



HEALTH CARE
AUTHORITY



CARA PUBLIC LISTENING SESSION

JANUARY 7, 2026

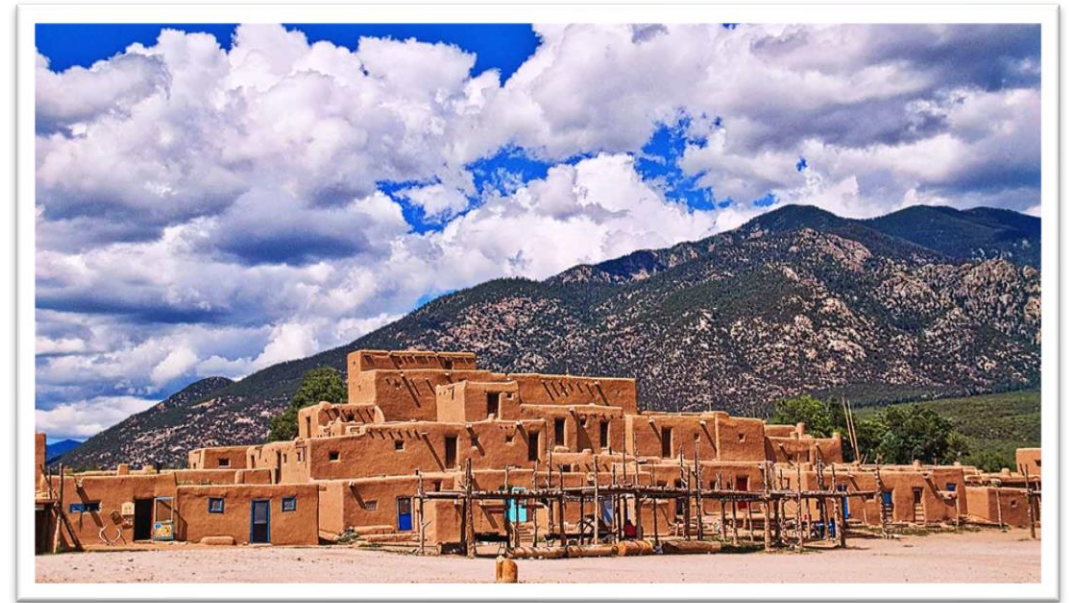
INVESTING FOR TOMORROW, DELIVERING TODAY.

BEFORE WE START...

On behalf of all colleagues at the Health Care Authority, we humbly acknowledge we are on the ancestral lands of the original peoples of the Pueblo, Apache, and Diné past, present, and future.

With gratitude we pay our respects to the land, the people and the communities that contribute to what today is known as the **Great State of New Mexico.**

Learn more: About Taos Pueblo at Taospueblo.com



A cloudy morning looking over Taos Pueblo

Photo provided by elpueblolodge.com



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MISSION

We ensure New Mexicans attain their highest level of health by providing whole-person, cost-effective, accessible, and high-quality health care and safety-net services.

VISION

Every New Mexican has access to affordable health care coverage through a coordinated and seamless health care system.

GOALS



LEVERAGE purchasing power and partnerships to create innovative policies and models of comprehensive health care coverage that improve the health and well-being of New Mexicans and the workforce.



BUILD the best team in state government by supporting employees' continuous growth and wellness.



ACHIEVE health equity by addressing poverty, discrimination, and lack of resources, building a New Mexico where everyone thrives.



IMPLEMENT innovative technology and data-driven decision-making to provide unparalleled, convenient access to services and information.

AGENDA

Run Time	Item
12:00-12:05	Introductions
12:05-12:10	Grounding and shared commitments
12:10-12:25	Upcoming changes under Senate Bill 42 affecting CARA
12:25-12:35	Work Group Progress
12:35-12:40	Stakeholder Communications
12:40-1:00	Public Comment



INTRODUCTIONS

GROUNDING AND SHARED COMMITMENTS

SHARED COMMITMENTS

- We are here to listen and share.
- The session will be recorded and uploaded to the CARA HCA webpage.
- Please allow presenters to finish before asking questions or commenting.
- Please avoid interruptions.
- Respect all viewpoints and keep comments focused on the topic.
- Use courteous language; personal attacks or political statements aren't appropriate.
- Stay solution-focused — we're all here to strengthen our community together.
- The facilitator may pause or redirect discussion to ensure fairness and keep us on schedule.

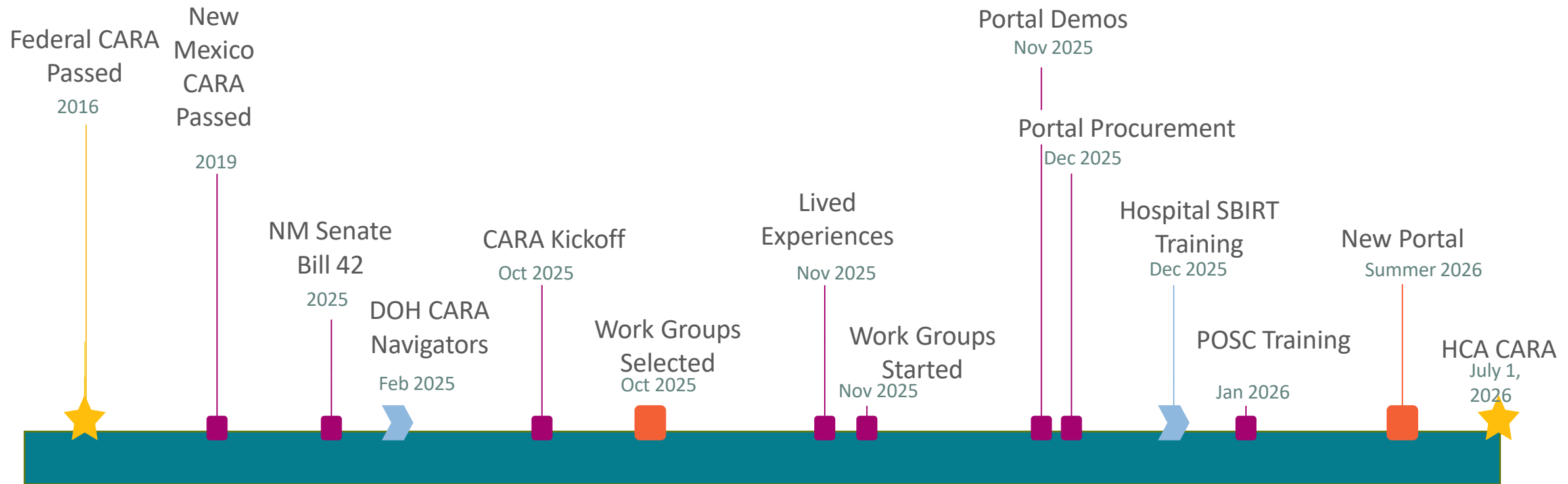
PUBLIC COMMENTS

- We value your input and want to give everyone time to speak.
- Hold questions and comments for Public Comment period at end. Questions and comments will be logged.
- Limited to 2 minutes per person
- No comments from chat will be monitored, however they will be logged as public comment



COMPREHENSIVE ADDICTION AND RECOVERY ACT

CARA Timeline



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BENEFITS TO MOTHERS

- Substance Use Disorder is a chronic medical condition which is treatable
- Medications for opioid use disorders are safe for use in pregnancy
- Screening and referrals for substance use disorder will save lives
- Overdose caused nearly 52% of pregnancy-related deaths in NM between 2015 and 2021 (NM Maternal Mortality Review Committee)



BENEFITS TO BABIES

- Prenatal substance use treatment is associated with an increased rate of infants attending well-child visits.
- Medications for opioid use disorders are safe for use in lactation.
- Wrap around services include referrals for behavioral health, early intervention and home visiting- which are all associated with improved maternal and newborn outcomes.



MAJOR CHANGES TO CARA PROGRAM

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Current CARA	Senate Bill 42 CARA
Primary responsibility for program with Children, Youth and Families Department (CYFD).	Primary responsibility for program moved to Health Care Authority (HCA) July 1, 2026.
No requirement for substance use screening. Substance exposure identified through toxicology or disclosure by mother.	Universal screening (verbal) removes bias.
Families may refuse a plan of care, referrals and care coordination.	SB 42 requires referral to Home Visiting and Substance Use Disorder treatment.



MAJOR CHANGES TO CARA PROGRAM

Current CARA	Senate Bill 42 CARA
Training requirements for professionals are non-specific.	<p>All providers will be trained on screening and referrals.</p> <p>All providers will be trained in Screening, Brief Intervention and Referral to Treatment (SBIRT).</p> <p>Providers will be trained in evidence-based evaluation of newborn for withdrawal symptoms.</p>
Managed Care Organizations directing Care Coordination services for CARA families	CARA specific care coordination responsibilities will be assigned to Health Care Authority CARA Navigators through the Department of Health



CURRENT DIRECTIVE FOR SUBSTANCE EXPOSED NEWBORNS

- On June 27, 2025, HCA issued guidance to hospitals and birthing centers on newborns with the following exposures at delivery:
 - Fentanyl
 - Methamphetamine
 - Fetal Alcohol Exposure
 - Polysubstance exposure (including one of the above- mentioned substances)
- Facilities are required to report these exposures in two ways:
 - 1) Report to CYFD via the Statewide Central Intake (SCI) AND
 - 2) Submit a CARA Plan of Safe Care (POSC)
- To report to CYFD SCI: 1-855-333-7233 or #SAFE from a cell phone
- Enter a CARA POSC in the NM Healthy Families Falling Colors portal



WORK GROUP PROGRESS

WORK GROUPS

- Tribal Work Group
 - Navigator Work Group
 - Plan of Safe Care Work Group
 - Hospital Work Group
 - Portal Work Group
 - Training Work Group
-
- Group members represent 15 Counties in NM.
 - Each work group has individuals with lived experience regarding SUD and pregnancy



TRIBAL WORK GROUP

- Ensure Tribal engagement in all aspects of CARA,
- Ensure Tribal communities are represented,
- Assist with creation of culturally relevant training programs, and
- Facilitate communication with Tribes, Nations and Pueblos.



CARA NAVIGATOR WORK GROUP

- Creating processes for CARA Navigators to access information about members in the CARA Program who:
 - identified prenatally, intrapartum, postpartum or in the emergency department and
 - connect with these individuals to assist with fulfilling the plans of safe care.
- The CARA Navigators will be responsible for conducting touch points and completing required documentation as well as ensuring that referrals are completed by following a closed loop process.



PLAN OF SAFE CARE WORK GROUP

- Updating and expanding existing POSC template
- Assisting with understanding goals for adherence to POSC
- Drafting standardized patient information and informed consent documents for state-wide use
 - What the CARA program is
 - What families can expect from the CARA program
 - Individual's and families' rights
 - Health care organizations and agencies' responsibilities to families



HOSPITAL PRESENCE WORK GROUP

- Creating processes to act as a hub among:
 - Facilities,
 - CARA Navigators,
 - CYFD, and
 - MCOs.
- The processes shall ensure timely Plan of Safe Care initiation and Safety Plans for Children in State Custody Situations as well as compliance to state and federal regulations.



CARA PLAN OF SAFE CARE PORTAL WORK GROUP

- Cross agency team responsible for selecting a portal vendor, influencing components of the portal and holding test sessions with providers to elicit feedback.
- Create training for providers to use the portal.
- Ensure portal meets all clinical and reporting needs for the CARA program.



CARA TRAINING WORK GROUP

- Identify training needs,
- Create training for maternal and neonatal screening tools,
- Training will be provided to all hospitals, birthing centers and prenatal care providers to use the screening, brief intervention, and referral to treatment program,
- Train providers on how to create a POSC, and
- Create standardized processes guiding medical staff on when a Plan of Safe Care is indicated and when a Statewide Central Intake (SCI) report is indicated.



STAKEHOLDER COMMUNICATION

COMMUNICATION

- Quarterly Public Listening Sessions
- HCA CARA Webpage: [Comprehensive Addiction and Recovery Act \(CARA\) – New Mexico Health Care Authority](#)
 - General information
 - Program updates
 - Training and education opportunities
 - Resources

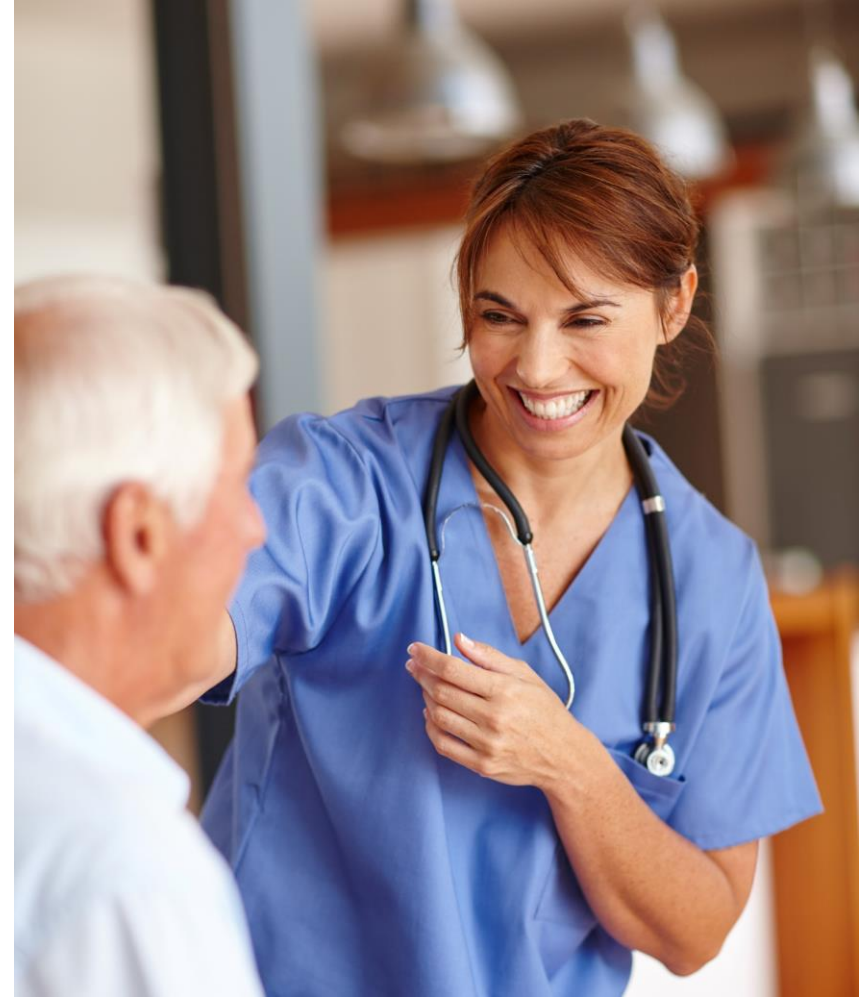


PUBLIC COMMENT

- LIMITED TO 2 MINUTES PER PERSON
- NO COMMENTS FROM CHAT WILL BE MONITORED
NOR LOGGED AS PUBLIC COMMENT



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THANK YOU!

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