



EBCI TRIBAL OPTION

For Providers



July 2026 Provider Newsletter

What is the EBCI Tribal Option?

EBCI Tribal Option assists approximately 5,500 Tribal-eligible Medicaid beneficiaries, primarily in Cherokee, Haywood, Swain, Jackson, and Graham counties.

[Learn More](#)

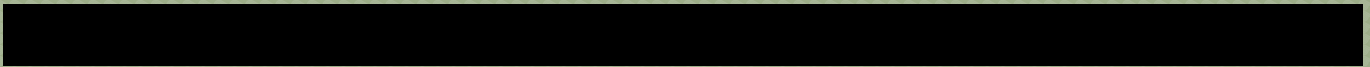


Attention!

**THE PROVIDER SURVEY HAS BEEN SENT OUT TO ALL
PRACTICES.**

PLEASE COMPLETE BY 7/31/2026

Sgi!



Meet The TRIBAL OPTION Team

Kristi Case Assistant Director of Managed Care

Some people come to Western North Carolina for school and end up finding a lifelong home. That was the case for Kristi Case, who moved from coastal North Carolina to attend Western Carolina University and never looked back.

After earning a Bachelor of Science in Criminal Justice and a Master of Public Affairs, Kristi began her career in the public mental health system. Following 13 years of leadership and innovation, she was recruited to join the Cherokee Indian Hospital Authority as Recovery Services Manager within CIHA's Behavioral Health Department.

In that role, Kristi led the development of a comprehensive continuum of recovery services, including a Recovery Center, Residential Substance Use Treatment Program, and Transitional Supported Living Homes. Her dedication to improving care and expanding services earned her CIHA's 2017 Employee of the Year award. Through these transformative projects, she also discovered a passion for project management, inspiring her to earn a Master of Project Management degree.

Kristi later became the Program Development Project Manager for the implementation of the EBCI Tribal Option, helping guide the successful launch of the program in July 2021. Her expertise in program development, operational leadership, and strategic planning eventually led her to her current role as Assistant Director of Managed Care.

Over more than 11 years at CIHA, Kristi has played a key role in strengthening partnerships throughout the community and expanding the reach of the EBCI Tribal Option to better support members in achieving their health goals. Her leadership is grounded in one of CIHA's guiding principles, *Di Qwa Tse Li I Yu Sdi*—"Like family to me"—a value reflected in the relationships she builds and the care she helps deliver every day.

Kristi lives in Jackson County with her teenage son and their beloved hound dog.



EBCI TRIBAL OPTION





CHEROKEE INDIAN
HOSPITAL AUTHORITY

ENRICHMENT CENTER

PROJECT UPDATES

The IDD/Enrichment Center Project represents a significant and forward-looking investment in the health, independence, and quality of life for members of the Eastern Band of Cherokee Indians. It is designed to address long-standing gaps in services, including limited access to care, long wait times, lack of residential options, and insufficient day programming and support systems.

At its core, the project is about building a tribally driven system of care—one that reflects the values, culture, and unique needs of the community. This includes developing infrastructure, workforce capacity, and partnerships to ensure services are not only available, but sustainable and culturally appropriate.

The work includes building tribal infrastructure for an IDD/Autism program, creating a family resource center, improving access to assessments and supports, expanding meaningful day and residential options, and developing a strong tribal workforce to help manage and sustain these services.

**EBCI TRIBAL OPTION WILL BE PROVIDING MONTHLY PROJECT UPDATES
TO OUR PROVIDER NETWORK.**

CLICK HERE FOR ADDITIONAL PROJECT
UPDATES AND INFORMATION



Healthy Vision Month

July 2026

Eating well, staying active, and protecting your eyes
are all a part of a healthy lifestyle.



EBCI TRIBAL OPTION

Acronym of the month

HIPAA

**Health Insurance
Portability and
Accountability Act**

Cherokee Language

It's Raining

Agasga

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Questions - Contact Live Help Desk

Submit questions to the Help Desk via email at openpayments@cms.hhs.gov or by calling 1-855-326-8366 (TTY Line: 1-844-649-2766), Monday through Friday, from 9:00 a.m. to 5:00 p.m. (ET), excluding Federal holidays.

The Help Desk refers media inquiries to CMS' Press Office for response.

Visit the [Resources](#) page on the Open Payments website for many of the above resources.

Eat Well. Play Well. Stay Well.



EBCI TRIBAL OPTION



241 Cherokee Hospital Loop

Cherokee, NC 28719

MEMBER/PROVIDER: 800.260.9992

[Connect With Us](#)

