



FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

For More Information:

Cabarrus County
Jonathan Weaver
O: 704-920-2341
M: 704-433-4064

Union County
Kathryn Brown
O: 704-283-3571
M: 704-577-2164

Partners Health Management
Stacy Bryant
O: 704-884-2558
M: 704-836-6377

jaweaver@cabarruscounty.us

kathryn.brown@unioncountync.gov

sbryant@partnersbhm.org

NC DHHS Secretary approves Cabarrus, Union move from Cardinal Innovations to Partners Health Management

Gastonia, NC, April 9, 2021—Cabarrus and Union counties were notified today that Mandy Cohen, MD, MHP, Secretary of the North Carolina Department of Health and Human Services (NC DHHS), has approved their requests for realignment with Partners Health Management (Partners). The realignment has an effective date of September 1, 2021 and was approved in accordance with NCGS § 122C-115(a3) and county disengagement rules.

In October 2020, both Cabarrus and Union County Boards of Commissioners unanimously voted to disengage from the current Local Management Entity/Managed Care Organization (LME/MCO), Cardinal Innovations Healthcare and realign with Partners. LME/MCOs are governmental entities that manage county, state and Medicaid funds for intellectual/developmental disability, mental health and substance use disorder services.

Cabarrus County and Union County officials worked jointly to align their requests in the best interest of residents, and believe the realignment will better serve their community needs.

“This seamless transition already delivers on the commitment Partners Health Management made to Cabarrus County,” said Steve Morris, Chair of the Cabarrus Board of Commissioners. “On behalf of the board and County leadership, I want to say that we look forward to collaborating with a like-minded organization that prioritizes innovative public service. Partners will help advance our goal of a safe, healthy community that provides appropriate mental health services.”

“The health and safety of Union County residents is always our top priority. We are confident this transition will better meet the needs of our residents and will allow for better service and more options for care,” said Michelle Lancaster, Deputy County Manager of Union County.

“We are humbled by the counties’ request and Secretary’s decision,” said Rhett Melton, CEO of Partners. “We understand that every community we serve is unique and one size does not fit all. Collaboration is the cornerstone of Partners’ culture and we look forward to working closely with county leadership, providers and stakeholders in the weeks ahead to ensure continuity of care for individuals and families who live in Cabarrus and Union counties.”

Cabarrus and Union leaders will review all requirements set forth from the Secretary in the coming weeks to develop a collaborative strategy and work plans to ensure continuity of care for members and a seamless transition to Partners on September 1, 2021.

For more information, visit:

- <https://cabarruscounty.us/resources/mental-health-realignment>
- <https://www.unioncountync.gov/departments/social-services/behavioral-health-realignment>
- www.partnersbhm.org/county-realignment.

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