



**SANDHILLS
CENTER**

**QUARTERLY
COMMUNITY REPORT**

April 2016

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A message from the CEO

SANDHILLS CENTER TAKES PRIDE

I am pleased to announce that Sandhills Center recently earned reaccreditation from URAC, the nation's largest healthcare accrediting organization. The three-year reaccreditation is effective May 1, 2016 through April 30, 2019, and covers the following areas of service to individuals and families:

- **Health Call Center** – provides clinical triage to members in a manner that is timely, confidential and includes medically-appropriate care and treatment referral.
- **Health Utilization Management** – ensures utilization review, follows a process that is clinically sound, respects patients' and providers' rights, and operates within reasonable guidelines.
- **Health Network** – includes key quality benchmarks for network management, provider credentialing, quality management improvement, and consumer protection. URAC standards require health networks to establish self-monitoring practices, emphasizing quality assurance and improvement.

This achievement reaffirms our commitment to those in need of services in Anson, Guilford, Harnett, Hoke, Lee, Montgomery, Moore, Randolph and Richmond counties. URAC accreditation demonstrates accountability in business practices, and we are proud of our efforts to reach this goal.

We also are pleased with the results of the most recent Provider Satisfaction Survey, conducted last fall by the North Carolina Department of Health and Human Services. Results were released in February. Sandhills Center was the only Local Management Entity-Managed Care Organization

(LME-MCO) in the state to show improvement in all 23 measured areas.

Currently, we are analyzing data from the recent annual Community Needs Assessment which concluded at the end of January. The results will allow Sandhills Center to identify its strengths and potential gaps in services, and will provide useful insight for future planning.

There were many highlights in the first quarter of 2016, including Sandhills Center's reinvestment of savings in the service system. Providers of various critical services are now receiving higher reimbursement rates, which began Feb. 1.

Details about each of these topics can be found throughout this report.

As you can see, Sandhills Center continues its commitment to working with our stakeholders to increase access to quality behavioral healthcare. We extend many thanks to our community partners for making these efforts possible.



Victoria Whitt,
Chief Executive Officer
Sandhills Center

Community

COMMUNITY NEEDS ASSESSMENT COMPLETED

Sandhills Center recently completed the annual Community Needs Assessment, a process that assists us in improving the quality of care for those who experience challenges with mental illness, substance use, and intellectual and developmental disabilities.

This comprehensive stakeholder survey helps identify service gaps so that we may address them. It also highlights areas that may be potentially underserved.

The valuable information gained from this assessment provides the foundation for service planning for at least the next year. It measures quality and accessibility of services across the full continuum.

Sandhills Center made participation in the survey as easy as possible -- it was available online and in pen-and-paper form, in both English and Spanish.

As in years past, those encouraged to participate were people who receive services and their families, providers, healthcare practitioners, county government and school officials, law enforcement personnel, mobile crisis teams, housing authorities and charitable groups.

The survey concluded Jan. 31. Data analysis is underway, with Sandhills Center staff developing plans to address issues. The next step is to implement the plans developed.

Just as in previous years, identified priority areas will be built into organizational business plans, quality improvement projects, requests for proposals and other planning processes to guide our efforts.

We will keep stakeholders abreast of new developments on our website -- SandhillsCenter.org -- and in future publications.

We appreciate everyone who offered feedback. Based on the survey results, we will continue to build on our foundation of a strong network of providers to meet the unique needs of our members. We look forward to the positive impact this initiative will have on our communities.

SANDHILLS CENTER IS IN THE PROCESS OF ANALYZING DATA, DEVELOPING PLANS TO ADDRESS THE ISSUES, AND IS BEGINNING THE PROCESS OF IMPLEMENTING THE PLANS DEVELOPED.



Services

RATE INCREASES ANNOUNCED

Sandhills Center continues to reinvest savings into services. Effective Feb. 1, reimbursement rates were increased to providers of various critical services.

“Sandhills Center values the quality residential treatment and community-service options offered to our members by our provider network, and is glad to be able to offer these rate increases,” said Victoria Whitt, Sandhills Center CEO. “These increases are only possible due to the collaborative efforts of Sandhills Center, our provider network and community partners continually working to provide the right services to assist our members.”

Reimbursement rates for Behavioral Health Long-Term Residential Services, which include Residential Level I to IV, were increased by 5 percent, and are available to children throughout the Sandhills Center region. These services offer a home-like setting and intensive treatment when out-of-home placement is necessary. Family involvement is a critical component because the goal often is for children to experience seamless transitions back to living at home with their families.

Reimbursement rates for Psychiatric Residential Treatment Facility (PRTF) services were increased by 5 percent. PRTF offers a high level of residential care with 24-hour supervision and are typically needed when an individual has a history of multiple hospitalizations, or when lower levels of residential care have been unsuccessful. These services may begin with a psychiatric assessment to determine the best clinical approach. As a result, many people are able to successfully transition to lower levels of care and return to their homes.

Community Support Team (CST) services were

increased by 15 percent. CST offers a team-based approach to care for those with significant mental health or addiction needs. It connects members with providers to meet their specific needs, and offers intensive case management services and monitoring. It also helps people to seek employment, housing or other essential support for long-term wellness.

Psychosocial Rehabilitation services were increased by 8 percent. These community-based programs help people strengthen important daily living skills, and assist them in pursuing and obtaining necessary social, vocational and educational goals.

Reimbursement for Opioid Treatment services was increased by 13 percent. These services are effective for some members who have dependencies, or experience addiction to opioids or other narcotics. This medication-assisted treatment provides tailored plans, and works in conjunction with outpatient therapy.

We will continue to explore opportunities to make adjustments to services, reimbursement rates and service-delivery models to more effectively meet the needs of our members.

“THESE INCREASES ARE ONLY POSSIBLE DUE TO THE COLLABORATIVE EFFORT OF SANDHILLS CENTER, OUR PROVIDER NETWORK AND COMMUNITY PARTNERS CONTINUALLY WORKING TO PROVIDE THE RIGHT SERVICES TO ASSIST OUR MEMBERS.”

- VICTORIA WHITT, CEO

Benchmarks

PROVIDER SATISFACTION SURVEY IS POSITIVE

Federal regulations require all managed care organizations to participate in an external quality review to ensure compliance with regulatory standards including access to care, structure and operations, and quality measurement and improvement.

Included in this review is a customer service survey of providers participating in the program. Sandhills Center, along with all state LME-MCOs, recently participated in the 2015 Provider Satisfaction Survey, conducted by the North Carolina Department of Health and Human Services. According to The Carolinas Center for Medical Excellence report summarizing the survey findings, "Sandhills Center showed strong gains across the questions, seeing improvement in each measure and having the highest average improvement of all the plans." Areas in which Sandhills Center excelled were:

- **Provider Network** -- responsiveness to providers' needs.
- **Customer Service** -- responsive to community stakeholders.
- **Community Relations and Training** -- Provider Network meetings are informative and helpful; training sessions are informative and meet agencies' needs; website is useful for finding materials needed to provide services.
- **Provider Mentoring** -- staff conducts fair and thorough investigations; following an audit/investigation, requests for corrective action and other supporting materials are fair and reasonable.
- **Utilization Management** -- authorizations are made within required timeframes and are accurate.
- **Overall satisfaction with Sandhills Center** -- an improvement of 10.2 percent over 2014.

Sandhills Center understands the important role network providers play in offering quality care to members. It is our goal to support them as they perform these duties. Sandhills Center vows to collaborate with the Provider Network by responding to their needs, offering training and technical assistance, and providing accurate and prompt authorizations for their work.

Sandhills Center is committed to a strong relationship with the Provider Network now and in the future, thereby providing access to quality care for residents of central North Carolina.

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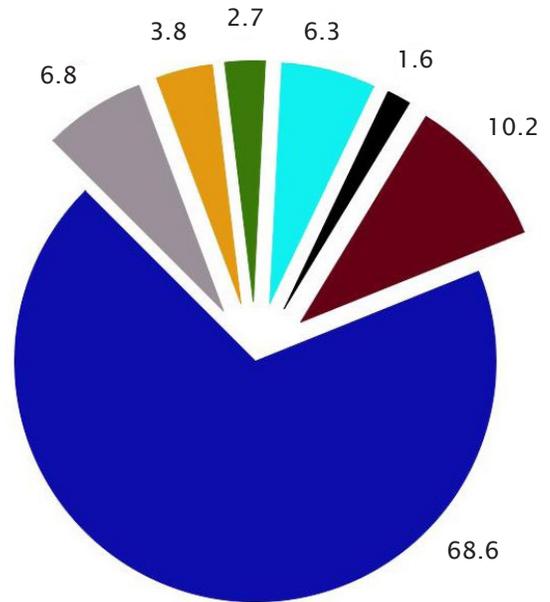
- THE CAROLINAS CENTER FOR MEDICAL EXCELLENCE.



Financials

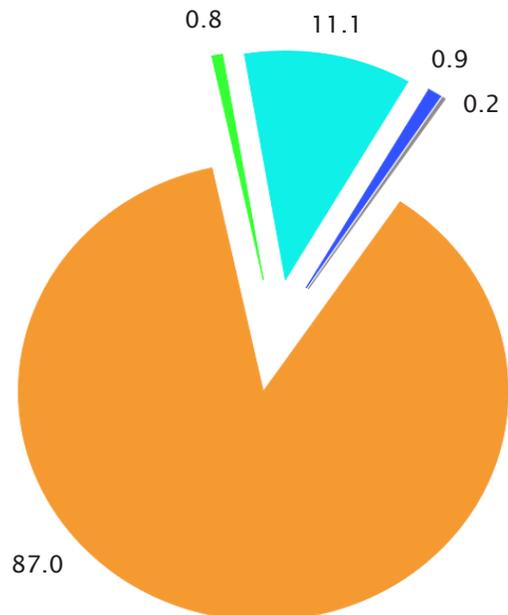
REVENUES - \$318,663,848

Medicaid Service Contracts	\$218,667,892	68.6%
State, Federal Service Funds and Medicaid Flow	21,645,623	6.8%
County General and Other Local	12,044,584	3.8%
I/DD Treatment Planning Administration and MH/SA/Treatment Planning	8,559,599	2.7%
Medicaid Administration General and LME Administration	20,217,312	6.3%
Medicaid Reserve Funds	4,976,511	1.6%
Fund Balance	32,552,327	10.2%
Total	\$318,663,848	100%



EXPENSES - \$318,663,848

Contracts	\$277,444,612	87.0%
Personnel	35,384,418	11.1%
Materials and Supplies	655,013	0.2%
Current Obligations	2,738,042	0.9%
Fixed Charges and Capital	2,441,763	0.8%
Total	\$318,663,848	100%





ACCREDITED
Health Network
Expires 05/01/2019



ACCREDITED
Health Call Center
Expires 05/01/2019



ACCREDITED
Health Utilization
Management
Expires 05/01/2019

SANDHILLS CENTER

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West End, NC 27376

For assistance -- 1-800-256-2452
Administrative offices -- (910) 673-9111

SandhillsCenter.org

SERVING ANSON, GUILFORD, HARNETT, HOKE, LEE, MONTGOMERY, MOORE, RANDOLPH AND RICHMOND COUNTIES.