures for those needing shelter. A new senior multi-purpose center is opening in Waccamaw.
- Walter Ferguson asked board members to share with him any comments or concerns they would like relayed to the Governing Board at their next meeting.
- Commissioner Smith shared that Lee County received a grant for an on-call transportation system for individuals who need transportation to and from appointments for treatments or counseling.
- Commissioner Zapple shared New Hanover has warming centers setup by the faith community throughout the county. The Healing Place now has 18 beds (9 women 9 men) to offer a warm place to sleep and a meal. County budget season is approaching and having a budget priority meeting for the Southern Regional Advisory Board to formulate a document to share with the Governing Board would be beneficial.
- Commissioner Zapple offered a concept of having the Southern Regional Advisory Board meeting throughout the region to increase physical participation. Commissioner Cooke suggested utilizing county complex that may be more central, adjusting meeting times, and having a meal with the meeting.
- Commissioner Williams suggested rotating the meetings between the regional offices.

**Adjournment:** Commissioner Picerno motioned to adjourn the meeting; Commissioner Cooke seconded the motion. All in favor, none opposed. The meeting adjourned at 5:34 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,



Sandra Dunlap, Administrative Coordinator



Commissioner Rob Zapple, Chair