

NCCARE360 Quarterly Report • July-September 2019

NCCARE360 Implementation Progress Report

We are proud to announce that the implementation of NCCARE360 is going as planned. With the recent launch in Durham, Franklin, Granville, Person, Vance, and Warren Counties, NCCARE360 is now operating in 21 counties, and is on target to be in 29 more counties by year-end



In addition, the resource directory has been expanded to include more than 8,000 verified resources, ensuring that each NCCARE360 pillar service in all 100 counties of North Carolina are now available for referral.

If you are interested in joining the network as a network partner, you can get started by going to nccare360.org/join. A member of the community engagement team will reach out to get you started.



NCCARE360 Overview

When we pose the question, "What do people really need to be healthy,?" the answer is pretty consistent and intuitive. Yes, access to high-quality medical care is critical; but so is access to healthy food, reliable transportation, a safe place to live, and a good job. However, people face a fragmented system of health and human services that can be hard to navigate. Providers often operate in silos, are disconnected, and have no meaningful way of coordinating services for local residents.

When a primary care physician notes that a patient needs a visit to a medical specialist, there are mature systems for the physician to make the referral and track the progress and outcomes of that referral. No such system existed to address the non-medical drivers of health. In addition, no systems existed to connect communitybased organizations and social service agencies to each other.

NCCARE360 addresses this gap — and more. NCCARE360 is the first statewide, coordinated care network to electronically connect people with identified resource needs to community-based organizations like food pantries, and allow for a feedback loop on the outcome of that connection.

1

Continued on page 2

NCCARE360 Announces the 1,000th Referral

On October 15, the NCDHHS and FHLI proudly announced that NCCARE360 had made its 1,000th referral for services.

This significant referral happened when staff at a Piedmont county health department used NCCARE360 to refer a resident for social services case management, allowing them to quickly receive diapers, bedding, and other necessities. Needless to say, it was a great day for everyone involved with NCCARE360 — and in that community — when a North Carolinian was able to quickly receive the assistance they needed using one point of contact.

NCCARE360 Referral Guidance to Local Health Departments

To assist North Carolina's local health departments with the planning, implementation, integration, and evaluation of NCCARE360, the North Carolina Department of Health & Human Services' Division of Public Health has developed the following referral guidelines: <u>"Maximizing the NCCARE360 Network</u> to Advance the Public's Health: A Guide for NC Local Health Departments."

This helps local health departments streamline and standardize referrals, create an instant, virtual connection between service providers, and close the loop on client service provision. By maximizing platform utilization, local health departments have the opportunity to link to to services and provisions of care while mobilizing community partnerships that influence the advancement of the public's health.

"Connecting those we serve to other services that can further support positive health outcomes is very important to the local health department," said Stacie Turpin Saunders, Health Director of Alamance County Health Department. "With NCCARE360, each local health department has an opportunity to implement NCCARE360 in a way that best fits their clients, services and programs. Additionally, because of the collaborative and community-oriented work of public health, local health departments have a unique and integral role in rolling out NCCARE360 in their communities."

Continued from page 1

NCCARE360 is a shared technology platform that enables health care and human service providers to not only send and receive secure electronic referrals, but also to seamlessly communicate in real time, securely share client information, and track outcomes.

Since its launch in three counties in April 2019, NCCARE360 has been connecting people with the resources they need to be healthy, safe and well. Local health departments, social service agencies, and community providers are using NCCARE360 to assist with identified needs, such as housing, employment, food, interpersonal safety and transportation, among others.

NCCARE360 is now live in 21 counties and counting across North Carolina, with new partners joining every day. On October 15, 2019, the 1000th referral was sent through the platform — a clear indicator of the network's momentum.

"With NCCARE360, each local health department has an opportunity to implement NCCARE360 in a way that best fits their clients, services and programs."

Community Spotlight: Rolling Up Our Sleeves at Cone Health to Change Lives with NCCARE360



By Kathy Colville, MSW, MPSH Healthy Communities Director, Cone Health

I was speaking recently with a social worker at Cone Health, who told me about a patient who had lost her job, was going through a divorce, and was diagnosed with a very serious illness, all within a few weeks. Each of these situations alone is a source of significant stress; when they happen all at once, it can feel like the sky is falling in around you. This social worker felt hopeful for her client though, because she saw the impact of NCCARE360 in this situation and others.

"It helps you feel less alone in the world to know that someone out there is trying to find you and help."

The social worker was able to use NCCARE360 to alert local agencies who could offer legal assistance, counseling, and help with immediate needs, like housing and food. The social worker told me, "She doesn't have to go to each of these places to ask for help. These agencies are all reaching out to her. It helps you feel less alone in the world to know that someone out there is trying to find you and help."

This story illustrates an important goal of NCCARE360. This network is not intended to replace human connection. Its goal is to facilitate human connection.

This speaks to us at Cone Health, where our stated purpose is to connect healthcare and well-being; our promise is, "We are right here with you." We have learned that making NCCARE360 successful in our communities requires a lot of hard work and commitment. We are also convinced that it is absolutely worth it.

"For now, we are very happily a work-inprogress, grateful for this historic opportunity to build a human-centered network dedicated to changing lives and communities."

But let's talk frankly about the hard work involved. Cone Health launched NCCARE360 at the end of April with more than 100 employees licensed. A handful of very motivated people, the early adopters, took up the tool and were almost immediately successful. But many struggled.

Even people who really want to use NCCARE360 find it challenging to figure out how and when it "fits" into their processes. That's not a people or motivation problem; that's a process problem. So, in alignment with our LEAN management principle of "respect for people," we are looking at this differently.

We are stepping back and looking at our processes and training so that our employees have the support they need to be successful and make these connections happen. Our leadership is committed to making this work by mapping current processes and developing standard work to integrate NCCARE360 into our processes, as well as monitoring our results in a spirit of continuous improvement.

We have also been greatly supported by the NCCARE360 implementation team led by Unite Us to help our department leaders to offer training, work flow support, and additional opportunities to ensure that NCCARE360 is successful.

At Cone Health, we take our role as the first health system using NCCARE360 seriously. We unearth new ideas and issues every week and share them with the NCCARE360 team. We hope, by the time this tool comes to other communities, they will be able to say, "Wow, what a great system. They really thought of everything!"

For now, we are very happily a work-in-progress, grateful for this historic opportunity to build a human-centered network dedicated to changing lives and communities. Now it's time to get back to work!

Endless Possibilities: Navigating NCCARE360

United Way of North Carolina's team works to ensure that the resources in NCCARE360 are upto-date, verified and accessible, and build on its existing, robust NC 2-1-1 resource database while also engaging the network of local United Ways as champions.

These community resources are also integral to the build-out of NCCARE360 and to inform the NCCARE360 community engagement strategy employed by the community engagement managers. The NCCARE360 resources team have verified more than 8,000 services in all of North Carolina's counties.

NCCARE360 Navigators, based in the 2-1-1 call centers, are also an integral part of the system. Navigators respond to requests for assistance received via <u>www.nccare360.org</u>, and support health care providers who need help making the best referral to meet their patients' health and human service needs. To date, NCCARE360 navigators have assisted with 64 referrals.

NCCARE360 Navigators Kim (working from Asheville) and Natalie (working from Durham) were interviewed by NC 2-1-1 State Director Heather Black. They were asked to share their perspectives as the key individuals receiving and routing referrals through the NC 2-1-1 Coordination Center for NCCARE360. NCCARE360 STATUS UPDATE



Continued on page 5

How is your role as an NCCARE360 navigator different from your prior role as a NC 2-1-1 Call Specialist?

Both Kim and Natalie shared that the biggest win in their work as NCCARE360 navigators is the opportunity to go beyond simply interacting with clients, to now interacting directly with staff and leaders at the agencies that provide important social services.

Natalie remarked, "It's surprising to learn how limited

a view some smaller agencies may have of the bigger social services system. In my navigator role, I like that I can provide some context so they understand the bigger picture of some of the systems in social services, like housing, which can be very complex."

What skills do you think are most important for an NCCARE360 navigator?

Kim shared that a navigator must be able to see the "holistic" picture of a client's situation and seek the "wrap around services" the client truly needs to move forward. "Persistence is really important and, because I can see where the barriers are while using NCCARE360, I can focus my persistence on those issues specifically to support the client," added Kim.

What excites you about NCCARE360?

Specifically, Kim spoke of how exciting it is to "see the full view of a client as it relates to a much bigger system. That's how we should be looking at people and meeting their needs. And now we're actually doing it."

For Natalie, she's most excited about the ability to interact more directly with the agencies that serve clients. "The ability to communicate effectively and efficiently through NCCARE360 really improves our ability to serve clients and meet their needs."

As for the future of NCCARE360, both Natalie and Kim think the potential is endless.

"The more communities that are on-boarded, the more agencies to serve clients, and then more clients who have their needs met. The opportunity for growth is tremendous. As more small agencies are on-boarded, the more those agencies will learn about holistic care and the system of social services," said Natalie.

"And that will just enhance the care for clients and our ability to help everyone," added Kim with excitement.



NCCARE360 Navigators Kim (top left) and Natalie (bottom right) at work assisting clients.

NCCARE360 is a public-private partnership between NCDHHS and FHLI, in collaboration with implementation partners that include the United Way of North Carolina/NC 2-1-1, Expound Decision Systems, and Unite Us. Partners are working together to develop guidelines and recommendations for social service departments and community-based human service agencies, as well.

For more information about NCCARE360, please visit <u>www.nccare360.org</u> or contact <u>connect@nccare360.org</u>.





NCCARE360 IS BEING BUILT IN COLLABORATION WITH:

