

REQUEST FOR BOARD ACTION

HENDERSON COUNTY BOARD OF COMMISSIONERS

MEETING DATE: January 2, 2024

SUBJECT: Behavioral Health System Coordinator Position – Public Health

PRESENTER: Steve Smith, Health Director

ATTACHMENTS: 1. Support letter from Henderson County Partnership for Health
2. Correspondence from Henderson County Board of Health

SUMMARY OF REQUEST:

The Henderson County Board of Health requests the Board approve the addition of a Behavioral Health System Coordinator position that was previously established within the Department of Public Health. That position was recently reclassified and transitioned into County Administration to lead strategic efforts identified by Commissioners for the priorities linked to opioid litigation settlement funds.

The capacity to lead broader community initiatives related to mental health and substance use strategies are reflected in the current Community Health Improvement Plan and represent a critical need. Those efforts are supplemental to the goals linked with the use of opioid litigation settlement funds, but that foundation can't be sustained without the requisite expertise and staffing capacity. One of the priority collaborations underway today for example, concerns proactive efforts to advance suicide prevention particularly among youth.

The position was previously funded by local dollars prior to the transition and with the ability to fund the Behavioral Health Systems Director entirely with opioid litigation settlement funds, this request poses no changes to the current FY 24 budget for the Department of Public Health.

The letter of support from the Henderson County Partnership for Health was reviewed by the Henderson County Board of Health at their August 8, 2023 meeting. Board members agreed on the importance of sustaining the position and approved a motion to advocate for its continuation.

BOARD ACTION REQUESTED:

The Board is requested to approve the addition of a Behavioral Health System Coordinator position capacity within the Department of Public Health.

Suggested Motion: *I move the Board approve the addition of a Behavioral Health System Coordinator position as originally established within the Department of Public Health.*

August 4, 2023

Henderson County Board of Health
Attn: Dr. Maggie Hayes, Chairperson
1200 Spartanburg Highway, Suite 100
Hendersonville, NC 28792



Partnership
For Health

Dear Henderson County Board of Health,

I wanted to thank the Department of Public Health for providing community health priority updates, including substance use and mental health, at our August 2nd meeting. During the updates, Mr. Steve Smith noted that Mrs. Jodi Grabowski would be transitioning from the Department of Health's Behavioral Health System Coordinator to a lead role managing the activities related to the opioid litigation settlement funds, including establishment of an adult recovery court model.

We understand the substantial value of the settlement funds and are excited about the benefit they will bring to so many that are involved with opioid drug use. We also see the enormous coordination and progress that's been made to address the growing substance use and mental health challenges our community faces. This progress has been facilitated by the Behavioral Health System Coordinator.

Examples of that work include coordination of several stakeholder groups including the Behavioral Health Summit, the Henderson County ACE's, Resilience and Trauma (HART) Collaborative and the Youth Mental Health Work Group, which is prioritizing suicide prevention. These additional components comprise the community foundation needed to sustain the success of multiple ongoing initiatives, including key strategies led by the Henderson County Board of Commissioners.

This letter serves as our formal support for the vital behavioral health system coordinator position so community partners including our members can continue our shared track record of success. We hope the Henderson County Board of Health will also consider advocacy for the position so that we can build and expand on this exceptional collaboration.

Thank you for all you do to advance health in our community.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in blue ink that reads 'Elizabeth Moss'. The signature is fluid and cursive, with the first name 'Elizabeth' written in a larger, more prominent script than the last name 'Moss'.

Elizabeth Moss, Executive Director of Interfaith Ministry
Chairperson, Henderson County Partnership for Health
elizabethmoss@iam-hc.org

Steve Smith

From: Hayes, Magdalena <mhayes@brchs.com>
Sent: Monday, August 21, 2023 2:20 PM
To: John Mitchell
Cc: William Lapsley; Kenesha Smith; Steve Smith
Subject: Behavioral Health System Coordinator for Henderson County

Dear Mr. Mitchell;

The Behavioral Health System Coordinator position was discussed at our Board of Health meeting on August 8, 2023. This position provides a number of vital services for our community, as detailed below. Board members wish to express our strong support for maintaining this position.

- The position has responsibilities not only in the substance use arena, but also mental health. Often individuals are dealing with challenges in both realms.
- Serves as our community direct liaison with VAYA Health to coordinate service provision, update a roster of service providers *and* maintain an estimate of wait times for critical services.
- Provides capacity for coordination of new and emerging priorities like our recent focus on upward trends in suicidal ideation in youth and related prevention strategies.
- Leads both community health action teams for substance use and mental health.
- Serves as a central and comprehensive data source for local non-profits pursuing grants, with most of those applications achieving success and generating additional investment for services and capacity that don't have to be funded with tax dollars.
- Assists Crossnore with some of its groundbreaking work as it establishes a Trauma Resilient Communities program in Henderson County. This innovative approach addresses some of the root causes of challenges we experience here.

Please share as you deem appropriate with the Henderson County Board of Commissioners.

Thank You,

Magdalena S. Hayes, MD
Chairperson Henderson County Board of Health