



# MEDICAL HEALTH HOMES

*Promoting Integrated, Person-Centered Care for  
People with Intellectual & Developmental Disabilities*

## NC Family Support ECHO 2022

### Project ECHO

**Project ECHO** (Extension of Community Health Outcomes) is designed to spread knowledge, expand capacity, and accelerate collective wisdom. It uses a guided-practice and mentoring model that links interdisciplinary teams of specialists (the hub) with primary care providers and other health and human service providers in multiple sites in the community (the spokes). This knowledge sharing network creates a learning loop among specialists and community providers.

**NC Family Support ECHO** programs are designed to connect expertise to communities and providers who support families in navigating multiple, complex, and challenging systems with a goal of supporting timely, comprehensive, accessible care for children and adults with I/DD and families. Project ECHO programs are particularly valuable in reaching families living in rural communities challenged by multiple barriers to care.

Following the successful pilot program conducted in early 2020 in Western North Carolina, four additional **NC Family Support ECHO** programs were launched in 2020 and 2021.

- Western NC FS ECHO program offered October 2020 – May 2021
- Central NC FS ECHO program offered February 2021 – May 2021
- Western NC FS ECHO program offered October 2021 – May 2022
- Central/East NC FS ECHO program offered November 2021 – February 2022

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Collaboration is at the heart of the ECHO model.

Dr. Arora, MD, Founder



Supported by:



### Participant Feedback

#### 2021-22 Cohorts

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“I feel like it not only built my knowledge and understanding but also my confidence in sharing resources and communicating with my families about that information.”

“It was a great experience all the way around...I just think everything about it was great.”

“I think it was really refreshing and invigorating and motivating to meet these other professionals from across the state who were so good at their jobs and so passionate about helping people. So, it was just inspiring and a positive part of the day to be around these people that really kind of lift you up and remind you what it’s about.”

## Evaluation Findings

### Across 2021-22 NC Family Support ECHO Programs

- High satisfaction rates
- Increased knowledge of topics including guardianship, sexuality, housing, self-advocacy, and ABLÉ accounts
- Increased confidence to connect a family to appropriate healthcare providers and resources
- Increased confidence in ability to discuss the educational system and the Exceptional Children process with families
- Increased confidence in identifying additional financial support resources for families who are uninsured or under-insured and connecting a family to the Social Security Administration for benefits enrollment
- Increased confidence in establishing family to family connections within the disability community
- Increased confidence to identify community resources that can address social determinants of health (essential community living needs such as housing, transportation, food)

## 2022 and Beyond Plans

- Western NC will launch its fourth cohort in the Winter – Spring 2023.
- A Southern Piedmont Family Support ECHO cohort launched in August 2022.
- On-going collaboration with UNC TEACCH Autism ECHO programs for primary care and mental health providers
- Collaboration with UNC TEACCH for an Autism ECHO for Behavioral Health and Healthcare providers serving Latino/a families
- Supporting development of a Project ECHO Network-NC

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I learned about some programs that I didn't even know existed.

Participant

## Alignment

### NC Family Support ECHO and Medicaid Transformation

- Under Tailored Care Management, Tailored Plan members will have access to a multidisciplinary care team that provides integrated, whole-person care management.
- Care Management services will incorporate care extenders as team members. A critical function of the care extender is to address unmet health related resource needs through outreach, engagement, education, and sharing community-based resources.
- Family members with lived experience can be employed as care extenders, offering a pivotal opportunity to advance Family Support Services for people with I/DD in North Carolina.
- The System of Care model utilizes Family Partners to provide education, support, and resources.
- The ECHO model, and specifically **NC Family Support ECHO**, provides a proven tele-mentoring model that aligns with the education and training needs of those providing integrated whole person care.