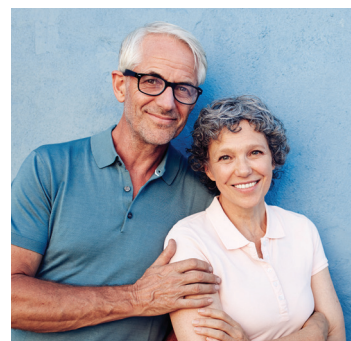




# NORTH CAROLINA "BE SMART"

FAMILY PLANNING MEDICAID PROGRAM



## BE SMART. BE READY. A FAMILY PLANNING PROGRAM

[2018-2023 STRATEGIC PLAN]

# TABLE OF CONTENTS

Summary . . . . .	3
Program Overview . . . . .	4
Strategic Plan Strategies. . . . .	5
Strategic Plan Strategy Details . . . . .	6
Moving Forward. . . . .	8
Related Strategic Plans. . . . .	8
Strategic Planning Partners . . . . .	9

# SUMMARY

The North Carolina “Be Smart” Family Planning Medicaid Program (“Be Smart”) Strategic Plan was developed in 2018 with representative partners in our state. The strategic plan guides the work of the “Be Smart” Family Planning Medicaid Program as it assists individuals by: providing family planning and family planning-related services and supplies to the eligible population, preventing unintended pregnancies, and protecting and improving the well-being of children and families.

To achieve specific goals and objectives for the program over the next five years, the “Be Smart” Strategic Plan was developed as a tool to track progress through a variety of partners. The strategies described in this plan include participation from state, local, non-profit, private, and federally qualified health agencies. The partners involved in providing input for the plan used data from consumer surveys, private and public providers frequently asked questions and concerns, and community members experiences with the “Be Smart” Family Planning Medicaid Program.

## Consumer Surveys Results

As of September 27, 2018, 50 consumer surveys were submitted by health agencies and social services organizations. According to the results of the 2018 “Be Smart” Family Planning Medicaid Program Consumer Survey, 31.4% found the “Be Smart” Family Planning Medicaid Program helpful to them, compared to 14.3% who found the program not helpful at all.

Through analysis of survey responses from “Be Smart” Family Planning Medicaid Program enrollees, the following was observed:

- 39.4% were not aware of services provided.
- 58.1% stated their case worker or social worker explained the “Be Smart Family Planning Medicaid Program very little.
- 30.3% preferred contraceptive pills as their family planning method, as compared to 24.2% used no birth control method.

The “Be Smart” Family Planning Medicaid Strategic Planning Partners group concluded that increased awareness of the program and available services among the eligible population was needed to advance outcomes.

# PROGRAM OVERVIEW

The “Be Smart” Family Planning Medicaid Program, is designed to help reduce unintended (unplanned) pregnancies for North Carolinians. Under this health insurance, family planning/reproductive health and contraceptive services are provided to eligible men and women, whose income is at or below 195% of the federal poverty level, with no age restrictions. Eligible individuals include: U.S. citizens, documented immigrants, or qualified aliens; and residents of North Carolina who are not incarcerated or pregnant. Services offered under the “Be Smart” program require no co-payment.

The following services are covered through the “Be Smart” Program:

- Annual and periodic office visits (including counseling, patient education, and treatment)
- Specific laboratory procedures (i.e., pap tests, pregnancy tests)
- FDA-approved and Medicaid-covered birth control methods, procedures, pharmaceutical supplies, and devices
- Screening and treatment for specific sexually transmitted infections (STIs)
- Voluntary sterilization (in accordance with federal sterilization guidelines)

More details on services covered can be found using the following link:

<https://medicaid.ncdhhs.gov/medicaid/get-started/find-programs-and-services/be-smart-family-planning-program>

The following objectives guide the service delivery efforts of the “Be Smart” Program:

- Increase the number of reproductive age women and men receiving family planning services by improving access to and use of Medicaid family planning services.
- Increase the number of adequately planned pregnancy.
- Positively impact the utilization of and continuation rates for contraceptive use.
- Increase access to highly effective methods of contraception.
- Reduce the number of unintended pregnancies among women eligible for Medicaid which will also reduce annual expenditures for prenatal, delivery, infant and newborn care.
- Estimate the overall savings in Medicaid spending attributable to providing family planning services to women and men.

# THE STRATEGIC PLAN

The “Be Smart” Family Planning Medicaid Program Strategic Plan was developed as a five-year (2018-2023) internal guide for the Division of Public Health (DPH) and the Division of Health Benefits (DHB), also known as NC Medicaid. It guides the implementation of the “Be Smart” Program by identifying and addressing six key strategies/goals, that assists DPH and its partners in implementing changes that will have the greatest impact on North Carolina residents and program participants.

## Six Key Strategies:

1. Expand agency and stakeholder partnerships that offer program services.
2. Increase training opportunities for all agencies implementing the program.
3. Provide training and outreach opportunities to program enrollees and potential recipients.
4. Improve and clarify the process of determining eligibility for current and future beneficiaries.
5. Create an easy access and enrollment process for consumers.
6. Provide automatic transitions from existing Medicaid programs for beneficiaries, caseworkers, and providers.

Below is a list of priority counties that will receive intense training and outreach for the next three years under the “Be Smart” strategic plan. These counties were selected due to the low number of Family Planning Medicaid enrollees receiving services:

**FISCAL YEAR 2019:** Cherokee, Columbus, Durham, Forsyth, Gaston, Halifax, Jackson, Pender, Robeson, Swain, Vance, and Wayne;

**FISCAL YEAR 2020:** Bladen, Carteret, Dare, Duplin, Greene, Johnston, McDowell, Richmond, and Wilson;

**FISCAL YEAR 2021:** Alamance, Buncombe, Cleveland, Craven, Cumberland, Montgomery, Northampton, Onslow, Pitt, Rutherford, Wilkes, and Yancey

## I. Strategy 1: Expand agency and stakeholder partnerships that offer program services.

### **ACTION STEPS/INITIATIVES:**

1. Evaluate existing relationships; explore and develop potential partnerships that would improve the “Be Smart” Program.
2. Organize quarterly “Be Smart” strategic plan committee meetings which include partners and consumers from numerous agencies that utilize the program.
3. Develop and update provider recruitment plan for local and private providers to increase capacity for beneficiary program participation.
4. Work collaboratively with staff from state, local, private non-profit and community-based agencies to improve and maximize the quality of family planning services.

## II. Strategy 2: Increase training opportunities for all agencies implementing the “Be Smart” Program.

### **ACTION STEPS/INITIATIVES:**

1. Provide and arrange in person training updates for county department of social services, public health clinics, and other community-based providers serving low income and Medicaid eligible clients. Develop a comprehensive outreach marketing plan to assist agencies in promoting the “Be Smart” Program and upcoming trainings for staff.
2. Host annual webinars for agencies to receive orientation and updates about the “Be Smart” Program.
3. Create a Train the Trainer Toolkit to:
  - a. Provide “Be Smart” agencies with the tools needed to implement family planning outreach activities (example: PowerPoint slides, educational resources, etc.)
  - b. Include “Be Smart” history, services, most recent policies, billing/coding guidance, and resources to assist with sustainability of the program.
  - c. Provide “Be Smart” resources for agencies with high staff turnover rates.
  - d. Provide materials to assist with promoting the program, communicating with potential beneficiaries, delivering innovative, educational presentations, and designing activities to reach recipients.
  - e. Provide a tool for agencies to track trainings and outreach.
4. Expand reproductive life planning inclusive of long-acting reversible contraceptives (LARC) and family planning educational training opportunities related to counseling and referring clients for contraceptive methods and sexually transmitted infections screenings (North Carolina Perinatal Health Strategic Plan action step: Goal 1, Point 1, 1A:3)

## III. Strategy 3: Provide training and outreach opportunities to program enrollees and potential recipients.

### **ACTION STEPS/INITIATIVES:**

1. Develop and conduct at least one family planning community awareness training per year.

2. Promote and improve the participation of “Be Smart” beneficiaries in utilizing services by facilitating ongoing trainings throughout North Carolina.
3. Create a Family Planning Male Outreach Team to increase male participation in the “Be Smart” Family Planning Medicaid Program and other family planning initiatives.
4. Conduct listening sessions with women and men of reproductive age to learn more about how current systems are working for them and what might work better. Apply what is learned to system improvements. (North Carolina Perinatal Health Strategic Plan action step: Goal 1, Point 6, 6C:1)

#### IV. Strategy 4: Improve and clarify the process of determining eligibility for current and future beneficiaries.

##### **ACTION STEPS/INITIATIVES:**

1. Assist with distribution of Medicaid Bulletins that provide guidelines for providers to follow on sterilizations and eligibility.
2. Create speaking points for front desk staff and other professionals (in health and social services settings) to follow to ensure enrollees are aware of “Be Smart” eligibility guidelines.
3. Prepare and revise documents with appropriate terminology and health literacy reading levels.
4. Educate “Be Smart” enrollees and staff on the Medicaid Approval Notice letter with family planning description enclosed.
5. Work with the Division of Health Benefits and the Centers for Medicare & Medicaid Services to assist with revising the sterilization eligibility process.

#### V. Strategy 5: Create an easy access and enrollment process for consumers.

##### **ACTION STEPS/INITIATIVES:**

1. Encourage partnerships between local department of social services and health agencies that offer “Be Smart” services and ensure both organizations are providing accurate and consistent information to consumers.
2. Review and assess enrollment application language to ensure consumers understand the application process.

#### VI. Strategy 6: Provide automatic transitions from existing Medicaid programs for beneficiaries, caseworkers, and providers to the “Be Smart” Program.

##### **ACTION STEPS/INITIATIVES:**

1. Educate consumers on the current transition process from one Medicaid program to another (for example: Medicaid for Pregnant Women to “Be Smart” Family Planning Medicaid).
2. Work with the Division of Health Benefits to create a process that links and transitions beneficiaries within Medicaid programs.

# MOVING FORWARD

The “Be Smart” Family Planning Medicaid Program Strategic Plan will be reviewed quarterly by the Strategic Planning Partners Group. The Plan updates and revisions will assist the “Be Smart” program in moving forward. The “Be Smart” consumer surveys will be conducted at least annually. The Strategic Plan guides the execution of the “Be Smart” Program by identifying and addressing goals, that assists DPH and its partners in implementing changes that will have the greatest impact on North Carolina residents and program participants.

## RELATED STRATEGIC PLANS

### North Carolina’s Perinatal Health Strategic Plan

The NC Perinatal Health Strategic Plan is designed to address infant mortality, maternal health, maternal morbidity, and the health of men and women of childbearing age. The 12-point plan is divided into three goals, comprised of four points per goal.

<https://whb.ncpublichealth.com/docs/NC-PerinatalHealthStrategicPlan-2016-2020-021919.pdf>

### North Carolina Preconception Health Strategic Plan

The NC Preconception Health Strategic Plan was introduced in 2008 to provide awareness about a new approach to reducing infant mortality by improving the health of women before, during, and after pregnancy. The plan highlights six priority areas.

<https://whb.ncpublichealth.com/docs/NorthCarolinaPreconceptionHealthStrategicPlanSupplement-2014-2019.pdf>



# 2018 “BE SMART” STRATEGIC PLANNING PARTNERS

Shahnee Haire, “Be Smart” Family Planning Medicaid Program Manager,  
North Carolina Division of Public Health

Wanda Woods, Facilitator, Public Health Program Consultant

Brenda Allen, NC Division of Health Benefits

Shirley Bolden, Cumberland County School System

Lakisha Bridges, Community Member

Kristen Carroll, NC Division of Public Health

Ellen Chavis, Hoke County Health Department

Betty Cox, NC Division of Public Health

Kendra Fennell, Young Women’s Christian Association (YWCA) of Greensboro

Latonya Fields, Community Member

Jerome Garner, Nash County Health Department

Sherika HiSmith George, Wake County Area Health Education Center (AHEC)

Ghada Gouda, Mecklenburg County Health Department

Cassandra Gray, Community Member

Julie Gooding Hasty, NC Division of Public Health

Walidah Karim, Cone Health – Center for Women’s Healthcare

Tara Martin, Rockingham County Department of Health and Human Services

Patti Nance, Columbus County Health Department

Belinda Pettiford, NC Division of Public Health

Donna Rosser, Durham County Department of Public Health

Kathy Smith, Hoke County Health Department

Latesha Staton, Nash County Health Department



**NC Department of Health and Human Services • Division of Public Health**

[whb.ncpublichealth.com](http://whb.ncpublichealth.com) • NCDHHS is an equal opportunity employer and provider. • 3/2019