

Agency receives grant to help the disabled

Special to the News Herald

ASHEVILLE — The North Carolina Council on Developmental Disabilities has selected Asheville-based Vaya Health to lead a statewide effort to improve how health care providers and other organizations help individuals with intellectual or developmental disabilities live in homes of their own.

NCCDD chose Vaya, a public managed health care organization serving 23 western North Carolina counties, as the recipient of the state's "Supported Living - Making a Difference" grant. The grant offers \$100,000 per year, for up to three years, to build the capacity of supported living programs and share lessons learned to help people with I/DD achieve greater independence.

Vaya plans to partner with leaders of the Norfolk-based Hope House Foundation, the Community Resource Alliance and the National Leadership Consortium on Developmental Disabilities at the University of Delaware in their endeavors.

"We're pleased to be selected for the NCCDD grant and the chance to truly make a difference," said Vaya CEO Brian Inghram. "Ultimately, this collaboration will better integrate individuals with IDD into our local communities, increase their level of independence and help them pursue lives of their own design."

Four area and statewide health care providers plan to participate in the development stage of the initiative — Turning Point Services, The Arc of North Carolina, Liberty Corner Enterprises and FIRST, a western North Carolina resource center for families of children with disabilities. Each group will work with people liv-

ing in institutions, residential facilities or with family caregivers and help them transition to living more independently in their own homes.

The efforts will serve as a learning laboratory for health care providers and advocates.

Vaya will host a statewide conference to launch the initiative on March 28-29 in Greensboro. The conference is designed for health care providers who offer supported living services, as well as people receiving North Carolina Innovations services and their family members.

After that conference, Derrick Dufresne, founder of the Community Resource Alliance, will serve as speaker at the NC TIDE Spring 2017 Conference in Wilmington and host a supported living learning session.

To learn more, visit www.vayahealth.com.

