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### **Cardinal Innovations Selected to Manage Medicaid Benefits for Nash County**

KANNAPOLIS, N.C., Sept. 30, 2015 – Nash County has selected Cardinal Innovations Healthcare to manage Medicaid, state and county-funded specialty health benefits for Nash County citizens. Today, the Nash County Board of Commissioners unanimously voted to discontinue its relationship with Eastpointe, the LME/MCO currently serving Nash County.

In North Carolina, counties are responsible for overseeing the delivery of services for individuals with mental health needs, intellectual and developmental disabilities, and substance use disorders.

“We are excited by the opportunity to serve Nash County,” said Cardinal Innovations Chief Executive Officer, Richard Topping. “Our experience, expertise and resources enable us to efficiently and effectively manage publicly-funded health benefits in a sustainable and transparent manner. After productive conversations with elected officials and county management, it is clear that Cardinal Innovations’ philosophy of care aligns well with Nash County’s commitment to its citizens. This is exactly the type of partnership we are looking for as we begin planning for the implementation of Medicaid reform in North Carolina.”

Cardinal Innovations Healthcare is North Carolina’s largest specialty health plan. The company first began serving individuals with complex health needs in 1974 and pioneered Medicaid managed care in North Carolina in 2005. Today, Cardinal Innovations manages care for special populations across 16 North Carolina counties for a combined 2.4 million covered lives with 720,000 enrolled members. Nearly one-quarter of North Carolina’s Medicaid population is enrolled with Cardinal Innovations for specialty services.

“It is our goal to ensure that Nash County’s most vulnerable citizens are best cared for,” said Commission Chairman Fred Belfield. “With significant changes on the horizon as a result of Medicaid reform, the move to Cardinal Innovations will provide stability for our county and our citizens.”

Additionally, Commissioner Lisa Barnes, who also currently serves on the Nash County Mental Health committee, said, “Cardinal Innovations has a proven track record of achieving successful outcomes for its members and the communities it serves. We look forward to this new relationship. “

Nash County’s decision comes less than a week after CenterPoint Human Services LME/MCO located in Winston-Salem announced that it would pursue consolidation with Cardinal Innovations. CenterPoint serves Forsyth, Stokes, Davie and Rockingham counties. Combined with CenterPoint, Cardinal Innovations would cover nearly 3 million lives and have 900,000 enrolled members.

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CenterPoint also cited the state’s recent decision to privatize Medicaid as a reason for joining Cardinal Innovations. Under the new Medicaid reform law, LME/MCOs will be phased out and either subcontract with, or be replaced by, commercial insurers and provider-led entities. Provider-led entities are groups of doctors and hospitals who will operate as regional managed care networks.

Legislators and advocates believe Cardinal Innovations is the only existing MCO with the scale to pursue becoming a provider-led entity and to compete successfully for regional contracts. Under the new law, all Medicaid contracts will be competitively bid and Medicaid will pay a fixed fee for each enrolled member. The fee will cover the cost of all care an individual needs, and the state will not be responsible for cost overruns.

Cardinal Innovations already serves Franklin, Warren and Halifax counties, which are adjacent to Nash. It maintains a community office in Henderson that serves these three counties as well as Vance and Granville. Additional community offices are in Chapel Hill, Burlington, Concord and Charlotte. Cardinal Innovations is headquartered in Kannapolis.



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