



2015 - 2016 Strategic Business Plan

“Building Bridges to Communities”

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EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

The Board of Directors and Staff of The Unique Caring Network, Inc. developed this Strategic Plan to provide The Unique Caring Network, Inc. with a five-year roadmap for its support services and organizational development. The Board of Directors and staff will review its progress ongoing, as well as, update the plan annually as needed. The plan was developed with broad involvement, guidance from staff, and input from persons served and agency stakeholders. The Strategic Planning Committee included met to reflect on the mission, vision, core operating values and assumptions underlying the organization's approach to its work. These meetings set the stage for a work sessions during which the organization's strategic direction was defined. The staff helped coordinate the planning process and provided important support and analysis to complete this plan.

The Unique Caring Network, Inc. provides Innovations Services to consumers whose primary diagnosis is a MR/DD. In 2006, we became nationally accredited by CARF International as a behavioral health service provider. In doing so, this gave us the credentials to provide services in all 50 states. Currently, we are only providing services in Mecklenburg County, but are able to expand in all 100 counties in North Carolina.

As a part of The Unique Caring Network's 2016, strategic plan we have made the decision to expand our services locations, to include: Columbia South Carolina. Our 2015, plan also includes expanding our residential services to other Manage Care Organizations. As a result, we are working with Sandills to begin services in their catchment areas. By the end of 2106 we will also be finished with the credentialing process, by Medicaid, to begin providing Outpatient B3 Respite with Cardinal Innovations and National Provider Identifier Number with Medicaid we are in a position to expand into other markets.

In other words, we have an endless opportunity to increase our annual revenue. What's even more exciting is the fact that it would take a potential competitor a minimum of 3 years to even apply for national accreditation. The time is right for The Unique Caring Network, Inc. to expand. Never before in the history of health and human services has a provider agency had this kind of opportunity to expand. Years of hard work has finally position us to become a leading provider in the industry. With a concentration in Alternative Family Living, Day Support, Community Network, Personal Care, and Respite The Unique Caring Network can provide a continuum of wraparound services to persons served.

Mission

The Unique Caring Network, Inc. mission is to empower persons served with special needs by offering quality programs and services that will educate, assist and prepare them to live and compete in the 21st global community.

Legal Structure

The owner established the business as a for profit Sub Chapter S-corporation, Unique Caring Network, Inc. is a Sub Chapter S-corporation to provide services to individuals with developmental disabilities.

Service Philosophy

Individuals should have meaningful input into the design, planning and services they receive. Unique Caring Network, Inc. services focuses on creating Individual Support Plans are consumer-driven, outcome oriented, cultural and age appropriate, and are built around the evidence based practice of self determination.

Corporate Values and Beliefs

Diversity and Pluaralism. The Unique Caring Network, Inc.'s board, staff, providers, consumers and the communities it serve are enriched by inclusion, cooperation, and partnerships across the lines of race, ethnicity, class, nationality, religion, and many other characteristics that often divide people and groups. The Unique Caring Network, Inc. is effective because it strives to ensure that its board, staff, care providers, consultants, and persons served reflect and value varying backgrounds and experiences.

Commitment to Empowerment. The Unique Caring Network, Inc. recognizes that the ability and leadership potential of individuals should not be solely related to their level of education, access to resources, or other social advantages. Therefore, the organization's special commitment is to strengthen and support the persons served through habilitation, rehabilitation, and treatment programs, whereby they are empowered with the skills necessary for becoming productive members of society.

Ethics and Integrity. As a social change organization, The Unique Caring Network, Inc. must hold itself to the highest possible standards of ethics and integrity. The organization and the individuals who are part of it will behave ethically in all aspects of their work and show integrity in consistently standing by those ethical values.

Teamwork and Collaboration. The Unique Caring Network, Inc. works in teams involving both the staff, consumers, and their case managers and encourages collaborative networking within the organization and the community. This approach, which includes cross-sector collaboration, enriches and strengthens The Unique Caring Network, Inc.’s work and models an operating style that is effective for all consumers and the community in general.

Commitment to Social Justice. The Unique Caring Network, Inc. believes that all individuals have the right to freedom, a safe environment, the basic necessities of life, and the opportunity to develop to their fullest potential. The life opportunities of individuals should be determined by their capacities and efforts, not by social barriers and conditions beyond their control. The organization provides the tools necessary so the persons served can face their daily challenges with pride, dignity and independence.

Quality. Unique Caring Network, Inc. is committed to excellence in its work. Teamwork and diversity help ensure the effectiveness of its treatment plans, consultation, and other services provided. All its activities are designed to meet the specific needs of individual person served. The Unique Caring Network, Inc.’s reputation for consistent high-quality work is its best selling point.

Respectfulness – The Unique Caring Network, Inc. honors the choices of people with disabilities, encouraging each person to take control over his/her own life, and helps to shape these based on what is important to each consumer. We respect the role that families have in helping to shape these choices as well.

Individualized Support – The Unique Caring Network, Inc. knows that people’s needs vary significantly and can change over time; we seek to understand the individual consumer and co-create the right supports for each person’s development.

Diversity – The Unique Caring Network, Inc. understands that people with disabilities are part of all races, ethnicities and religions; we seek to assist as many people as our financial resources support.

Integrity and Accountability – The Unique Caring Network, Inc. has the highest level of integrity in its administrative, service, and outreach activities; we tie these activities directly to our mission, and we maintain and report our records accurately.

State of the Art Practices –The Unique Caring Network, Inc. aims for excellent, high quality, state-of-the-art approaches that people with disabilities and their families can always count on to be there.

Partnerships – The Unique Caring Network, Inc. works with a wide variety of partners and advocates for quality service by all partners.

Advocacy – The Unique Caring Network, Inc. educates the public and advocates for the long-term best interests of people with disabilities and their families.

Financial Sustainability – The Unique Caring Network, Inc. believes its work as an advocate and service provider will be needed for many years into the future. Therefore, we strive to deliver on our mission with thoughtful strategic choices that ensure we have sufficient financial resources.

Services Provided:

Community Networking:

Community Networking services provide individualized day activities that support the participant's definition of a meaningful day in an integrated community setting, with persons who are not disabled. This service is provided separate and apart from the participant's private residence, other residential living arrangement, and/or the home of a service provider. These services do not take place in licensed facilities and are intended to offer the participant the opportunity to develop meaningful community relationships with non-disabled individuals. Services are designated to promote maximum participation in community life while developing natural supports within integrated settings. Community Networking services enable the participant to increase or maintain their capacity for independence and develop social roles valued by non-disabled members of the community. As participants gain skills and increase community connections.

Day Support

Day Supports is primarily a group service that provides assistance to the participant with acquisition, retention, or improvement in self help, socialization and adaptive skills. Day Supports are furnished in a non-residential setting, separate from the home or facility where the participant resides. Day Supports focus on enabling the participant to attain or maintain his or her maximum functional level and it coordinated with any physical, occupational, or speech therapies listed in the Individual Support Plan. Transportation to/from the participant's home, the day supports facility and travel within the community is included.

In-Home Intensive Supports

In-Home Intensive support is available to support participants in their private home, when the participant needs extensive support and supervision. Habilitation, support and/or supervision are provided to assist with positioning, intensive medical needs, elopement and/or behaviors that would result in injury to self or other people. Staff implements interventions and assistance as defined in the ISP.

In-Home Skill Building

In-Home Skill Building provides habilitation and skill building to enable the participant to acquire and maintain skills, which support more independence. In-Home Skill Building augments the family and natural supports of the participant and consists of an array of services that are required to maintain and assist the participant to live in community settings.

In-Home Skill Building consists of:

1. Training in interpersonal skills and development and maintenance of personal relationships.
2. Skill building to support the participant in increasing community living skills, such as shopping, recreation, personal banking, grocery shopping and other community activities.
3. Training with therapeutic exercises, supervision of self-administration of medication and other services essential to healthcare at home, including transferring, ambulation and use of special mobility devices.
4. Transportation to support implementation of in-home skill building.

Personal Care

Personal Care Services under North Carolina State Medicaid Plan differs in service definition and provider type from the services offered under the waiver. Personal Care Services under the waiver include support, supervision and engaging participation with eating, bathing, dressing, personal hygiene and other activities of daily living. Support and engaging the participant describes the flexibility of activities that may encourage the participant to maintain skills gained during habilitation while also providing supervision for independent activities. This service may include preparation of meals, but does not include the cost of the meals themselves.

AFL (Alternative Family Living) or Residential Support

Residential Supports consists of an integrated array of individually designed training activities, assistance and supervision

Residential Supports include:

1. Habilitation Services aimed at assisting the participant to acquire, improve, and retain skills in self-help, general household management and meal preparation, personal finance management, socialization and other adaptive areas. Training outcomes focus on allowing the participant to improve his/her ability to reside as independently as possible in the community.
2. Assistance in activities of daily living when the participant to participate in home life or community activities. Transportation to and from the residence and points of travel in the community is included to the degree that they are not reimbursed by another funding source.

Respite

Respite services provide periodic support and relief to the primary caregiver(s) from the responsibility and stress of caring for the participant. This service enables the primary caregiver to meet or participate in planned or emergency events, and to have planned time for him/her and/or family members. Respite may include in and out-of-home services, inclusive of overnight, weekend care, emergency care (family emergency based, not to include out of home crisis) or continuous care up to ten consecutive (10) days. The primary caregiver is the person principally responsible for the care and supervision of the participant and must maintain his/her primary residence at the same address as the participant.

Goals & Priorities

The following goals for The Unique Caring Network, Inc. over the next 3 years are the organization's response to the important issues identified in the CARF recommendations that CARF provided during our 2015 survey. The outlined goals provide a roadmap for fulfilling the strategic direction of The Unique Caring Network, Inc.

Priority Levels: One-within one to two years (urgent)
Two – within two to three years
Three – within three to four years

GOAL: 1 Service Delivery

The Unique Caring Network, Inc. will provide model supports for persons served with disabilities and their families, either directly or through partnerships with or referrals to other service providers:

Priority Level: One/ASAP

Responsible Persons: Executive Director, Family Service Coordinators, Providers, Finance Technician

Timeframe: 2016

Tasks:

- Increase partnership with business in the community including Project C.A.R.E.S., the Food Bank, Churches, and John C. Smith University, Great Wolf Lodge, etc.
- Increase advocacy efforts by attending Individual Support Plan meetings for persons served
- Work on persons served communication skills by offering them computer session as a part of their daily goals
- Accessing and using community resources: Create UCN Community Resource Guide
- Offer ongoing Self-Determination “best practices” training to Providers

GOAL: 2 Human Resources

The Unique Caring Network, Inc. will develop a stable, highly qualified and motivated workforce that actively delivers the organization's mission.

Priority Level: One/ASAP

Responsible Persons: Executive Director, Family Service Coordinators, Providers, Finance Technician

Timeframe: July 2016/ongoing

Tasks:

- Ongoing staff training and development
- Revise drug testing policy
- Ensure that performance evaluations & job descriptions are reviewed annually
- Update the training assessments to include a dates and pass/fail criteria
- **I.2.a. (1) (d)** UCN will develop and implement written procedures for verification of backgrounds of personnel in the area of drug testing.
- **I.6.c. (1) through I.6.c. (4)** UCN performance management will include job descriptions that are reviewed annually and updated as needed. Job descriptions will be dated to validate their review or updating. Review annually the performance of all contract personnel performance of their contracts, ensure that they follow all applicable policies and procedures of the organization, ensured that they conform to CARF standards applicable to the services they provide.
- **I.8.a. (1) through I.8.a. (3)** UCN will implement personnel policies that are accessible to applicable personnel, reviewed annually, and updated as needed.

GOAL: 3 Program Development

Program improves which will result in more quality supports and services delivered to persons served.

Priority Level: One/ASAP

Responsible Persons: Executive Director, Family Service Coordinators, Providers, Finance Technician

Timeframe: 2016

Tasks:

- Have staff, stakeholders, guardians, providers complete surveys ongoing
- Suggestions boxes
- Establishment of an Internship Program with Johnson C. Smith University
- Establish funding raising events

- Seek support from endowment funds

GOAL: 4 Organization of the Strategic Plan

Ensure that UCN strategic plan represents input for all agency stakeholders and is made available to all stakeholders.

Priority Level: One/ASAP

Responsible Persons: Executive Director, Family Service Coordinators, Providers, Finance Technician

Timeframe: 2016

Tasks:

- review the strategic plan annually
- **C.1.b.** utilize data collected in satisfaction surveys in considering expectations of persons served and other stakeholders.
- **C.3.a. through C.3.c.** share the strategic plan with persons served, personnel, and other stakeholders.
- upload the strategic plan on The Unique Caring Network's website

GOAL: 5 Funding Sources

While government contracts are still a significant source of funding, The Unique Caring Network will create a robust and innovative fundraising program earning resources from private sources including individuals and businesses.

Priority Level: One/ASAP

Responsible Persons: Executive Director, Family Service Coordinators, Providers, Finance Technician

Timeframe: 2016

Tasks:

- Conduct fundraising activities to ensure that UCN is able to remain financially solvent covers its expenses when if funding source cuts services or there is a reduction in persons served.

GOAL: 6 Financial Planning & Management

Ensure that Unique Caring Network is financially solvent and remains profitable.

Timeframe: April 1, 2014, 2015 and 2016

Responsible Persons: Executive Director, Family Service Coordinators, Providers, Finance Technician

Priority Level : One/ASAP

Tasks:

- **F.4.e.** UCN identify and review financial its financially position ongoing
- **F.10.** conduct an annual review of UCN financial statements by an independent accountant

GOAL: 7 Performance Measures

UCN will ensure that all performances measures adhere to the CARF standards.

Priority Level: One/ASAP

Responsible Persons: Executive Director, Family Service Coordinators, Providers, Finance Technician

Timeframe: January 2016

Tasks:

- **M.1.a. through M.1.d** UCN will develop a written description of its performance measurement system that includes, at a minimum, the mission, programs/services seeking accreditation, objectives or the programs/services seeking accreditation, and personnel responsibilities related to performance measurement and management.
- **M.2.a. through M.2.d.** UCN will demonstrate how its data collection system addresses reliability, validity, completeness, and accuracy.
- **M.3.a. (12) through M.3.d. (2) (c)** data collected by UCN will include financial information, accessibility information, resource allocation, surveys, risk management, governance reports, human resources activities, technology, health and safety reports, strategic planning information, and service delivery. The data collected will address the needs of person served and other stakeholders and the business needs of the organization. It will also allow for the comparative analysis. The data collected will include business function objectives, performance indicators, and performance targets and written service delivery objectives.
- **M.4.** UCN collects data about the characteristics of the persons served.
- **M.5.a. through M.5.d.** UCN collects data about persons served at the beginning of services, appropriate intervals during services, the end of services, and point(s) in time following services.
- **M.6.a. through M.6.b (4) (b)** UCN measures business function performance indicators and service delivery performance indicators for each program/service seeking accreditation in the effectiveness and efficiency of services, service access, and satisfaction and other feedback from the persons served and other stakeholders.
- **M.7.a. through M.7.d.** for each service delivery performance indicator, UCN determine to whom the indicator will be applied; the person(s) responsible for collecting the data; the source from which data will be collected and a performance target based on a n industry benchmark, based on the organization's performance history, or established by the organization or other stakeholder.

GOAL: 8 Performance Improvements

UCN will ensure that all performances Improvements adhere to the CARF standards.

Priority Level: One/ASAP

Responsible Persons: Executive Director, Family Service Coordinators, Providers, Finance Technician

Timeframe: January 2016

Tasks:

- **N.1.a. through N.1.c. (3)** UCN will complete a written analysis at least annually that analyzes performance indicators in relation to performance targets, including business functions; service delivery including the effectiveness and efficiency of services, service access, and satisfaction and other feedback from persons served and other stakeholders; and extenuating or influencing factors. The annual performance analysis will identify areas of performance improvements, result in an action plan address the improvements needed to reach established or revised performance targets, and outlined actions taken or changes to improve performance.
- **N.2.a. (1) through N.2.d.** The analysis of performance indicators will be used to review the implementation of the mission and core values of UCN, improve the quality of programs and services, facilitate organizational decision making, and review or update the organizations strategic plan.
- **N.3.a. (1) through N.3.c.** UCN will communicate accurate performance information to the persons served, personnel, and other stakeholders according to the needs of the specific group, including the format, content, and timeliness of the information communicated.

GOAL: 9 Input from Persons Served

Ensure that UCN meets all requirements recommended during its last CARF survey.

Priority Level: One/ASAP

Responsible Persons: Executive Director, Family Service Coordinators, Providers, Finance Technician

Timeframe: 2016

Tasks:

- **D.1.a.** demonstrate that it obtains input on an ongoing basis from persons served and make sure stakeholder surveys are dated
- **D.2.b. (1) through D.2.b. (6)** The leadership will use input obtained in program planning, performance improvement, strategic planning, organizational advocacy, financial planning. This will include input from surveys and suggestion boxes.

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GOAL: 10 Rights of Persons Served

Ensure the rights of persons served are protected at all times.

Priority Level: Two

Responsible Persons: Executive Director, Family Service Coordinators, Providers, Finance Technician

Timeframe: January 2016

Tasks:

- **K.2.c. (1) through K.2.c. (5)** UCN has developed its policies promoting the rights of the persons served to address freedom from abuse, financial or other exploitation, retaliation, humiliation, and neglect.
- **K.4.a. through K.4.b. (3)** UCN will has a written analysis of all formal complaints conducted annually that determine trends, areas needing performance improvement, and actions to be taken.

GOAL: 11 Achieve Three Year CARF accreditation.

Receive a 3 year re-accreditation with CARF

Priority Level: One

Responsible Persons: Executive Director, Family Service Coordinators, Providers, Finance Technician

Timeframe: August 2016

Tasks:

- Continue to ensure that all standards of the CARF manual are in compliance through the systems, committees and audits being conducted.
- Obtain new manual each year for the new standards.
- ensure that the recommendations from the previous CARF survey are fully implemented into The Unique Caring Network's best practices

GOAL: 12 Medical Records

Implement an electronic medical record for clients in the Unique Caring Network programs.

Priority Level: One

Responsible Persons: Executive Director, Family Service Coordinators, Providers, Finance Technician

Time frame: October 2016

Tasks:

- The undertaking of this goal will be handled primarily through the Technology Committee with the assistance of the IT consultant and direct care workers.

GOAL: 13 Health & Safety

Ensure that UCN meets all health & safety requirements recommended during its last survey in 2015

Priority Level: One

Responsible Persons: Executive Director, Family Service Coordinators, Providers, Finance Technician

Time frame: July 2016/ongoing

Tasks:

- **H.7.a. (1) through H.7.d.** unannounced tests of all emergency procedures will be conducted at least annually on each shift at each location. The tests will include complete actual or simulated physical evacuation drills; be analyzed for performance improvement that addresses areas needing improvement, actions to be taken, results of performance improvement plans, and necessary education and training or personnel; and evidenced in writing, including the analysis. Also, an annual schedule of unannounced drills for all emergency procedures will be conducted each year.
- **H.9.f (17)** UCN is will expand its written procedures regarding critical incidents to include sexual assault.
- **H.10.a. through H.10.b. (8)** A written analysis of all critical incidents will be provided to or conducted by the leadership at least annually that addresses causes, trends, actions, for improvement, results of performance improvement plans, necessary education and training of personnel, prevention of recurrence, and internal and external reporting requirements
- **H.13a. (1) through H.13.b. (3)** UCN comprehensive health and safety inspections will be conducted at least annually with recommendations for areas needing improvement, and actions taken to respond to the recommendations.
- **H.14.a. through h.14.b. (3)** a comprehensive health safety self-inspections will be conducted at least semiannually on each shift. The self-inspections will result in a written report that identifies the areas inspected, recommendations for areas needing improvement, and actions taken to respond to the recommendations.

GOAL: 14 Program/Service Structure

Ensure that UCN meets all Program Structure requirements recommended during its last survey in 2015

Priority Level: One

Responsible Persons: Executive Director, Family Service Coordinators, Providers, Finance Technician

Time frame: July 2016/ongoing

Tasks:

- **A.1.a. (3)** Organizational documents, including the provider handbook and handbook for persons served, policies, and marketing materials, have not be updated to reflect that community integration service are no longer offered to children. The Post Office hours as 9a.m. to 5p.m. Monday through Friday;

however, the provider handbook indicates that the hours 8a.m. to 5p.m. Monday through Friday, and that actual hours for service staff members begin closer to 9:15a.m. to 9:30a.m. Day Program hours vary according to the individual needs of the person served; hours are not posted at the site; and published hours vary from one document to another. It is recommended that each program/service document, regarding its scope of services, the population(s) served and hours of services. It is suggested that UCN take steps to ensure that the posted and published hours of its services are consistent with actual practice and that its documents reflect that community integration services are no longer provided to children.

- **A.4.a. through A.4.c.** Program policies indicate that persons served, referral sources, and family/support systems will be informed when a potential person served is found ineligible for services, including reasons for the decision and the provision of alternative resources. However, interviews with staff members indicate that this inconsistently occurs in practice and that it rarely is documented, unless the person has been referred by the MCO. When a person served is found ineligible for services, the person should be informed as to the reasons. In accordance with the choice of the person served, the family/support system and referral source should be informed as to the reasons, and recommendations should be made for alternative services. It is suggested that the organizations practices be amended to reflect organizational policy and that policies be updated to include a process for ensuring that these practices consistently occur. Informing all concerned in writing or electronically attaching a list of alternative resources could enable service supervisors to ensure that this process occurs, regardless of who receives the referral or from whom it comes, including self referrals.
- **A.11.c.** Information about UCN provided to the persons inquiring about services should be updated as necessary to reflect changes in information provided. The organization is encouraged to revise documents provided to persons served, including the handbook for persons served, to reflect that Day Program services are no longer provided to children.

GOAL: 15 Family-Based Shared Living Support

Ensure that UCN meets all Family Based Shared Living Support requirements recommended during its last survey in 2015

Priority Level: One

Responsible Persons: Executive Director, Family Service Coordinators, Providers, Finance Technician

Time frame: July 2016/ongoing

Tasks:

- **J.2.a. (1) (a) through J.24.e.** UCN implement will implement procedures for monitoring the performance expectations of the provider that takes place initially at 30 days and 90 days; quarterly for the rest of the first year; and subsequently every six months, unless the individual situation merits more frequently. The monitoring procedure will include individual discussions with the person served, the provider, and others as appropriate; ensure the implementation of program values, the individual rights of the person served in the home respected, protection of the person served from any form of exploitation and the provider is facilitating linkages of the person to the community. The procedure includes documenting the results of monitoring visits and address performance improvement as needed.

GOAL: 16 Community Integration

Ensure that UCN meets Community Integration requirements recommended during its last survey in 2015

Priority Level: One

Responsible Persons: Executive Director, Family Service Coordinators, Providers, Finance Technician

Time frame: July 2016/ongoing

Tasks:

- **P.6.b.** UCN will outreach and follow-up on persons served who drop out of services and those who have been admitted to a treatment, institutional, or other setting.

**The Unique Caring Network, Inc. Board of Directors and Advisors
 2014-2015**

Name	Board Term	Title	Company	Address	Telephone	Fax
Tyrone Miller	2007-2016	Chairman	Unique Caring Network	5500 Executive Center Drive, Suite 118 Charlotte, NC 28212	704-297-9456	704-563-8677
Celeste Miller	2007-2016	Corporate Compliance	Unique Caring Network	5500 Executive Center Drive, Suite 118 Charlotte, NC 28212	704-712-9028	704-563-8677
Brenda Burris	2011-2016	Secretary	Unique Caring Network	3414 Hatwynn Rd Charlotte, NC 28269	704-634-6961 704-594-9844	704-510-2077
Eric Guthrie	2007-2016	1st Vice Chairman	Unique Caring Network	9219 Brightleaf Place Charlotte, NC 28269	704-516-2180	
Patricia Brown	2007-2016	Board-Member-At-Large – Spiritual Advisor	Unique Caring Network	4624 Martha’s Ridge Dr Charlotte, NC 28212	704-536-3153	704-563-8677

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Sandra Penn	2012-2016	QA/QI Best Practice Compliance Officer	Unique Caring Network	1900 Selwyn Ave Charlotte, NC 28274	704-688-2761	704-490-4080
Tolshea Adams	2014-2016	Treasurer	Unique Caring Network	11180 Saintsbury Place Charlotte, NC 28270	704-965-5248	704-563-8677
Jacinda Garabito	2014-2016	At-Large Community Liaison	Unique Caring Network	1519 Thoreau Court Charlotte, NC 28214	757-593-4773	704-563-8677
Christopher Cox	2014-2016	Volunteer	Unique Caring Network	4807 Paxton Court Charlotte, NC 28213	704-562-1517	704-563-8677

Strengths & Weaknesses

The following is a brief summary of opportunities, threats, strengths and weaknesses highlighted by the board and staff of The Unique Caring Network, Inc.

Strengths

Strengths – We continue to look for ways of improving quality of service delivery. Through on-going planning we are able to identify ways of reducing risk and expanding our program and services. The services that The Unique Caring Network, Inc. provides are needed in the community. The company went through a period of downturn; however, they were able to reduce expenses significantly in order to remain afloat. The determination and the commitment of The Unique Caring Network, Inc.’s team will help sustain an organization long-term.

Based on input from consumers, staff, guardians, and other stakeholders The Unique Caring Network, Inc.’s key strengths include the organization’s demonstrated ability to provide high quality, necessary services, which help people with disabilities live a fuller life in the community. Staff is committed, and the services and programs offered are monitored for quality. When there is a challenge, the organization meets it through innovation. The Unique Caring Network, Inc. has an excellent reputation and is looked to by other service providers as a leader.

Weaknesses

Weaknesses – The ongoing changes that continue to impact provider agencies are evident throughout the industry. Services continue to be threatened as the General Assembly make statewide budget adjustments. We will need to continue to develop strategic partners that can assist us financially.

Based upon the past CARF survey recommendations The Unique Caring Network has several identified areas that need improvements. Including but limited to: health & safety best practices, monitoring how we measure input from persons served, monitoring our cash flow, revamping some of our HR policies and procedures, and redesigning our performance measures.

Strategic Direction Opportunities & Threats

Based on the Board of Directors’ understanding of The Unique Caring Network, Inc.’s mission, primary customer, core values, and the opportunities and threats in the current environment, the next three to five years will be a time of assessing and deepening its approaches to its work. Concurrently, The Unique Caring Network, Inc. will take more of a leadership role in working with a broader array of community resources, and it will explore the feasibility of actively engaging volunteers.

- The Unique Caring Network, Inc. will review and deepen its existing direct supports and services over time to ensure that they are they are state-of-the art for working effectively with children and adults with disabilities. The model emphasizes consumer decision-making and community participation and integration. The ABC Service Agency is committed to ensuring that all of its programs are exemplary.

- The Unique Caring Network, Inc. will further assess consumer and community needs to identify gaps or opportunities for shifts in service delivery. This assessment will serve as the basis for expanding or adding new services. The emphasis on further deepening programs would be the priority in the early years, and so growth in numbers of people served would not be a priority, if at all, until the later years of the plan.

- The Unique Caring Network, Inc. will take a leadership role in working with a range of providers (not just disability providers and maybe some outside of the county) to identify and meet the needs of people with disabilities. The Unique Caring Network, Inc. will serve as a service “broker” when necessary. The focus will be to ensure quality across services and eliminate duplication.

- The Unique Caring Network, Inc. will explore the feasibility of expanding the organization’s visibility in the community and making greater use of volunteers. The organization will explore developing and supporting a network of volunteers, being more active and visible in a wide range of community initiatives, highlighting the positive role that people with disabilities are playing in the community, and creating strong supporters for community participation throughout the broader community.

- The Unique Caring Network, Inc. will emphasize building its discretionary financial resources to invest in providing quality services. This includes building the endowment and establishing a maintenance fund to take care of our property assets.

Opportunities

- *Strategic Partnerships.* There is opportunity for The Unique Caring Network, Inc. to establish new strategic partnerships and develop a solid roadmap for sustained growth. The Unique Caring Network, Inc. will be able to identify other emerging markets in which to offer their services in North Carolina, South Carolina and Florida. There is an opportunity for the agency to develop a duplicable system in which to establish the new office locations. As a provider of services The Unique Caring Network is in a position to provide services in all 100 counties through North Carolina. Currently, we are only providing services in the Cardinal, Partners and Sandhills catchment area.
Implications: The Unique Caring Network, Inc. could develop a program to support volunteers through screening, training

- *Increased visibility, which could lead to greater access to volunteers and other resources.* The county has a range of resources including potential volunteers, community colleges for courses, and universities with students interested in working with people with disabilities—all of which could be better tapped.
Implications: The Unique Caring Network, Inc. could develop a program to support volunteers through screening, training and ongoing supervision. The program should also celebrate and recognize volunteer efforts. Having more volunteers can help increase fundraising. At the same time, others may look more closely at the quality of services provided by volunteers.
- *New social & recreational activities.* There is an ongoing need for social and recreational opportunities for people with disabilities, including opportunities after the workday in the 3:00 to 6:00pm timeframe.
Implications: Increasing social and recreational activities may draw in more consumers and increase their quality of life and community contact. To be successful here, The Unique Caring Network, Inc. could develop a greater partnership with The county Department of Parks and Recreation and the general community. Having transportation available will be vital for success. These activities are one way to utilize volunteers. At present there is no funding for expanding these services, so this will need to be addressed.
- *Increased occurrence of children diagnosed with autism.* The increasing number of children with autism may be a new consumer population for The ABC Service Agency.
Implications: The Unique Caring Network, Inc. would require different skill sets, information, and facilities to serve this population. There is a different approach and need for different types of communication with families of children with autism, so there would be a learning curve for building trust. The relationship with the Autism Society would need to be considered. There is also a question about who will pay for these new services.
- *Other opportunities mentioned included:* Expanding family support especially, respite and outreach in various languages, and providing a broader array of services for youth transitioning to adulthood.

Threats

The threats considered most important included:

- *Dependence on government funding.* Funding, particularly the residential funding stream, doesn't keep up with needs.
Implications: The Unique Caring Network, Inc. needs to assess the real demand for its services, increase private pay options, and be prepared to explore other opportunities for generating revenue. The question of what happens when private money is gone needs to be addressed.

▪ *Staffing challenges and the cost of providing good care.* It is hard to maintain a competent staffing pool, including staff that can speak multiple languages.

Implications: Although increased efficiency and technology may help, high turnover, especially among direct support staff, leads to increased administrative costs. To respond, The Unique Caring Network, Inc. needs to increase fund raising, empower employees and increase their opportunity for growth, and develop a pay structure for different services.

Succession Planning

In the event that something happens to Tyrone Miller and he is unable to perform his job duties as Executive Director, Shawn Morris, The Family Service Coordinator, will take over the running the agency. In the event that Shawn Morris cannot perform his duties as the Family Service Coordinator, Marketta Fluker, will take over as the Executive Director. Management succession planning is currently in progress. The Unique Caring Network has also secured a Key Man Life Insurance on Tyrone Miller in the amount of \$300,000 in the event of his death to find a replacement Executive Director. UCN will also be purchasing Key Man Policies on other key personnel by the end of 2016.

Direction and Results

The strategic direction and goals included in this plan are The Unique Caring Network, Inc.'s response to its understanding of what its customers value most about the organization, current opportunities and challenges for offering a high quality system of support in the community for people with disabilities, and recommendations from CARF past survey. The five-year period of this strategic plan will be a time of assessing and deepening The Unique Caring Network's approaches to its work. Concurrently, The Unique Caring Network, Inc. will take more of a leadership role in working with a broader array of community resources, and will actively evaluate input from stakeholders in the ongoing review and updates to its strategic planning process. With a fresh perspective on its mission, understanding what it does well, and the environment in which it operates, The Unique Caring Network, Inc. will pursue the following strategic direction:

1. The Unique Caring Network, Inc. will review and deepen its existing direct supports and services over time to ensure that they are state-of-the art for working effectively with adults with disabilities.
2. The Unique Caring Network, Inc. will further assess consumer and community needs to identify gaps or needed shifts in service delivery. This assessment will serve as the basis for expanding or adding new services.
3. The Unique Caring Network, Inc. will take a leadership role in working with a range of

providers (not just disability providers and maybe some outside of the county) to identify and meet the needs of adults with disabilities.

4. The Unique Caring Network, Inc. will explore the feasibility of expanding the organization's visibility in the community and making greater use of volunteers.

5. The Unique Caring Network, Inc. will emphasize building its discretionary financial resources to invest in providing quality services. This includes exploring other funding sources to ensure that we have capital reserves to meet the ongoing financial needs of the agency.

III. Marketing Plan

Market: Present and Future

Present

The Unique Caring Network, Inc.'s major customers are individuals receiving Innovation services. The Unique Caring Network, Inc.'s person's served relationships stem from service provision based on the agency's philosophy of being family friendly and consumer driven.

The Unique Caring Network, Inc.'s marketing approach is to network with MCO's and case managers of the clients that we serve. We also have revamped our website and updated our social media sites to share information about the services that we provide.

Future

The health and human services industry is one of the fastest growing industries. The Unique Caring Network, Inc. does not have a formal marketing plan at this time; however, the agency is has purchased Marketing Pro to support our marketing endeavors. The Unique Caring Network, Inc. will need to market its services to state, local level human service agencies and consumers. The agency has plans to emerge into the Gaston and Cabarrus markets.

Business Environment

With the increasing population growth in Mecklenburg County, this will provide an opportunity for additional market share. Although there are agencies that provide similar services in the community, The Unique Caring Network, Inc. will have to establish themselves with a competitive advantage of impeccable service and prompt response time in meeting client needs. The downside will be gaining the credibility of the community in order to find supplemental funding sources within the local areas.

External Environment

Unique Caring Network, Inc. is focused on building relationships with other agencies in the community.

Target Market

We will continue to strengthen and cultivate positive relationships with county the MCOs, Youth and Family Services, Schools, Churches, and other Community Based Organizations in order to continue to grow our agency.

Competitive Advantage

Unique Caring Network's competitive advantage is its ability to provide Alternative Family Living Levels 1-4, Day Support, Community Networking, Respite and Personal Care Services to adults and children.

Disadvantage

Unique Caring Network has experienced a shortage of qualified providers to work with Level 3-4 clients. Because of the requirements to become a provider it is very difficult to find individuals whit the experienced that we are looking for.

Methods of Distribution

Unique Caring Network will directly target potential providers by contacting, schools, churches, participating in educational events, sending information to community organizations, and email blasts.

Promotional Activities

The planned nature and decision making process associated with individuals with disabilities requires a consistent approach with establishing relationships in the community with service organizations in the targeted markets. Unique Caring Network must have brand identity. An intentional marketing strategy that encompasses outreach to the targeted markets is important in building brand recognition.

Unique Caring Network's marketing strategy should include the design and development of proposals and presentations that is reflective of the company's logo. Promotional products such as pens and items that customers will remember should be created as a marketing tool.

The company is considering the following forms of advertisements.

- A. Phone books – Yellow pages and directories
- B. Agency to Agency Directories
- C. Tee-Shirts
- D. Bumper Stickers

“Building Bridges to Communities”

Community Involvement

Unique Caring Network continues to collaborate with area organizations to provide scholarship opportunities for persons served with intellectually disabilities that want to complete their high diploma. Unique Caring Network obtains free tickets sporting other community events.

Performance Improvement Plan

Performance Improvement

To stay on target at both strategic and tactical levels, The Unique Caring Network, Inc. will constantly monitor and assess its performance against a series of performance indicators and targets. Only by setting specific, measurable goals and tracking performance can the organization determine the degree to which it is achieving the desired service and business outcomes. Appropriate organizational and stakeholder representatives must review and analyze results to determine areas for improvement. This review and analysis continues to position the organization to develop and initiate quality improvement changes.

A critical component of The Unique Caring Network's Inc. quality improvement is the implementation of performance measurements and management systems for both its business and service delivery that allows the organization to look objectively at how well it is accomplishing its mission.

Following the review and analysis of its performance measurements results, The Unique Caring Network, Inc. will continue to carefully evaluate the information learned so that it may be translated into focused actions to improve performance against targets. The evaluations will continue to drive The Unique Caring Network to engage in a dynamic, proactive process to review, renew, or revise its strategy and tactics, while ensuring alignment of organizational purpose, service and business practices, and organizational resources. The Unique Caring Network realizes that achieving excellence requires a disciplined continuous improvement process that is reflective of ongoing strategic planning and self evaluations.