

Henderson County Free Clinics Win Innovation Award

By Administrator
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Henderson County recently received a 2020 Local Government Federal Credit Union (LGFCU) Excellence in Innovation Award from the North Carolina Association of County Commissioners (NCACC). The award recognizes an innovative new program implemented earlier this year for behavioral health navigation for inmates at Henderson County Detention Center.

The program, developed in partnership with the Henderson County Department of Public Health, the Henderson County Sheriff's Office, and local nonprofit The Free Clinics (TFC), was created to address substance abuse disorder within individuals in the county detention center and implement a plan for treatment during and after their release. An in-house Navigator/Advocate, staffed by TFC, works together with the Detention Center team to assess, evaluate, and engage inmates in their needs and create discharge plans for them upon release. The Free Clinics was chosen for this contract because it had extant programming and serves as the community's "Access Network" for health, behavioral health, and social services referrals.

"The Free Clinics is honored and proud to be part of this successful collaborative project to provide person-centered care for the inmates of our county detention center, seeking to meet them where they are, address their needs, and engage them in care," said Executive Director Judith Long. "As a community, we can always do more together, and our teammates at the health department, sheriff's office, detention center, and county government have demonstrated their deep commitment to working together to care for all our citizens. And our Advocate, Tina LaFoy, is a tremendous blessing to us all."

County Board of Commissioners Chairman Grady Hawkins noted that "This program was the result of months of work spent by members of a county task force identifying possible ways to address substance abuse in Henderson County. The success this collaborative program has demonstrated is a testament to the dedication of our community in battling the opioid crisis."