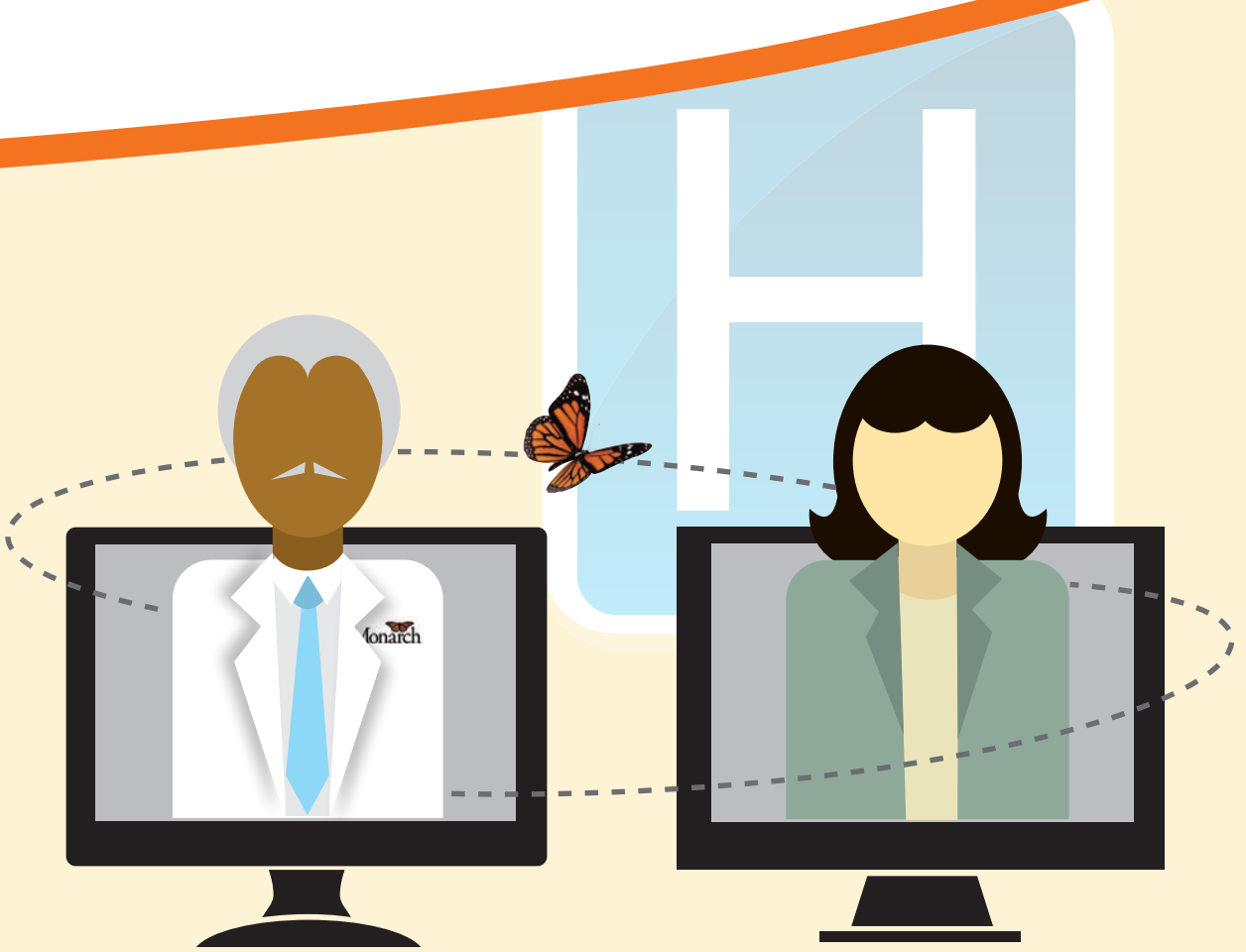




Reaching Dreams

A Monarch publication for the community,
people we support, and their families



Monarch's **Open Access** Model:

Decreasing wait times and keeping people out of the
Emergency Department – page 8

STRAIGHT FROM PEGGY



The last few months have been uniquely exciting. I was privileged to be chosen to serve on the state's Medicaid Reform Advisory Group. I was among a five-member committee that included: Dennis Barry of Guilford County, chair, CEO emeritus of Cone Health; Richard Gilbert, MD., of Mecklenburg, former chief

of staff for Carolinas Medical Center; state Rep. Nelson Dollar of Wake, and State Sen. Louis Pate, who represents Lenoir, Pitt and Wayne counties.

We met three times for public meetings. The first meeting, we organized and learned. The second meeting, we heard from more than 45 individuals and groups about their desires as we worked to reform the state's Medicaid system. During the third meeting, we reviewed a tentative plan drafted by the state's Department of Health and Human Services. The final draft was presented to the General Assembly on March 17, 2014.

The experience of serving in this capacity was amazing for me. The final report reaches the three goals we were given to achieve: *budget predictability* and sustainability, administrative ease and *efficiency for providers*, and *whole person patient care* that unites physical and behavioral health.

First, we already have budget predictability within the Managed Care Organizations (MCO). The state provides them with a specific amount of money annually, and that is all they can spend. Certainly, that is predictable. But when it came to the physical health side, there were many possible directions we could take. When we listened to the people giving us input in the second session, however, it was quite clear.

Physicians, hospitals, and almost all other groups requested that we move to an Accountable Care Organization (ACO) model. This model is actually already

in practice in North Carolina, and is used right now for Medicare patients. An ACO is created when a group of physicians of multiple specialties come together and agree to certain quality standards. By doing this, redundancy can be eliminated. For example, if you go to your primary care physician who orders blood tests, it is likely, later in the month when you visit your endocrinologist or cardiologist, that doctor will order the same tests. With an ACO, there is a shared record, so instead of duplication, the second doctor can look at the first set of results, and can take action from there. There are no extra tests or waiting.

There are many more economies that ACOs can achieve, and they offer a higher quality system, because the doctors who agree to join agree to accept risk. The entire group makes money or loses money. So it's less likely that an ACO will allow a doctor to join who isn't good.

The ACO budget predictability model decides on a specific amount of money to spend, which they agree is enough. So if they spend less than they were given, and reach certain quality standards, then some of the money saved goes back to the state, and the ACO gets to keep some of the money. It's a win-win for the patients, doctors and funders.

The second area is administrative efficiency for providers, and that has been a process that was started last year, and is continuing nicely. The final area, integration of care, is expected to occur when ACOs and MCOs have the same types of quality standards and incentives to work together.

The whole plan is very exciting, but, of course, the "devil is in the details." Whether the General Assembly will pass the plan as proposed, modify it and pass it, or not pass anything, remains to be seen. I'm sure that as this plan is discussed, people will have many questions. I encourage you to contact our office if this occurs. We will be happy to find accurate answers to your questions.

Peggy S. Terhune, Ph.D.
Monarch CEO

Reaching Dreams is the official agency publication for the community, people we support, and their families.

Our Mission

We are committed to supporting, educating, and empowering people with developmental and intellectual disabilities, mental illness, and substance abuse challenges to choose and achieve what is important to them.

Our Vision

We will lead the way in the state to creatively support people with disabilities in growing toward their potential, reaching their dreams, and making their own informed choices about where they live, learn, work, play, and worship. Through partnerships and relationships with our community, we will offer a variety of innovative quality services and supports and will promote advocacy, awareness, education, training, employment, and residential opportunities.

CHARLIE'S STORY

Man says his faith, giving back and Monarch helped in his recovery



LAST FALL when Charlie Hudson sat down to write a letter to the editor of the "Montgomery Herald," he knew what he wanted to say. Hudson, a resident at one of Monarch's homes, decided he wanted to share with the community his own story of living with bipolar disorder and schizophrenia, and his recovery. More importantly, though, he wanted to share a message of hope and faith.

"I remember when I was first diagnosed with mental illness," Hudson said. "My faith was hurt."

Hudson says his faith in God was challenged by his illness and it was a devastating experience for him. But through his recovery, Hudson realized people with mental illness can still nurture faith in a loving God. In spite of any illness, there is still a place for serving God and for serving others.

"I believe the soul, mind, and body all have their role in this life," Hudson explained. "They can affect each other in positive and negative ways. We shouldn't give up on one area, like the soul, just because another, like the brain, is sick."

Hudson is grateful for his recovery and says Monarch has helped him find new ways to nourish his faith by volunteering in the community and to stay healthy by regularly exercising as a way to reduce anxiety.

Today, he finds himself in a place where he can share his message of faith and recovery to people around him. He didn't always expect that to be possible, which makes him all the more grateful that he can. ●

By Laurie Weaver, Monarch's director of grants and foundation relations.

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Monarch launches a brand awareness campaign

LAST NOVEMBER, Monarch launched its first major communications campaign in and around the Charlotte area. The initiative, to generate name awareness about Monarch, includes TV spots, online and print advertising and National Public Radio announcements that focus on the theme, “putting the care into mental health care.”

Because mental health is a timely topic right now, Monarch officials thought it would be best to start there. In the next phase of the campaign, the agency plans to feature more about its specific services, including support and programs for people with intellectual and developmental disabilities, through stories about the people it supports and staff.



“Our industry specializes in a topic most people don’t discuss. Monarch wants to lead a dialogue with the focus of putting the ‘care’ into mental health care,” explained Natasha Suber, Monarch’s director of marketing and communications. “In fact, it’s our hope that when people discuss these topics, they will be familiar with Monarch, and know we are a leading provider of quality services.”

Monarch’s Office of Development, Marketing and Communications and A Big Idea Group, a Charlotte-area marketing firm, collaborated on the campaign. The agency hopes to replicate the campaign in other areas. ●



We’re now on Twitter! @MonarchNC

Monarch is committed to providing the latest Monarch happenings, industry news about mental health and developmental disabilities, and exclusive tips from our experts. Follow us today!

SPECIAL OLYMPIAN TJUANA JAMES BRINGS HOME THE GOLD

TJUANA JAMES, a participant of Monarch's River City Achievement Center in Elizabeth City, was among 140 athletes from across North Carolina and Virginia who competed at Appalachian Ski Mountain near Boone for the 2014 Special Olympics Carolina Winter Games.

James, who started skiing when she was 19, took gold in the downhill skiing competition for Pasquotank and Camden counties. She said at the start of the competition she was nervous, but once she got on the slopes it was a lot of fun. Afterwards she got to meet people from across the state.

Lighting the Olympic Torch, another big honor for athletes, was something else James participated in during the ceremony. According to Leslie Hughes, site manager in Elizabeth City, James was extremely excited after the games to share her experiences and medal with other River City Center participants.

"When she returned, everyone was so proud of her accomplishment," Hughes recalled. "She just smiled at all the clapping and congratulations. She said she and her peers had a nice time, but it was 'cold!'"

James earned another medal for participating in a spring basketball competition hosted by Special Olympics.



Now that this important competition is behind her, James is preparing for her weightlifting competition which will be held in New Jersey later this year.

"We anticipate more gold coming our way real soon," Hughes predicted. ●

MONARCH CEO DR. PEGGY TERHUNE NAMED TO GOV. PAT MCCRORY'S MEDICAID REFORM ADVISORY GROUP

MONARCH CEO DR. PEGGY TERHUNE, along with four other prominent North Carolina healthcare leaders, was appointed last fall by Gov. Pat McCrory to serve on the state's Medicaid Reform Advisory Group.

Terhune said she was honored by the nomination and excited to be part of the group that worked to help move the system forward to better meet the needs of people with disabilities in North Carolina.

She also said the advisory group looked at the need for integrated care as it collaborated with the Department of Health and Human Services (DHHS) to develop the detailed plan to reform North Carolina's Medicaid system.

"We must improve patient care and control exploding Medicaid costs," said Gov. McCrory, as the advisory group worked on its proposal. "The Medicaid Reform Advisory Group will work with DHHS as it explores all options to come up with the best plan for North Carolina."

The Medicaid Reform Advisory Group held three public meetings to help shape the process of developing the reform proposal. DHHS presented a reform proposal to the General Assembly in the spring and legislation is set to be introduced on the topic in May. ●



David Kling receives the 2014 Governor's Volunteer Service Award for Moore County

SOUTHERN PINES RESIDENT LOVES TO HELP HIS NEIGHBORS IN NEED

DAVID KLING, who attends Monarch's Creative Arts and Community Center (MCACC) and is a resident of one of the agency's homes, performs a number of service activities with fellow MCACC participants, but he especially enjoys organizing and packing food for Backpack Pals of Moore County. The non-profit, which started in 2005, provides weekend bags full of nutritional food for more than 1,100 students in Moore County Schools who don't always get enough to eat once school dismisses on Friday.

Every Thursday since the program's inception, Kling volunteers for two hours replenishing the assembly line of food for other volunteers who are packing the bags. He also carries and loads the packed food bags into the cars of the 24 school representatives who deliver them to the schools. Students who have been identified as recipients in need by teachers, social workers and school administrators then receive the backpacks for the weekend.

"Everybody loves David," shared Linda Hubbard, founder and organizer of Backpack Pals of Moore County. "He's an extremely hard worker, who is dedicated, has a great sense of humor – and he's cute. He and his parents are fantastic. It's a great program and it takes wonderful volunteers, like David and his dad, who make this [program] work."

For his volunteer service and commitment of time, community impact and enhancement of the lives of others, Kling was named the Moore County recipient of the 2014 Governor's Volunteer Service Award. The state honor was presented to Kling during the Moore County Commissioners' meeting in April.

People supported, as well as staff at Monarch, are very proud of Kling's dedication to service and his tremendous recognition. Angela House, a Monarch operations director who nominated Kling for the Governor's Award, said he sets a positive example for so many and is a deserving recipient.

"I nominated David for this award because anyone who puts nine years into volunteering his own personal time into something so great deserves to be recognized for his years of volunteerism," House explained. "It shows others how easy it is to be committed and dedicated to helping people in need."

Kling is much more modest about his efforts.

"This is very important to the kids in the community. I am very proud to be part of Backpack Pals. I'm thankful to the people of Moore County and those who nominated me," Kling said. "I'm very excited."

Kling is among the dozens of people with disabilities statewide supported by Monarch who gave their talent, energy and time in 2013 – exactly 33,215.44 hours of their time. That dedication and level of service to communities across the state yielded an economic impact of \$634,082.75, according to the Independent Sector, a national organization that estimates the value of volunteer time for North Carolina at \$19.09 per service hour. ●

By Natasha A. Suber, director of marketing and communications at Monarch.





Joshua Youth Camp lends a hand at Monarch homes

JOSHUA YOUTH CAMP (JYC), located just outside of Albemarle, is owned and operated by Carolina Cross Connection (CCC), a collection of Freewill Baptist Churches in the area.

During service weeks in the summer, campers perform a variety of home repairs for the unemployed, the disabled, the elderly or single parents across nearly 20 North Carolina counties.

Last year, four of Monarch's homes in Stanly County and the people who live there, were the lucky recipients of an outpouring of the campers' hard work. The volunteers performed various tasks including trimming bushes, cleaning up leaves and branches, planting flowers, painting shutters, handrails and doors and sharing food and fellowship with the residents of each home.

"An incredible camaraderie developed with the students from JYC and the people supported at each of the four Monarch homes they visited," explained Eileen Bress, volunteer and community coordinator at Monarch.

"It was a genuine outpouring and natural extension of their servant attitude which they shared while performing hard work to beautify the homes and spread the good news. This is the essence of social integration when each person experiences the joy of being treated with dignity and respect," she said.

Meredith City, a senior at Elon University, is a field coordinator who seeks out locations and organizations in need of CCC services. She said typically five or six high school volunteers from JYC are paired with two leaders to help work on the homes. One of City's campers told her he loved volunteering for a home where the residents use wheelchairs because his dad uses a wheelchair and it helped him to connect with those he was serving.

Clark Chilton, Clemmons United Methodist Church's youth pastor, had an experience with JYC similar to City's. Chilton attended in high school as a camper, and then went on staff for a number of years. He now takes his youth group students to the camp in the summers.

Chilton said the project helps high-schoolers get a sense of satisfaction and gives them new perspectives. "They're more interested in doing their faith, rather than just talking about it," he said.

"Working at the Monarch homes allows them to put that faith in action. They mowed the lawn, shopped for mulch and flowers to plant in the raised beds and took care of the grounds so that it looked good for the residents," Chilton said. "Everyone felt good knowing they helped make the grounds look better and we made the residents' day a little brighter." ●

By Brittany Smith, communications specialist at Monarch.



Monarch's Terri Bernhardt (left), chief administrative officer, and Blake Martin, chief development officer, present their small group activity during the agency's launch of its Mental Health First Aid (MHFA) training on Oct. 18 in Kannapolis.

MONARCH PROVIDES MENTAL HEALTH FIRST AID TRAINING FOR NEARLY 300

National program offered to the public to assist people experiencing mental health emergencies

LAST FALL, Monarch partnered with Mental Health First Aid (MHFA) USA to teach a select group of community, business and school leaders how to properly respond in crisis situations involving individuals with mental illness or substance abuse disorders. They have continued those trainings with the help and support of two Stanly County supporters

Because 1 in 4 adults and 1 in 5 youth experience mental illness in a given year, according to the National Alliance on Mental Illness (NAMI), the eight-hour MHFA training helps to reduce stigma and increases the understanding that mental illness is real, common and treatable.

MHFA helps participants identify signs of substance use disorders and mental illness such as depression, anxiety, trauma, psychosis, eating disorders and self-injury. Those who attend will learn how to connect individuals demonstrating or exhibiting these signs to proper professional care and resources. To date, Monarch, along with community and business partners, have provided training to about 300 people.

"Just as CPR training helps a layperson with no medical or clinical training assist someone who is suffering a heart attack, MHFA training can equip a person to assist someone experiencing a mental health crisis, such as contemplating suicide or inflicting harm on others," explained Blake Martin, chief development officer at Monarch. "In both situations, the goal is to help support an individual until appropriate professional help arrives."

A Monarch staff member, who asked to remain anonymous, said a family member who is suffering from Post Traumatic Stress Disorder and is seeking support from a counselor and psychiatrist considered self-harm. Following MHFA training, the person felt equipped to respond to the loved one.

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Several Monarch employees and staff representing half a dozen area business and community partners participate during Monarch's first MHFA training last fall.

Monarch will offer several public trainings throughout the spring and summer, including Youth Mental Health First Aid, to address mental illness and substance abuse challenges among young people.

"This individual talks to me quite openly about the daily struggles. One day there were comments about giving up, wishing they wouldn't wake up," the employee explained. "Using my MHFA training, I felt much more comfortable with how to proceed. Before taking the training, I would have been afraid of asking the question 'do you have a plan to kill yourself?'" With MHFA training, I knew it was ok to ask this question, and that it was the right thing to do. I encouraged the person to make an appointment with them (psychiatrist) that day instead of waiting for the next scheduled session."

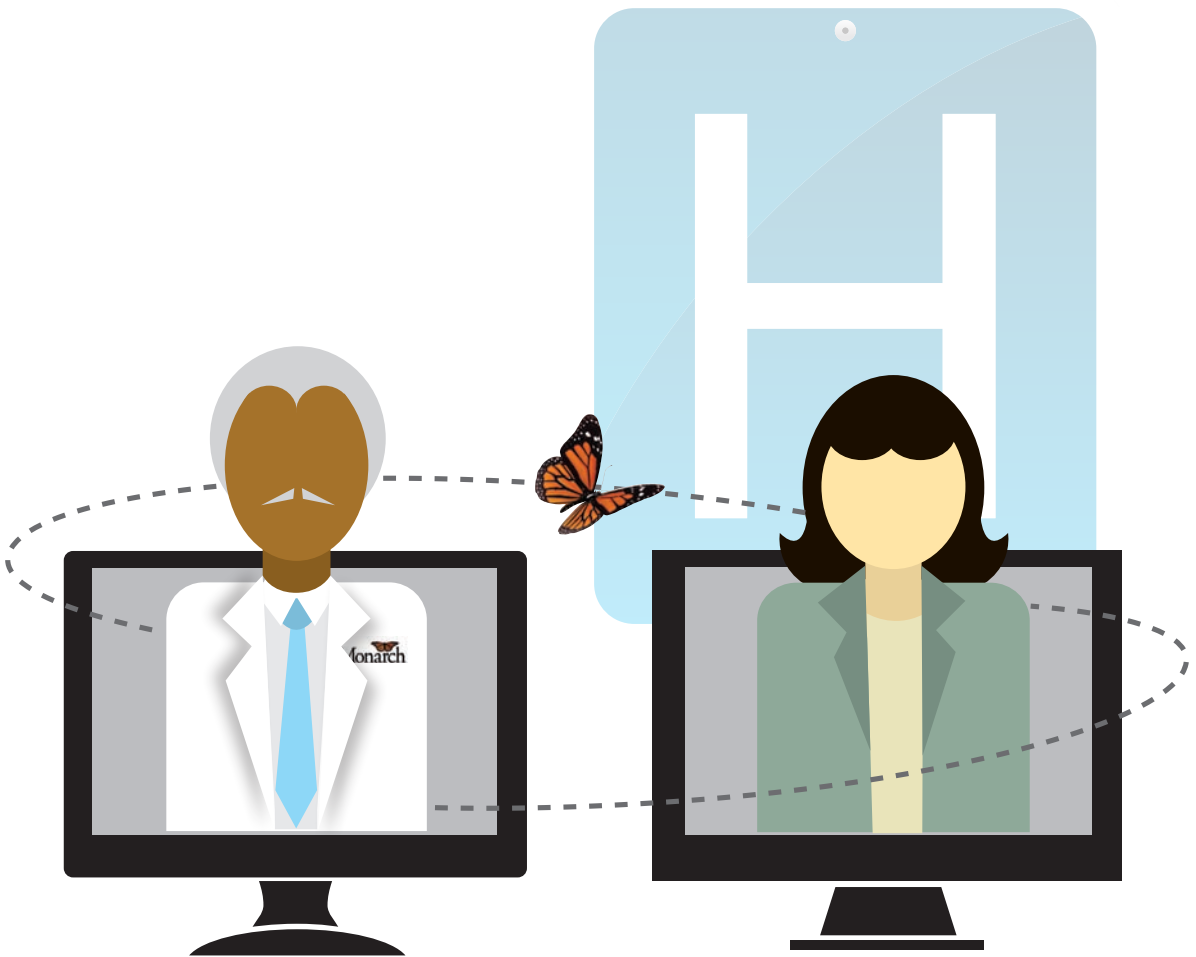
The MHFA training in Albemarle was made possible by a \$9,750 award Monarch received from the United Way of Stanly County and by a \$1,500 award from the Stanly County Community Foundation. Monarch will offer several public trainings throughout the spring and summer, including Youth Mental Health First Aid to address mental illness and substance abuse challenges among young people.

"The funds will help offset the cost of trainings for staff, MHFA books, resource materials, and to provide training to the public at a reduced cost. Additional trainings may be available for churches, businesses and community organizations," Martin said.

Monarch recently received one of only eight national grants for \$5,000 to provide Mental Health First Aid training to public safety professionals, including law enforcement, first responders, and school resource officers among others. The grant was awarded by the National Council on Behavioral Health and was made possible by the Aetna Foundation.

Sheri Carter, LaVictor Talbert and Michael Smith are Monarch's certified MHFA trainers.

To learn more about Monarch's Mental Health First Aid program, please contact Blake Martin, chief development officer, at (704) 986-1584 or blake.martin@monarchnc.org.

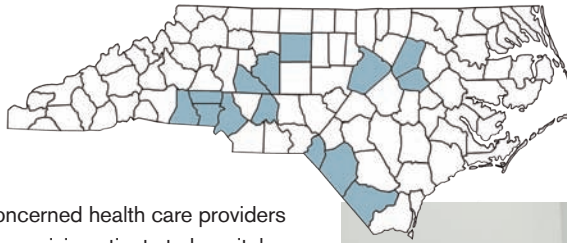


Monarch's **Open Access** Model:

Decreasing wait times
and keeping people
out of the Emergency
Department

BECAUSE OF THE TREMENDOUS DEMAND for mental health services, often the doctor is in, but he might not be able to see you for months. During the average wait time it takes to see a psychiatrist under the current system, a package could be mailed around the world, a woman might have gone through her first trimester of pregnancy or a runner could have trained for a marathon.

The problem, says Carlyle Johnson, director of provider network development at Alliance Behavioral Healthcare, is that "people experiencing mental health crises need services as quickly as possible. If people don't connect quickly, they drop out, things come up in their lives, they become more depressed and anxious, and could end up in a more serious level of care."



■ Open Access is available in these counties.

The long wait times have concerned health care providers for years but, short of sending crisis patients to hospital Emergency Departments (ED), not much had changed until telehealth technology— the use of a video monitor or webcam – to connect patients with a physician or health professional at another location, came on the scene.

Through this advancement, Monarch has been able to help change the way the system works and incorporate it into an effective model known as Open Access.

Kara Froberg, Monarch’s senior clinical operations director, said Monarch’s model is unique and is the first in the state of North Carolina that allows a patient to see a clinician, nurse and psychiatrist all in the same day.

Most Monarch offices provide on-site assessments while others use state-of-the-art virtual telehealth technology to perform visits. Telehealth has expanded Monarch’s ability to serve people in smaller or rural offices and decreases wait time when larger offices reach capacity.

“When an individual leaves our Open Access he/she will be leaving with a day/time for their next appointment with a prescriber, a prescription if needed, the ability to start group therapy that day or the day after, an appointment for individual therapy and/or any appropriate referrals for needed services,” Froberg explained.

Individuals can come to one of Monarch’s 17 Open Access sites for the first time without an appointment and be seen that day. With same-day Open Access, individuals get what they need when they need it and, in turn, this keeps them out of the ED.

Dr. Sharyn Comeau, one of Monarch’s psychiatrists, previously worked at a hospital in Raleigh. While there, she saw people admitted to the hospital who often waited 2-3 days to see a psychiatrist before they could be released.

She also noted that once people were in the system, patients often had to wait six weeks to see a psychiatrist, “but with Open Access they can see a psychiatrist faster through Monarch than in the hospital!”

Mary Foster first walked into a Monarch office in December 2013 after struggling with depression, anxiety and a trauma from her past. She had moved to Rocky Mount three years earlier to become her father’s caretaker when he was diagnosed with cancer. Foster said the pressures of that role made her feel like she was carrying a heavy load. She was referred to Monarch’s Open Access and was able to connect with a therapist and psychiatrist the same day.



Dr. Sharyn Comeau, a Monarch psychiatrist who works in the Charlotte behavioral health office, appears on the telehealth monitor during a chat with Brandon Springs, professional recruiter at Monarch, demonstrating how the technology works.

“I got to release what I was going through. There’s no shame in that,” explained Foster, who was prescribed medicine that she says helps her stay calm and relaxed during the day and she now has a resource to call when she feels like the pressure is closing in on her.

The hallmark of Monarch’s Open Access Model is the psychiatric services it provides. One of the barriers of the current system has been limited access to a psychiatrist, or long wait times to see one, but psychiatrists are now able to work in a more flexible environment to see people through Open Access. Johnson said this is a critical component of the program and is a great improvement in getting people the help they need.

Each person who utilizes Open Access is asked before they leave that if Monarch did not have a walk-in center where they would have received services. To date, 22 percent of those polled said they would have gone to the ED and 37 percent admitted would not have gotten services anywhere.

Johnson said on his first day working in Wake County he managed a waiting list of 128 people who needed services.

“That memory has stayed with me for 20 years; how difficult it is to contact people when you put them on a waiting list. They would drop off, or we would assume their lives had gotten better, but in the back of my mind I wondered if that was a valid assumption,” he shared. “We’ve wanted something like the Open Access model and I appreciate Monarch solving what has haunted us for two decades.” ●

By Brittany Smith, communications specialist at Monarch.

THANK YOU

We would like to thank sponsors and participants for their tremendous support and for Helping Dreams Take Flight.

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Teamwork Makes the **DREAM** Work

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MONARCH HOSTS SIXTH ANNUAL GOLF TOURNAMENT

MONARCH again hosted its Annual Dreams Take Flight Golf Tournament, with a sellout crowd, at Tillery Tradition Golf Club in Mt. Gilead on May 2. Sponsored by First Citizens Bank, the event raised thousands to benefit the programs and services Monarch provides to support people with intellectual and developmental disabilities, mental illness and substance abuse challenges.

The agency plans to expand its successful fundraiser and will host a golf tournament in Craven County on Sept. 11 at the New Bern Golf & Country Club. More details will follow.

For more information about Monarch's Annual Dreams Take Flight Golf Tournament, contact Blake Martin, chief development officer, at (704) 986-1584 or blake.martin@monarchnc.org. ●

MAY

MAY IS MENTAL HEALTH MONTH

For more than 60 years, Mental Health America and other organizations, like Monarch, nationwide have observed May as Mental Health Month by helping to reach millions of people through the media, local events and screenings. Please take this time to educate yourself and others with the following tips:

GET TREATMENT. Don't let the fear of being labeled with a mental illness prevent you from seeking help. Don't let stigma create self-doubt and shame. Monarch offers Open Access so people who seek help can walk into one of our offices without an appointment for the first time.

DON'T ISOLATE YOURSELF. Reach out to people you trust for support and understanding.

DON'T EQUATE YOURSELF WITH YOUR ILLNESS. You are not an illness.

JOIN A SUPPORT GROUP. Some local and national groups, such as the National Alliance on Mental Illness (NAMI) offer local programs and Internet resources that help reduce stigma by educating people with mental illness, their family members and the general public. Monarch offers a variety of group therapies.

GET HELP AT SCHOOL. If you or your child has a mental illness that affects learning, find out what plans and programs might help. If a teacher doesn't know about a student's disability, it can lead to discrimination, barriers to learning and poor grades.

SPEAK OUT AGAINST STIGMA. It can help instill courage in others facing similar challenges and educate the public about mental illness.

For help or more information, call Monarch at (866) 272-7826.



PROGRAM CREATED TO HELP KEEP PEOPLE WITH MENTAL ILLNESS OUT OF EMERGENCY DEPARTMENTS

Monarch, Sandhills MCO, Partnership for Community Care and Cone Behavioral Health join to reduce hospital readmissions, promote recovery and wellness

OVER THE PAST DECADE, hospital emergency departments (ED) have seen a significant increase in the number of people seeking treatment for behavioral health issues. In 2010, more than 6.4 million visits to EDs nationwide – or about 5 percent of total visits – involved patients whose primary diagnosis was a mental health condition or substance abuse. That is up 28 percent from just four years earlier, according to the latest figures available from the Agency for Healthcare Research and Quality.

.....●
“We are so excited to be working with Sandhills, P4CC, and Cone Health. This is an example of the way a community can work together to provide better care for individuals with very complex needs.”

— Kelly Crosbie
Monarch Chief Strategy Officer
.....●

In North Carolina, the problem is severe. A recent study reveals the number of mental health patients entering EDs in the state was double the nation's average in 2010. Many of these individuals repeatedly visit the emergency department – as much as 3-4 times per month or more.

Earlier this year, Monarch with the support of Sandhills MCO, and in close collaboration with Partnership for Community Care (P4CC), developed a Transitional Care Team (TCT) in Guilford County.

The aim of the TCT is to help keep people with serious persistent mental illness, and other behavioral health issues, and co-occurring medical conditions, out of the ED. The goals of the TCT will be to reduce re-admissions to both the ED and inpatient hospitals, increase a consumer's connections to medical and behavioral health services, and promote recovery and wellness.

According to Kelly Crosbie, chief strategy officer at Monarch, the transitional care interventions will initially be aimed at people being discharged from Cone Health Inpatient or Monarch's Crisis Diversion Unit, both in Greensboro, since the first 30 days after discharge can be very challenging for individuals leaving the hospital. Over time, the team will look at some of the high ED-utilizers – those that never ever get admitted for inpatient treatment.

“For years, people with chronic mental illness have experienced challenges finding long-term maintenance care in the community,” Crosbie explained. “After a hospitalization, people can feel very isolated and may have very real difficulties connecting to their medical and behavioral health providers and adjusting back into daily life. It can be daunting to understand new medications and manage side effects; sometimes it's easier to just stop taking them.

“Without the proper support, people end up back in the ED,” Crosbie said. “Universally, everyone knows to present to the ED, especially when they can't think of anywhere else to go. The ED presents a safe space.”

Monarch will implement the same transitional care model that P4CC uses to help consumers connect to aftercare, understand and adjust to their medications and begin to manage their own care. A key component of the collaboration will include stationing a TCT member at Cone Behavioral Health Hospital to assist in the coordination of post-discharge care. Monarch and P4CC will triage cases each day to ensure that consumers are connected to medical and behavioral health care. Monarch's TCT also includes a peer support component to help individuals become more active in their own recovery and wellness.

“We are so excited to be working with Sandhills, P4CC and Cone Health,” said Crosbie. “This is an example of the way a community can work together to provide better care for individuals with very complex needs.” ●

Kelly Crosbie, chief strategy officer at Monarch, contributed to this article.



Monarch

 partners with
North Carolina universities to expand, enhance

As Monarch continues its mission to lead the way statewide to creatively support people with developmental disabilities, mental illness and substance abuse histories, the agency is partnering with three universities – Campbell, East Carolina and Pfeiffer – to identify innovative ways to offer enhanced support and quality care.



This summer, Monarch will contract with East Carolina University to serve as a community hub site for NC-STeP (N.C. Statewide Telepsychiatry Program). Through this program, Monarch physicians will provide psychiatric assessments and consultation to hospital emergency departments (ED) throughout North Carolina.

Through NC-STeP, the agency plans to offer assessment and consultation for 50,000-60,000 people each year—that means getting people assessed, stabilized, and back into the community quicker. Since many of the EDs that Monarch will support are within its service area, agency officials said it can offer people a meaningful community link back to Monarch for aftercare and ongoing services.

“Monarch is thrilled to be of part of this exciting statewide program; we are very proud of our growing telepsychiatry program,” said Kelly Crosbie, chief strategy officer at Monarch.

Monarch has also recently begun expanding telepsychiatry services into primary care practices. Through a Kate B. Reynolds Charitable Trust-sponsored program, Community Care of the Sandhills contracts with Monarch to provide telepsychiatry assessments and consultation in 24 primary care practice sites in Montgomery, Moore, Lee, Harnett, Hoke and Scotland counties.

“We want people to receive psychiatric assessment right in their primary care offices—this way we catch issues sooner and, hopefully, prevent the need for more intensive specialty mental health services,” Crosbie explained. “By using telepsychiatry, Monarch brings specialty mental health care to a person, in their “usual place of care”—and in turn, their primary care physician can provide better, more holistic care with Monarch’s treatment recommendations.” ●

An illness should not determine
a person's place in their community

www.MonarchNC.org

quality care

Pfeiffer
UNIVERSITY

According to the U.S. Labor Department, the unemployment rate for people with disabilities is 13.4 percent, compared to those without a disability which stands at 7.9 percent.

Because of this large gap in unemployment rates, Dr. David Hollar, a professor at Pfeiffer University, has written a grant proposal to develop a certificate program in Healthcare Entrepreneurship for people with disabilities. Monarch will serve as a partner agency in the project.

The program, aimed at veterans with disabilities but inclusive of others with and without disabilities, will focus on entrepreneurship training in the health care industry. Program coordinators will also pair peer mentors and students with disabilities.

If the grant is received, Monarch will serve as a resource on disability issues, as well as an internship location. A Monarch staff person will serve on an advisory council for the academic program. The grant has been submitted and approval notification will take place in August. ●

CAMPBELL
UNIVERSITY

Monarch is working toward an agreement with Campbell University and Southeastern Regional Medical Center, in Lumberton, to offer medical students of The Jerry M. Wallace School of Osteopathic Medicine at Campbell, an opportunity to spend time working in health and human services.

Through the partnership, Campbell medical students will have an opportunity to perform their clinical rotations at Monarch in an effort to gain experience at an agency that provides support to people with disabilities, substance abuse challenges and mental illness. The programs at Monarch will include patient care, graduate medical education, and development of enhanced systems of health care delivery.

Deborah Groves, MSN, RN, director of nursing at Monarch, is helping to facilitate the agreement, and said Monarch is extremely excited about the possibility of medical students joining agency staff.

"We are thrilled to be able to provide physicians with the experience of working with people in facility-based crisis settings and outpatient units," said Groves. "People are recognizing we're in the communities. We want to give back and add value to the area. We're excited about this agreement and I feel like we can offer a meaningful experience to medical students at Campbell!"

Campbell's School of Medicine is developing clinical placement programs around the state for its graduates, especially in areas positioned to meet the needs of rural and underserved communities. According to the National Rural Health Association, 75 percent of graduates from rural programs will practice in rural locations. ●



WHY I SUPPORT MONARCH

GENERAL COUNSEL NICOLE GARDNER: "I FEEL LIKE AN EXTENSION OF THE FAMILY AT MONARCH"

NICOLE GARDNER, of Gardner | Skelton PLLC, has served as Monarch's general counsel for nearly eight years. As the organization's legal advisor, one would think most of her interactions with Monarch surround business matters and complex legal issues. While business is essential, there is much more to Gardner's relationship with Monarch.

"I feel like an extension of the family at Monarch," commented Gardner, who is pictured above second from the left on the back row. "My firsthand experience over the past eight years has allowed me to see the incredible impact staff has on the lives of people throughout the communities Monarch serves in North Carolina. I get to be a part of this impact."

Gardner supports Monarch annually through a lead sponsorship of the Dreams Take Flight Golf Tournament held each spring.

"Being a golf tournament sponsor isn't what is important to our firm, it is the impact those dollars have on people supported," she said. "It isn't every day that you find an organization where passion for changing lives flows from the CEO to front line service delivery."

Gardner said not long after she began working with Monarch, she had the opportunity to visit Pence Place, a home

the agency operates for children in Rockingham. During that visit, she said she found herself thinking there couldn't be a better place to invest and become committed to being more than just the company's attorney.

"It was a 'melt your heart' experience from the moment I walked through the door to children with smiles from ear-to-ear," recalled Gardner, who said the staff's interaction with the children, their passion and desire for the job was contagious.

Giving back to her community has been a top priority for Gardner and her husband and colleague, Jared Gardner. The Gardners bring that same desire to the firm and see it as an extension of their efforts to support non-profit missions in the Charlotte area.

"The character of Monarch's staff and organizational personality makes it easy to give to Monarch and be a part of funding services that will further impact lives in such a positive manner. As a family, and as a firm, we look for places that not only need the financial support, but also places where we can see our investment come to life—we see that daily at Monarch," the attorney shared.

Gardner said the service Monarch provides is enough to convince anyone to support the agency.

"Giving is always easy when success is evident and people are being cared for in the most innovative ways possible. Seeing your money make an immediate impact and knowing there is an added benefit to people supported because of your gift, makes it worth every penny," Gardner explained. "There is not a better organization to support."

Gardner | Skelton PLLC is a Charlotte based law firm that specializes in employment law, health care law, business litigation and estate planning. The team of six attorneys is led by Nicole Gardner and Heather Skelton. ●

By Blake Martin, chief development officer at Monarch.

Would **YOU** like to join us in Helping Dreams Take Flight?

For your convenience, a reply envelope is included in this issue of *Reaching Dreams*. If you have questions or would like more information, please contact Blake Martin, (704) 986-1584.



JOY Prom

People supported from several homes in Stanly, Union and Cabarrus counties spent an incredible evening filled with tiaras, photo shoots, live music and lots of decadent desserts during Joy Prom 2014 held in Concord and Matthews. The annual formal dance is a free, full-scale event hosted by the local organizations, businesses and the community for people with disabilities who live in surrounding counties. Prom goers dressed in formal attire arrive, literally, on the red carpet and are escorted by volunteers who help them with make-up, shoe shines and photo opportunities. It was a magical night.

Photos (clockwise): Stepping out in style, these gentlemen, residents of one of Monarch's homes, pose for a photo before the prom in Matthews. Jamie Hathcock and Emma Fortin, daughter of Lisa Fortin, qualified professional and program manager at Monarch, smile for the camera; Lindsey Colavito (right) dances the night away; Jimmy Colson is all smiles; and Beth Townsend models her beautiful dress.

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