



HENDERSON COUNTY BEHAVIORAL HEALTH CONFERENCE 2026



Public Health
Prevent. Promote. Protect.
Henderson County, NC

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