

HEALTH AND HUMAN SERVICES BOARD



Board Members

Mr. John Blalock
Ms. Carmelita Coleman
Dr. James Doub, OD
Dr. Palmer Edwards, MD
Dr. Brooke Griffith
Dr. Calvert Jeffers, Jr., DVM
Dr. Richard Lord, MD
Dr. Linda L. Petrou, PhD
Dr. Sharon Pettiford, DNP, RN, CNRN
Ms. Sharon A. Rimm, LCSW
Dr. Kenneth Sadler, DDS
Mr. J. Phil Seats, R.Ph., MBA
Dr. Ricky Sides, DC
Ms. Gloria Whisenhunt, Commissioner

Chair

Ms. Heather Parker

Vice Chair

Mr. Fleming El-Amin,

HEALTH AND HUMAN SERVICES VIRTUAL BOARD MEETING MINUTES

February 4, 2026

Board Members Present

Mr. John Blalock, Ms. Carmelita Coleman, Dr. James Doub, Mr. Fleming El-Amin, Dr. Brooke Griffith, Dr. Calvert Jeffers, Dr. Richard Lord, Ms. Heather Parker, Dr. Sharon Pettiford, Ms. Sharon Rimm, Dr. Kenneth Sadler, Mr. J. Phil Seats, Ms. Gloria Whisenhunt

Board Members Absent

Dr. Palmer Edwards, Dr. Linda Petrou, Dr. Ricky Sides

Staff Present

Ms. Lorrie Christie, Ms. Tanya Donnell, Mr. Michael Duncan, Ms. Nihya Payne, Ms. Denise Price, Ms. Christa Smith, Mr. Joshua Swift

Guest

Mr. Sherod McCormick, Commissioner Gray Wilson

Call to Order

On Wednesday, February 3, 2026 the Forsyth County Health and Human Services Board held its regularly scheduled bi-monthly meeting virtually. The meeting was called to order by Board Chair, Ms. Heather Parker at 5:30 p.m.

Moment of Silence

A moment of silence was observed by all.

Consideration of Board Minutes for December 3, 2025

The minutes from the December 3, 2025 Health and Human Services Bi-monthly Virtual Board Meeting were reviewed. Discussion: Ms. Parker requested change on the second page under

HHS Board Operating Procedures Annual Review be changed from Mr. John Blalock asked for a motion to Mr. John Blalock made a motion.

Dr. Doub made a motion to approve the minutes with the change and Mr. El-Amin seconded the motion. A quorum was present. The motion carried and the minutes were approved with 12 votes in favor.

Public Comment Period

None.

Announcements

Education Opportunity Ms. Nihya Payne, Evaluation and Planning Manager

The Role of the Health and Human Services (HHS) and Strategic Plan Update

Ms. Payne shared that her team has a large role in the coordination and communication with the entire HHS campus. Currently, the team consists of two community outreach liaisons and one business process analysis (BPA). There are three BPA positions vacant.

This team works on strengthening the Health and Human Services plans, by coordinating and tracking improvements and service deliveries across all Human Services agencies.

The COL (Community Outreach Liaison) team leads the frontline outreach and engagement and the BPA function is to support process improvement and data processing systems and design.

January 2026 marked the second year of the strategic plan. There are three priorities:

- Whole-person care
- Reshaping the culture
- Integrating with community partners

COL has played a key role in coordinating efforts and support of the whole person care and integrating partnerships. They have done intentional outreach, streamlined internal communication and coordinated schedules across the agencies. The team created a survey and a monthly algorithm that is sent to the human services directors and the executive leadership team. This allows staff to attend appropriate outreach events.

Ms. Payne reported that the COL team was able to attend over 150 community events and was able to connect over 275 individuals to resources. Beginning in January 2026, the team began working with MapForsyth, the City/County GIS team, in order to transition from a manual tracking tool to a digital platform. This will provide clearer data, make reporting easier and improve forecasting to help understand the capacity, staffing needs and community needs.

The Business Process Analyst team has been focusing on whole person care with partners. They help carry out and implement patient centered services and engagement opportunities that will help strengthen programs and connections. The Learn More series features peer led discussions

regarding programs and topics across Health & Human Services with the goal of assuring HHS employees are aware of the full array of services and supports available across the campus and so they can best connect individuals to other areas as needed. The team supported four sessions in 2025 and have planned another four sessions planned for 2026.

Ms. Payne shared another topic is the Employee Resource Fair which is held annually. The next fair will be 2/18/26 from 11:00 a.m. until 1:30 p.m. The goal is to have employees meet their co-workers and learn directly from them about services available.

Several partners came to tour the campus in 2025. Campus tours for 2026 have already begun. In June 2025, approximately 125 employees as well as community partners attended the HHS Campus Open House.

Reshaping the Culture

Working with community partners, providing resources to employees, making services more accessible and creating conversations and dialogue shifts towards reshaping the culture. There is a growing awareness of available services. New Employee Orientation also helps with this.

Health & Human Services Website

Ms. Payne reported that the team will be working along with the communications department to make changes/updates to the HHS website.

Mr. Blalock commended Ms. Payne for a great presentation and expressed his appreciation.

Dr. Sadler asked how it was determined that there was a need for a change in culture. Ms. Payne responded that workgroups were formed which included management, line staff, HHS board members and evaluation and planning staff who worked with Chapel Hill. Over a period of four weeks, several areas were identified but the three priorities were established. Ms. Payne has offered to share the hardcopy of the Strategic Plan.

Dr. Griffith also commended Ms. Payne for the great work she and her team are doing.

Mr. El-Amin also commended Ms. Payne and asked if there is a target date for filling the vacant positions. Ms. Payne responded that she is in the process of scheduling interviews for next week.

Deputy County Manager's Comments – Ms. Denise Price

(Complete- detailed handouts on file in the Administrative Binder)

Ms. Price thanked everyone for shifting to a virtual meeting due to inclement weather. She also announced that a virtual meeting is allowed when there is an active state of emergency.

Otherwise, a quorum must be present in person.

Construction Updates

- Social Services Lobby Renovation

- Construction has begun
- Public Health Renovation
 - In early design phase, a few design options have been shared
- Dental Clinic Renovation
 - Design completed, contractor will be selected soon, short project, approximately six months
- Mobile Integrated Healthcare Relocation
 - Plans have been finalized, will be moving out of the future dental clinic space soon at Annex 1 and relocating to the former pharmacy space in the same building
- Annex 2
 - Currently housing the winter program. During community sessions, received input from the community regarding types of complimentary services that would be helpful. More sessions will be planned in the near future.

Fiscal Year (FY) 2027 Budget Timeline

- February 9-April 3, 2026: Department Budget Meetings with the Manager’s Office
- March 16, 2026: Budget Workshop
- March 21, 2026: Board Retreat
- April 6, 2026: Budget Workshop
- May 7, 2026: FY27 Budget Presented to the Board of County Commissioners (BOCC)
- May 14, 2026: Detailed Budget Presentation
- May 18, 2026: Public Hearing on FY27 Budget
- May 21, 2026 & May 28, 2026: Budget Workshops
- June 4, 2026: Adoption of FY27 Budget

Other Budget Related Task

- **January 26—May 7, 2026: Behavioral Health and Opioid Settlement Request for Proposals (RFP) timeline:**
 - January 26-February 13, 2026: RFP application portal open
 - March 13, 2026: Review teams finalize recommendations
 - April 1, 2026: HHS board votes on recommendations
 - May 4, 2026: BOCC briefed on recommended projects
 - May 7, 2026: BOCC votes on recommended projects

Director of Social Services Comments – Ms. Christa Smith

(Complete- detailed handouts on file in the Administrative Binder)

Vacancy Rate

Current rate of 8% agency wide. Vacancy rates are beginning to trend downwards and nearing all positions being filled in Child Protective Services (CPS) and CPS After Hours.

Operations Updates

The lobby construction project is scheduled to begin on 1/26/2026 and is expected to take approximately 10 weeks to complete. During this time, lobby seating for customers will be relocated to a large conference room on the first floor.

Agency Outreach Updates

Representatives will be stationed one day per week in each of the five outlying libraries: Rural Hall, Walkertown, Kernersville, Clemmons and Lewisville.

Adult Services

Practice Standards

The NC Division of Social Services in collaboration with public knowledge has developed the NC Practice Standards for Adult Services. These standards outline best-practice behaviours for adult services leaders, supervisors, and staff when working with their agencies, team, and the adults and families they serve. These standards consist of the essential functions of core activities and practice standards and will be introduced and supported by training requirements established by the NCDHHS (North Carolina Department of Health & Human Services). The training modules for Adult Services personnel include:

- Communicating Practice Standards for Adult Services Workers
- Engaging Practice Standards for Adult Services Workers
- Assessing Practice Standards for Adult Services Workers
- Planning Practice Standards for Adult Services Workers
- Implementing Practice Standards for Adult Services Workers

Adult Services Holiday Giving Campaign Summary

The Adult Services Division (ASD) is proud to have served 140 clients thanks to the generosity of others. The campaign distributed a total of 174 gifts, at an estimated monetary value of over \$5,000. Beyond gift cards, the most frequently requested items were warm clothes and slippers. A “fun fact” is that one client’s wish list included a request for “French Books and Magazines.”

Family & Children Services Division

End of 2025 Year Celebration

The Family & Children’s (F&C) division had a great end of the year celebration with the team members in December. Some of the activities consisted of sharing a meal, including youth staying in our building, networking with partners, organized games and an Ugly Sweater Day!

Social Worker Hiring Event

Thank you to Mrs. Sandra Byrd, Human Resources Consultant for her assistance with a successful hiring event for Child Protective Services (CPS) and After-Hours CPS staff on December 18, 2025. As a result of all the hiring efforts, F&C is currently at one vacancy in daytime CPS and two in After-Hours CPS.

PATH NC (Partnership and Technology Hub for North Carolina)

PATH-NC is the new state-wide information system that equips the social workers with real-time data and decision-making tools to better protect children and to improve outcomes for children and families across the state. Currently, Intake and Assessment are enrolled in the system, In-home and Foster Care will enroll at the end of 2026 or early 2027.

Number of Children in Foster Care

As of January 2026, there are 219 children in care.

Economic Services Division

Childcare Waitlist Update

Social Services has fully eliminated the Childcare Subsidy waitlist. All children previously on the waitlist have been served. Beginning February 2026, families who apply for childcare assistance will be served upon application rather than placed on a waitlist.

Community Outreach – Bethesda Center

Economic Services and Medicaid Services will expand community-based access by providing on-site services at the Bethesda Center two days per month. Staff will be available on the 1st Tuesday and 3rd Wednesday of each month to assist individuals with applications and eligibility services.

Employee Engagement

Economic Services hosted an end-of-year celebration, including a spirit week that encouraged team bonding and employee engagement. Staff participation was strong and contributed positively to morale and workplace culture.

Food and Nutrition Services – Error Trend Update

Food and Nutrition Services implemented a Continuous Quality Improvement (CQI) process focused on identifying error trends and reducing the FNS error payment rate. This initiative began October 1, 2025.

First Quarter Results:

- Cases Audited: 506
- Cases Correct: 418
- Total Number of Errors: 88
- Unable to Determine: 29
- Overpayments: 24 cases of \$5,470.00
- Underpayments: 35 cases of \$4,473.00
- Total Allotments Issued: \$206,663.00
- Total Error Amount: \$9,943.00
- Calculated Error Rate: 7.21%

These results establish a baseline for targeted corrective actions and real-time case corrections. The CQI process will continue to focus on trend analysis, staff coaching, and policy reinforcement to further reduce the error payment rate in upcoming quarters.

Medicaid Services Division

Medicaid Expansion

Starting in December 2023, Forsyth County had approximately 10,500 residents enrolled in Medicaid expansion. By December 2025, the number of enrollees grew to more than 27,000 individuals, more than doubling the number covered since the program's implementation. This steady rise reflects increased awareness, improved outreach efforts, and ongoing eligibility expansions.

This upward trend is a positive sign that Forsyth County is successfully connecting more residents to critical healthcare services under Medicaid expansion, helping to reduce the uninsured rate and support overall community health.

Among the 27,000+ residents enrolled as of December 2025, many received essential health services that improved their quality of life:

- 22,227 residents received prescription medications
- 2,904 residents received diabetes-related prescriptions
- 6,856 residents were treated for hypertension
- 6,519 residents accessed dental care services
- 2,134 residents were screened for breast cancer
- 1,115 residents underwent colon cancer screening
- 2,993 residents were screened for cervical cancer

These figures highlight the broad impact Medicaid expansion has had in Forsyth County not only making services available, but ensuring residents actually received vital care.

Operational and Workforce Impact

This same population will also be impacted by the implementation of biannual Medicaid recertifications along with new work requirements. As a result, the workload for the Medicaid Services Division will increase significantly.

Currently, staff complete approximately 27,000 eligibility reviews per year for individuals receiving expanded benefits. With biannual recertifications, that number will increase to 54,000+ reviews annually, in addition to completing a new non-financial eligibility determination related to work requirements for this population.

This represents a substantial operational shift for our workforce, increasing case complexity, staff workload, and administrative demands while maintaining continuity of care for eligible residents. By supporting these services and managing these expanded responsibilities, Forsyth County DSS continues to improve health outcomes, reduce long-term healthcare costs, and contribute to a healthier, wealthier, and safer Forsyth County.

Child Support Services

Collections Updates

At the halfway mark of the fiscal year, Child Support has collected \$11,285,649.38 – 50% of goal and exceeding the state-wide average. We would like to recognize Jamie Tucker for collecting a lump sum payment of \$14,732.78 paying off the arrears on the case. We would also like to recognize Bonnie Reynolds for collecting \$9,072.28 for a family also paying off the arrears on the case.

Public Health Director Comments – Mr. Joshua Swift

(Complete- detailed handouts on file in the Administrative Binder)

Childhood vaccine recommendation changes

Mr. Swift reported that these changes do not alter the recommendations of the North Carolina Division of Public Health.

FLU/COVID

Vaccine is available and COVID-19 test kits availability is beginning to wind down. The test kits have been available at all libraries. The state will not provide any more. The flu cases have peaked and COVID cases are slowly increasing. Wastewater levels are going up.

Budget

The team is closely monitoring the federal and state funding. The state funds 35% of the public health budget with 90% of these funds being federal passthrough dollars.

Care management programs that go out into the community to work with pregnant women and women with children that are high risk may be affected by Medicaid reductions and management by standard plans. Currently working with prepaid health plans to receive a six-month extension.

Measles

Mr. Swift reported that six North Carolina counties have confirmed measles cases, a total of 14 cases statewide. Cases in South Carolina, Western North Carolina and Charlotte are being monitored. South Carolina has the largest outbreak in the nation. Due to continued domestic transmission, the United States is facing the potential loss of elimination status.

The WSFCS overall vaccine rate is 93% and 95% is needed for herd immunity. Mr. Swift and team have been collaborating with WSFCS to communicate the importance of MMR (Measles Mump Rubella) vaccines for students and staff. Students and staff who are non-compliant or exempt, will miss 21 days of school if infected. The schools with the highest percent of unvaccinated students include The Special Children's School (30%), The Children's Center (25%), Kingswood School (20%), Middle Fork Pre-K (11%) and Gibson Elementary (7%).

Mr. Swift and team continue to work to be prepared in case cases are identified in Forsyth County including preparing a call center for contact tracing, media messages and updating the Public Health website.

Care Management

Managing, monitoring and engaging 1,114 at-risk children and at-risk pregnancies with nurse/family partnerships.

Health Education

- Men's Health launched a new 24/7 Dad Fatherhood program, this included an online launch.
- Community Nutrition will begin offering Med-South nutrition classes for employees and the community this month.
- Healthy Forsyth's Walk with Me launched the program on the southside of Forsyth County.
- Minority Diabetes Employee Prevention program will be launched in the spring. There will be 2 new sites added to the youth garden.
- The Libraries with Heart program expanded to 8 new sites to add blood pressure monitoring stations which were donated by the American Heart Association.

POSSE

Expanding to an additional site with 1,450 protective devices distributed and they performed 1,237 STI (Sexually Transmitted Infection) tests.

Forsyth WINS

Held the December community event and provided toys, coats, clothes, food and shoes for the community.

WIC

Maintaining a caseload of over 10,000, there has been a national decrease. Currently providing information to the NICU (Neonatal Intensive Care Unit) units at the hospitals. There has been a national upgrade to the food packages to allow more accommodations.

School Health

The first annual Project Bright Eyes event hosted by Public Health's School Health program in partnership with In Her Sight Vision Care will be held on Saturday, March 28, 2026 at the Forsyth County Public Health Department. There are 40 appointment slots available for comprehensive eye exams and glasses will be ordered as needed.

Environmental Health

Two new Food & Lodging Environmental Health Specialists (EHS) have passed all requirements and are fully credentialed. One EHS from Food & Lodging has completed FDA (Food & Drug Administration) Standardization, bringing the total number of employees to have completed standardization training to twelve.

LAB

A new electronic process has been implemented to use for specimen submission to the State Laboratory, including rabies testing specimens submitted by Animal Control who will be trained by the lab manager.

Clinical Services

The Flu and Covid vaccine clinic will remain open Monday-Friday with late clinic hours every Thursday until 7:30 p.m. As of 1/21/26, approximately 2,300 flu vaccines and 186 Covid vaccines have been given.

Staffing

There are two vacancies in the immunization clinic, two in registration and one refugee nurse position.

Dental Clinic/Preventive Dental Health (PDH)

Adding a new provider allows more people to be served to meet dental care needs. The new provider has been with the dental clinic for two months and new patients are already being seen.

Emergency Preparedness

Actively recruiting to fill the HHS (Health & Human Services) Emergency Preparedness Coordinator position. This position works closely with Forsyth County Emergency Management.

EPI/Surveillance

The team is completing the 2025 Community Health Assessment (CHA) report which is due to the state by March 2026.

Finance/Business Office

The fiscal analyst position has been filled and currently filling the last fiscal tech position.

Director of Behavioral Health Services Comments – Michael Duncan

Overdose & Narcan Administration Data

Mr. Duncan began by sharing that the Unseen Patterns Highlights Impact website is the best way to view overdose data. It will show gender, race, age group, scene zip codes, patient destinations and patient dispositions (subject to change). This information is available to the public. You may view detailed information at: https://forsyth.cc/unseen_patterns

Mr. Duncan reported that October–December, ESO (Emergency Services Operations) data reporting shows that most responses were in the following zip codes: 27101 (102), 27105 (93), 27107 (65) and that the gap between females and males is narrowing during this reporting period; the average age and race are consistent with previous data.

Heat mapping shows poisoning data; 243 reports of alcohol misuse which is the primary suspected drug. You will also see 172 unknow substances. There were 80 Opioid overdose calls and 143 Narcan administered (42 required multiple administration)

Additional Narcan Wall Sites

Two additional Narcan wall units have been installed at The Bethesda Center and The Dream Center which makes a total of 14 units installed across Forsyth County.

Needs Gap Analysis Updates

Will be receiving a preliminary data report on February 20th to help inform recommendations as teams review requests for fY27 MOE (Maintenance of Effort) and Opioid Settlement funds.

Dr. Sadler asked how often the wall units need to be replenished. Mr. Duncan responded, the centers where they are placed track the supply and let county staff know when they need to be replenished. He added that all supplies have lot numbers for tracking in case there are product recalls. Ms. Price added that the specifics depend on the location and foot traffic.

Mr. Seats asked where the kits come from, how many are made available to us and who is paying for them. Mr. Duncan explained that they are not unlimited, Behavioral Health orders them through Opioid Settlement funds and Cardinal is the main provider. Ms. Price added that the state and some community partners supply kits as well.

988 Bumper Sticker Project

All non-emergency fleet vehicles will be labeled with the sticker across Forsyth County. The suicide prevention lifeline can be reached by dialing 988.

Monthly Recreation Center Resource Fairs

The first was held on January 13, 2026 with a total of 15 vendors and 41 attendees. The vendor response exceeded the available space.

Mobile Integrated Health (MIH) Vehicles

Two non-emergency, quick response vehicles have been rebranded with the MIH and Forsyth County logo. The decaling is intentionally simple.

Mr. Duncan announced that the one of the MIH Paramedics will be joining the MIH team i next week after completing their months-long training with EMS .

New Business

Public Health Fee Schedule

Director of Public Health Mr. Joshua Swift

Mr. Swift requesting approval from the HHS Board for approval to implement adjustments to the fee schedule. The rationale is to align fees with the Medicaid reimbursement standards. (See handout for additional details.)

Mr. Seats made a motion to approve the Public Health Fee schedule and Mr. El Amin seconded the motion. The motion carried and the Public Health Fee schedule was approved with 13 votes in favor.

Bad Debt

Director of Public Health Mr. Joshua Swift

Mr. Swift reported approximately \$1,200.00 in accumulated debt from the past two years. He is requesting approval to write off debt for patients owing less than \$50.00 each. Total debt for Fiscal Year 2023-2024 is \$369.40 and the total for Fiscal Year 2024-2025 is \$807.25.

Dr. Jeffers made a motion to approve the write off of bad debt from FY 2023-2024 and FY 2024-2025 as outlined above. Mr. Seats seconded the motion. The motion carried and the Public Health Fee schedule was approved with 13 votes in favor.

FROST Committee Update -- Mr. John Blalock

Mr. Blalock reported that they are receiving applications for FY27 funding now. Ms. Annie Vasquez will coordinate a panel to review and make recommendations.

Legislative Committee Update -- Dr. Linda Petrou

None at this time.

HHS Board Member Shadowing --Moments of Reflection

Dr. Sadler shared that he toured the HHS campus a couple of weeks ago and was very impressed by what he saw in the time he spent with staff. He shared that this was helpful as a new board member.

Ms. Parker requested a motion to adjourn. Dr. Lord made a motion to adjourn the meeting and several board members seconded. The meeting was adjourned at 7:15 p.m.

Next Hybrid Meeting: April 1 at 5:30 p.m.