

New Mexico Comprehensive Addiction Recovery Act (CARA)

The Comprehensive Addiction and Recovery Act (CARA) is federal, bipartisan legislation signed into law July 22, 2016 that designates up to \$80 million toward advancing treatment and recovery support services in state and local communities across the country.

Using federal CARA money, the State of New Mexico passed legislation in 2019 requiring supports and services for infants born substance-exposed and their families so that they thrive without being stigmatized, discriminated against, or punished.



How CARA Helps Families

When a substance-exposed child is born, hospital staff create the Plans of Care prior to discharge, and care coordinators from each of the four Turquoise Care Managed Care Organizations (MCOs) connect mothers and families with supportive services including behavioral health care, home visiting, substance use disorder treatment, applications for WIC, and more. Families are not required to use these services.

Turquoise Care Strengthens CARA Requirements

Under Turquoise Care, the MCOs are responsible for many new requirements for infants in the CARA program, including delegating the responsibility for care coordination to community partners who are trusted in their communities and know the population best. MCOs must also meet employment and timeliness standards to ensure substance-exposed infants and their families have needed health care supports. Each MCO must:

- Employ a care coordinator through their delegated entities at each of the 5 hospitals in the state to meet with mothers and infants immediately after discharge to offer services,
- Contact new families with substance-exposed infants and complete a health risk assessment (HRA) within 24 hours of hospital discharge,
- Make 3 attempts to contact mother within the first 48 hours of hospital discharge,
- Conduct an in-home, comprehensive needs assessment (CNA) within 7 days of contact,
- Communicate with the state navigation team if unable to reach the family within 3 days of discharge from the hospital, and
- Complete a transition plan within 60 days prior to the member's graduation from the CARA program (at the one-year mark) to ensure continuity of care.

Resources:

[CARA \(sharenm.org\)](https://sharenm.org)

[NM Legislative Finance Committee: Program Evaluation, 10/27/23](#)