



DESTINATION 2025

AGENDA

October 14th through 17th
Cherokee, NC

INTEGRATED CARE SUMMIT



DAY 1

Tuesday, October 14, 2025

7:00a

Exhibitor Set-up Opens (Exhibit Hall)

10:00a

Registration Opens (Level 3)

1:00p

Integrative Health: A Tribal Approach to Whole Person Care (General Session)



CASEY COOPER

Cherokee Indian Hospital Authority / Chief Executive Officer

This session focuses on major historical events in Cherokee history and how history is portrayed thru intergenerational trauma and its impact on the health of the tribe. We will dive into how the Tribe developed their integrated model to address health disparities and sets the stage for the following presentations regarding tribal specific models to deal with the effects of trauma.

2:00p

Galvgwodiya (“It Is Sacred”) (General Session)



DR. FREIDA SAYLOR

Analenisgi / Director

MICHELLE FRERICH

Beauty for Ashes / Program Manager

The Galvgwodiya model centers on substance use, mental health, interpersonal violence, and child abuse.

2:45p

Snack & Sip Station (General Session)

Sponsored by Residential Services, Inc. (RSI)

Grab some snacks, catch up with your neighbor, and get ready for our next presentation!

3:00p

Innovation in Child Welfare: A Tribal Safety Model (General Session)



GEORGE ROBINSON STOKELY

Analenisgi / Child Services Assistant Manager

KANSAS “KANDEE” PARKER

Family Safety / Program Manager

This session shares and outlines the Tribe’s integrated child welfare and behavioral health model.

INTEGRATED CARE SUMMIT



DAY 1

Tuesday, October 14, 2025

4:00p

Exhibit Hall Grand Opening (Exhibit Hall)



Join us downstairs for hors d'oeuvres including Trout Cake with Remoulade Sauce, Elk Tenderloin Carpaccio with Wild Mushroom Polenta Cake & Huckleberry Glaze, Deviled Eggs with Candied Chipotle Bacon, while you browse the amazing companies that sponsored Destination 2025. You may discover new opportunities for your business, find new or renewed partnerships, and explore the shops of the Eastern Band of Cherokee Indian's artisans.

5:30p

The Engagement Journey: Visualizing Trends and Cost Outcomes in Tailored Care Management (Dining Room)

Sponsored by: Allies 4 Outcomes, Health Management Associates, SPARC Services & Programs, & Youth Villages

This presentation will be complemented by an exquisite plated dinner inspired by the culinary traditions of the Eastern Band of Cherokee Indians: Mesclun Greens, Bone-In Ribeye with Cherokee Steak Sauce & Joyce Farm Roasted Chicken Breast with Crème Goat Cheese Grits & Grilled Asparagus followed by Fresh Blackberry Cobbler with Vanilla Ice Crème.



DEBORAH ALDRIDGE

Alera / Chief Network Officer

PATRICE CLAYTON

Alera / Vice President of Network Operations



DESTINATION 2025 EVENT ITINERARY



DAY 2

Wednesday, October 15, 2025

7:30a

Breakfast (Dining Room)

Sponsored by Exceptional Parenting Magazine, Lutheran Services Carolinas, & Open Minds

Fresh seasonal sliced fruit & berries; local free-range scrambled eggs with wild forest mushrooms, fresh baby spinach, & herbs; hog sausage & thick-cut Applewood smoked bacon; Riverview Farms smoked Gouda cheese grits; scratch-made buttermilk biscuits with country gravy; vanilla & cinnamon challah bread French toast served with maple syrup & fresh fruit compote; freshly baked assorted muffins, toast, butter & fresh fruit preserves; freshly brewed Starbucks coffee, decaffeinated coffee, & assorted organic hot tea; fresh Florida natural orange juice, apple juice, & cranberry juice

9:00a

Welcome & Land Acknowledgement (General Session)



KAREN MCLEOD

Benchmarks / Chief Executive Officer

TARA LARSON

Cansler Collaborative Resources (CCR) / Managing Principal

9:15a

Honoring Traditions, Embracing New Futures (General Session)



CHIEF MICHELL HICKS

Eastern Band of Cherokee Indians / Chief

9:45a

The Warriors of AniKituhwa Performance (General Session)

Sponsored by Cansler Collaborative Resources (CCR)

The Warriors of AniKituhwa bring to life the Cherokee War Dance and Eagle Trail Dance, as described by Lt. Henry Timberlake in 1762. They also perform Cherokee social dances, including the Bear Dance, Beaver Hunting Dance, and Friendship Dance and talk about the significance of the dances, their clothing, and Cherokee history and culture. They have been designated as the official cultural ambassadors by the Tribal Council of the Eastern Band of Cherokee Indians and sponsored by the Museum of the Cherokee Indian.



DESTINATION 2025 EVENT ITINERARY



DAY 2

Wednesday, October 15, 2025

10:30a

Vendor Visits & Vittles (Exhibit Hall)

Sponsored by Aetna, Anuvia Prevention & Recovery Center, Community Care of North Carolina, Healthy Blue, & United Healthcare

Snag some milk & cookies! Don't miss Ryan O'Donnell's (Your Case Plan) and Gaile Osborne's (FFA NC) presentation **"Why Foster Parents are Closing Their Homes?"** in the exhibit hall while you snack!

11:00a

Keynote Address by Afterburner: Flawless Execution; The Fighter Pilot Mindset (General Session)

Sponsored by Molina Healthcare



BOBBI "FLASH" DOORENBOS

Afterburner

MAXIMO "MONEY" NAVARRO

Afterburner

12:15p

Italian Pranzo Luncheon & Networking

Sponsored by Exceptional Parenting Magazine, Lutheran Services Carolinas, & Open Minds

Risotto tomato & pesto salad; caprese: layered tomatoes, fresh mozzarella, & basil pesto, drizzled with extra virgin olive oil; cavatappi pasta pomodoro; Tuscan style vegetables; chicken breast with portabella mushrooms and marsala wine; warm extra virgin olive oil focaccia bread; mini cannoli & chocolate eclairs



DESTINATION 2025 EVENT ITINERARY



DAY 2

Wednesday, October 15, 2025

2:00p

Focused Sessions

NC DHHS

Provider Innovation

Child Welfare

Workforce

2:00p –
2:40p

Room 103

Overview of Health Fraud

Rae Elliott, NC Medicaid, Office of Compliance & Program Integrity

Exhibit Hall

Learning the Impact of Stress on Our Caregivers

Michelle Wingate, Learning Ambassador, Omni Family Institute & Mindy Kiser, President/Executive Director, Omni Family Institute

Room 109

Prenatal Substance Exposure Impact on Placement Stability

Sarah Moser, Resource & Training Developer, Creating a Family

Room 110

Ensuring Health Equity and Care for All: Improving Outcomes in Whole-Person Care

Tara Larson, Managing Principal, Revella Nesbit, Senior Consultant, CCR, & Shante Vines, Clinical Director, Support Incorporated

2:00p–
2:40p

Room 104

NCDHHS Samantha R Update

Kelly Crosbie, Director, Division of MH/DD/SUS & Corey Dunn, Disability Rights, Director of Public Policy

2:50p –
3:30p

Room 103

Preparing for Disasters

David Leonard, NC Department of Public Safety, Division of Emergency Management

Room 104

Navigating Complex Care – A Holistic Approach to High-Acuity Youth & Families

Meredith Newman, Executive Director, Rapid Resource for Families & Rashel Lauret, Deputy Director, Rapid Resource for Families

Room 109

Hope Begins Here: A Caregivers Introduction to The Science of Hope

Keonte Jenkins-Davis, Hope Ambassador, Omni Family Institute

Room 110

Community Colleges' Action Plan for Disrupting Our Workforce Crisis

Dr. Kara Finch, Dean of Public Services, Program Head of Social & Human Services, Stanly Community College & Betsey Zook, Workforce Analyst, Center on the Workforce for Health



DESTINATION 2025

EVENT ITINERARY



DAY 2

Wednesday, October 15, 2025

3:30p

Treats & Treasures (Exhibit Hall)

Sponsored by Aetna, Anuvia Prevention & Recovery Center, Community Care of North Carolina, Healthy Blue, & United Healthcare

Grab some popcorn, candy bars, root beer or Cheerwine as you shop and network with exhibitors and each other.

4:00p

Strategic Insights: Leveraging Advocacy for Vulnerable Populations to Drive Business Success with NC Elected Officials (General Session)



North Carolina General Assembly

HOUSE REPRESENTATIVE GRANT CAMPBELL

HOUSE REPRESENTATIVE ALLEN CHESSER

HOUSE REPRESENTATIVE DONNIE LOFTIS

HOUSE REPRESENTATIVE TIMOTHY REEDER

5:30p

The Gallery of Ideas: Poster Presentations with Bites & Beverages (Exhibit Hall)

The Gallery of Ideas: Poster Presentations

Hope Centered Caregiving *Omni Family Institute*

Effectively Infusing Family Voices
Children's Home Society, Institute for Families

Beyond Trauma-Informed to Trauma-Responsive: Keeping it Easy
The Trauma Informed Academy

Retaining North Carolina's Resource Parents: A Peer-to-Peer Coaching Model for Foster, Kinship, and Therapeutic Foster Homes
Foster Family Alliance & CCR

Navigating Complex Care - A Holistic Approach to High-Acuity Youth & Families
Rapid Resource for Families

Supporting Caregiver Regulation - A Practical Approach to Managing the Chaos of Parenting
Omni Family Institute

DESTINATION 2025 EVENT ITINERARY



DAY 3

Thursday, October 16, 2025

7:30a

Breakfast (Dining Room)

Sponsored by Exceptional Parenting Magazine, Lutheran Services Carolinas, & Open Minds

Fresh seasonal sliced fruit & berries; local free-range scrambled eggs with wild forest mushrooms, fresh baby spinach, & herbs; hog sausage & thick-cut Applewood smoked bacon; Riverview Farms smoked Gouda cheese grits; scratch-made buttermilk biscuits with country gravy; vanilla & cinnamon challah bread French toast served with maple syrup & fresh fruit compote; freshly baked assorted muffins, toast, butter & fresh fruit preserves; freshly brewed Starbucks coffee, decaffeinated coffee, & assorted organic hot tea; fresh Florida natural orange juice, apple juice, & cranberry juice

9:00a

Keynote Address by Torsten Gross: Crashing Through Barriers (General Session)



TORSTEN GROSS

Just Hands Foundation / Founder / Racecar Driver / Maverick

10:00a

Unity in Action: Amplifying Impact in Community Health Collaboration with NC Department of Health and Human Services & NC Department of Public Safety Leadership (General Session)



EDDIE BUFFALOE

NC Department of Public Safety / Secretary

KELLY CROSBIE

NC DHHS / Director of the Division of MH/DD/SUS

DEBRA FARRINGTON

NC DHHS / Deputy Secretary for Health

JAY LUDLAM

NC DHHS / Deputy Secretary of NC Medicaid

MICHAEL LEIGHS

NC DHHS / Deputy Secretary for Opportunity and Well-Being

DESTINATION 2025

EVENT ITINERARY



DAY 3

Thursday, October 16, 2025

11:00a

Refuel & Refresh (Exhibit Hall)

Sponsored by Aetna, Anuvia Prevention & Recovery Center, Community Care of North Carolina, Healthy Blue, & United Healthcare

Stretch your legs and head down to the exhibit hall for networking, chips, dip, and beverages! Snack away while you tune in to our **Sponsorship Showcase presentation: "How Technology Can Speed Up Permanency & Improve Case Collaboration"** by Ryan O'Donnell.

11:30a

How National Healthcare Initiatives Shape Our Local Landscape (General Session)



THOMAS ENGELS

*US DHHS Health Resources and Services Administration/
Administrator*

KIRK A. LEW

*DOL Office of Disability Employment Policy/Director of Youth
Initiatives & Acting Director of Workforce Systems*

12:30p

French Déjeuner Luncheon & Networking (Dining Room)

Sponsored by Exceptional Parenting Magazine, Lutheran Services Carolinas, & Open Minds
Baby spinach, roasted walnuts, pickled red onions, herb roasted croutons, heirloom tomatoes, olives, bleu cheese crumbles, and champagne tarragon vinaigrette; grilled vegetables, tri colored cous-cous, garlic tomato, and sherry vinaigrette; dauphinoise potatoes; ratatouille; roasted chicken with bordelaise sauce; grilled salmon with lemon dill beurre blanc; chocolate mousse and French petit fours

2:00p

The AI Promise: Opportunities and Challenges for Healthcare Leaders in Behavioral Health (General Session)



JOSE CASTILLO

Alera / Chief Information Officer

3:00p

Nosh & Network (Exhibit Hall)

Sponsored by Aetna, Anuvia Prevention & Recovery Center, Community Care of North Carolina, Healthy Blue, & United Healthcare

Time to give those legs a little stretch and treat yourself! Head on down to the exhibit hall for some networking, chips, dips, and beverages. Think of it as a tasty little adventure—because who said business and snacks can't be the perfect combo? Snack away while you tune in to our **Sponsorship Showcase presentation: "Empowering Independence in a Residential Setting with Safe Technology"** by Christian Brucculeri, Bark, VP of Community.

DESTINATION 2024 EVENT ITINERARY



DAY 3

Thursday, October 16, 2025

3:30p

Embracing Integration for the Future: Standard Plan vs Tailored Plan Concepts for Care (General Session)



KAREN MCLEOD

Benchmarks / Chief Executive Officer

DAVE RICHARD

McGuireWoods Consulting / Senior Vice President



ROB ROBINSON

Alliance Health / Chief Executive Officer

LIBBY MCCRAW

Partners Health Management / Chief Executive Officer

JOY FUTRELL

Trillium Health Resources / Chief Operating Officer

TRACY HAYES

Vaya Health / Area Director / Chief Executive Officer



DR. NERISSA PRICE

AmeriHealth Caritas / Behavioral Health Medical Director

CHRIS E. PATERSON

Carolina Complete Health / Chief Executive Officer

DR B. STEVEN BENTSEN, MD, MPA, DFAPA

Healthy Blue / Behavioral Health Medical Director

DR. BARBARA WISE

United Healthcare / Behavioral Health Medical Director

ERIC HARBOUR

WellCare / Behavioral Health Director

5:00p

Evening Reception on the Terrace with NC Health Plans

Sponsored by North Carolina Association of Public Community Health Plans & NC Association of Health Plans

Join us for a hosted bar and heavy hors d'oeuvres that include Lamb Lollipops, Jumbo Sea Scallop Confit, Braised Pork Belly, Roasted Pear, & a carving station featuring Prime Rib of Beef with Horseradish Cream & Au Jus carving station.

DESTINATION 2025 EVENT ITINERARY



DAY 4

Friday, October 17, 2025

7:30a

Breakfast (Dining Room)

Sponsored by Exceptional Parenting Magazine, Lutheran Services Carolinas, & Open Minds

Fresh seasonal sliced fruit & berries; local free-range scrambled eggs with wild forest mushrooms, fresh baby spinach, & herbs; hog sausage & thick-cut Applewood smoked bacon; Riverview Farms smoked Gouda cheese grits; scratch-made buttermilk biscuits with country gravy; vanilla & cinnamon challah bread French toast served with maple syrup & fresh fruit compote; freshly baked assorted muffins, toast, butter & fresh fruit preserves; freshly brewed Starbucks coffee, decaffeinated coffee, & assorted organic hot tea; fresh Florida natural orange juice, apple juice, & cranberry juice

9:00a

Juvenile Justice Trends and Partnerships (General Session)



WILLIAM LASSITER

*Department of Public Safety / Deputy Secretary for Division of
Juvenile Justice and Delinquency Prevention*

10:00a

Pause & Patisserie (Exhibit Hall)

Sponsored by Aetna, Anuvia Prevention & Recovery Center, Community Care of North Carolina, Healthy Blue, & United Healthcare

Don't miss your last chance to swing by our amazing exhibitors during the most delicious break of the week: Chocolate Decadence which includes assorted dark and white chocolate cake pops; rocky road brownies; chocolate mousse and strawberry parfait; mini double chocolate muffins; mini chocolate and orange tartelette. Grab a snack, chat, and see what surprises they've got in store. Trust us, your future self (and your stomach) will thank you!



DESTINATION 2025 EVENT ITINERARY



DAY 4

Friday, October 17, 2025

10:30a

Fireside Chat with Billie Lourd (General Session)

Sponsored by Molina

Interview with Sharron Roberts, Benchmarks' Principal Consultant



12:00p

Farewell & Raffles (General Session)

let's get in touch

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@benchmarksn

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Maps Sponsored by



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Save The Date



DESTINATION 2026

October 13-16, 2026

Cherokee, NC

about benchmarks

Benchmarks is a non-profit association of provider agencies advocating for quality and accountability among human service providers so that North Carolina's children, adults and families can realize their full potential, contribute to their communities and live healthy lives.