



# HENDERSON COUNTY BEHAVIORAL HEALTH CONFERENCE 2026



Connected for Impact:  
Evidence, Experience, & Innovation

03 . 23 . 2026 - BRCC

## 2026 Henderson County Behavioral Health Conference Agenda

**8:30 AM** – Registration Opens, Breakfast, Exhibits, Community Activities and Networking

**9:00 AM** – Welcome and Opening Keynote: Philip Cooper, CCHW, CPSS, Chief Change Agent & Founder, Operation Gateway

### **SESSION A – 10:00–10:45 AM**

Zachary White, LCSW, LCAS

Mountain Area Health Education Center

*The interaction between stimulant use disorder, intimate relationships, and retention of care in OBOT*

David Chastain, PhD

Catalyst Consulting

*When the Frying Pan Hits the Fire: The Intersection of Addiction and Grief*

Courtney Rogers, PhD & Marisa Schorr, PsyD

Western Carolina University (CR); AppHealthCare (MS)

*Expanding Access and Enhancing Outcomes: Single-Session Interventions to Address the Mental Health Needs of Western North Carolina*

Lisa Curtin, PhD

Appalachian State University

*Motivational Interviewing: A Primer and Basic Skills Workshop*

Kara Ashley-Gilmore, LCMHC, ATR-BC, SE

Mountain Creative Arts Counseling

*Your Therapeutic Secret Weapon: From Consultation to Crisis Response—Mini-Zines for Every Stage of Treatment*

Parisa R. Kaliush, PhD

University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill

*Bridging Science, Practice, and Community Partnerships to Improve Access to Evidence-Based Perinatal Suicide Prevention*

Yolanda Robinson, PhD, LCSW  
Abide Inclusive Therapy  
*Accessing Care and the Rights of Teens in Mental Health*

**SESSION B – 11:00–11:45 AM**

Kelly Caravella, PhD  
Carolina Institute for Developmental Disabilities, UNC - Chapel Hill  
*Understanding Autism in Infants and Toddlers: What to Look For and How to Support Families*

Terance Dawkins, LCSW  
Missing Pieces Counseling Services  
*Intergenerational Trauma: The Burdens We Are Not Meant to Carry*

Colleen Tarantino, MA, NBC-HWC  
Appalachian State University  
*What is SBIRT Screening and How Can It Strengthen Communities?*

Tracy George, MPH, CHES  
University of North Carolina at Asheville  
*Strengthening Health Behaviors Through Relationships, Routines, and Reflection*

Mark Harvey, PhD  
University of North Carolina at Asheville  
*Becoming animal: Eco-therapeutic exercises for the hidden senses and more*

Beth Glueck, PhD, LCMHCS, NCC  
Community Care of North Carolina  
*Understanding the Collaborative Care Model, Its Alignment with Value-Based Care, and How You Can Participate*

Christine Lau, RN, LCSW  
AdventHealth  
*Building Trauma-Informed Organizations: Principles, Practices, and Impact*

**12:00 PM** – Lunch and Keynote: Kelly Crosbie, MSW, LCSW, Director, North Carolina Division of Mental Health, Developmental Disabilities, and Substance Use Services

**SESSION C – 1:30–2:15 PM**

Shuchin Shukla, MD, MPH  
North Carolina Technical Assistance Center  
*Substance Use Disorders: Trends, Gaps, and Innovations*

Derek Martinez, LCMHC  
Your Next Chapter Counseling  
*Sitting With Uncertainty: Understanding and Applying Exposure and Response Prevention for OCD*

Dr. Natalie West, DNP, PMHNP

UNC Health Pardee

*Beyond Survival: Understanding Complex PTSD and Cultivating Post-Traumatic Growth*

Sarah Pfau, JD, MPH

Attorney at Law, PLLC and Senior Consultant, CCR Consulting

*Navigating Health Care System Change with Resilience*

Lamarr Lewis, MA, LAPC, NCC, CPRP

Lewis Family Counseling

*Holla If You Hear Me: The Art of Storytelling in Behavioral Health*

Sarah Reives-Houston, PhD, PsyD (ABD)

Behavioral Health Springboard, UNC School of Social Work

*From Self-Care to We-Care: Using DBT to Improve Provider Wellbeing and Reduce Compassion Fatigue*

Jay Wilson, LCSW

Therapy & Sneakers

*Cultural Doorways: Engagement and Resilience through Therapy & Sneakers*

Beth Harmer, DSW, MSW, LCSW, LCAS, CCS

Western Carolina University

*Harm Reduction with Adolescents*

#### **SESSION D – 2:30–3:15 PM**

Samantha Berkowitz, MPH, RD, LDN

Carolina Resource Center for Eating Disorders in collaboration with Unmasked Nutrition

*Reframing Food and Body: The Role of Nutrition Therapy in Eating Disorder Recovery*

Raymond C Turpin, PsyD

The Pearl Institute

*Ketamine-Assisted Psychotherapy for Treatment-Resistant Depression*

Sarah Erdman, MS

Creating a Family

*A Trauma-Informed Approach to Understanding and Supporting Families Affected by Prenatal Substance Exposure*

Taylor Ludwig, LCSW, LCAS, CCS, QS, RYT

Tailored Wellness PLLC

*Beyond Mood and Menstruation: Advancing Sexual Health Literacy*

Julianne Power, PhD, MS & Emily Roberts, MA, LCMHCS

Mountain Area Health Education Center (MAHEC)

*Bridging the Gap: Sustainable Growth Strategies for Behavioral Health in Western North Carolina*

Nate Sowa, MD, PhD

University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill

*Breaking Barriers: Virtual Care and the Future of Youth Mental Health*

Brea Kuykendall, MHS; Cori Search, MA; & Jenna Sharrits, MA, GCPH  
Land of Sky Regional Council Area Agency on Aging  
*From Isolation to Connection: Community Solutions for Older Adults*

**3:30 PM** – Afternoon Keynote and Closing: Sarah Merritt Ryan, MS, CPSS, Mental Health Advocate  
*Stability Isn't the Finish Line: What True Healing Really Takes for SMI*