

**RESOLUTION OF THE MECKLENBURG COUNTY BOARD OF COMMISSIONERS
AUTHORIZING THE COUNTY MANAGER TO POST A DISENGAGEMENT PLAN,
ISSUE A LETTER OF INTENT AND NOTIFY THOSE PARTIES REQUIRED BY LAW
OF MECKLENBURG COUNTY'S INTENT TO DISENGAGE FROM CARDINAL
INNOVATIONS HEALTH CARE**

WHEREAS, North Carolina General Statute 122C-115 (a3) empowers a County to choose its Local Management Entity/Managed Care Organization (LME/MCO) subject to the approval of the Secretary of the North Carolina Department of Health and Human Services; and

WHEREAS, from 2012-2013 Mecklenburg County launched and operated MeckLINK Behavioral Healthcare as the County's LME/MCO; and

WHEREAS, in 2013-2014 the General Assembly passed legislation prohibiting counties from operating as LME/MCOs and in April 2014, Cardinal Innovations replaced MeckLINK as the County's LME/MCO; and

WHEREAS, since aligning with Cardinal Innovations, Mecklenburg County has experienced significant issues in the delivery of service to Mecklenburg County residents; and

WHEREAS, in October 2020 Mecklenburg County issued a joint letter along with Forsyth County to NCDHHS outlining many of the problems that both counties were experiencing in the service delivery by Cardinal Innovations, which, for Mecklenburg, included fragmented discharged planning from emergency room stays for those facing mental health issues, especially juveniles in the custody of the County due to abuse and neglect, gaps in service provisions for individuals during high-acuity behavioral health situations, delayed treatment authorizations and a restricted provider network for foster children and adult wards resulting in extended hospitalization and often inappropriate placements upon discharge for youth in foster care; and

WHEREAS, several community stakeholders have expressed concerns with the level of services provided to the community by Cardinal; which includes, District Court Judges, Mobile Crisis Services, Charlotte's Center for Legal Advocacy, Council for Children's Rights, local hospital systems as well as many advocacy groups; and

WHEREAS, to address the issue, Mecklenburg County convened a Community Transition for Youth Collaborative that included many of the above-named partners; and

WHEREAS, numerous subcommittees were established to work on the issues and develop a plan for going forward, yet the issues continued. A Plan of Action (POA) was developed to address systemic concerns, and to date, Cardinal has not outlined a clear plan to address the ongoing concerns; and

WHEREAS, while these issues are not unique to Cardinal alone, because of the difficulty in operating with limited resources to serve individuals with the most complex behavioral health needs, there does need to be a willingness to partner and work to implement improved sustained and necessary changes to meet the needs of the residents in the catchment area; and

WHEREAS, several counties, including Forsyth, within the Cardinal catchment area have requested disengagement from Cardinal Innovations as their LME/MCO; and

WHEREAS, in November 2020, the Board was presented with an update outlining the ongoing concerns with the services delivery by Cardinal. Different options were presented for the Board to consider and the Board authorized the County Manger to explore disengagement from Cardinal Innovations; and

WHEREAS, Mecklenburg County staff have continued to work with Cardinal to address the systemic issues, but insufficient progress has been made after a considerable period of time; and

WHEREAS, Mecklenburg County representatives have had productive discussions and engagement with Alliance Health, an LME/MCO in good standing with NCDHHS; and

WHEREAS, Alliance is committed to its mission of "improving the health and well-being of the people they serve by ensuring highly effective, community- based support and care." Alliance's values of accountability, integrity, collaboration, compassion, dignity, respect, and innovation align with the mission, vision, and values of Mecklenburg County; and

WHEREAS, Alliance's priorities and projects align well with the county's responsibilities to citizens with Behavioral Health and Intellectual/Developmental Disability needs; and

NOW THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED

That the Mecklenburg County Board of Commissioners hereby approves the Disengagement Plan, attached hereto and incorporated herein by reference, and authorize the County Manager to issue a letter of intent and solicit public comments on such plan and to work in coordination with the County Attorney and staff to continue the process of disengagement from Cardinal Innovations Healthcare and realign with Alliance Health.

Adopted this 1st day of June, 2021


George Dunlap, Chairman
Mecklenburg County Board of Commissioners



Approved as to form:


County Attorney