BURKE COUNTY
PUBLIC HEALTH

September 3, 2026

Burke County Commissioners and Board of Health
200 Avery Avenue
Morganton, NC 28655

Dear Members of the Board of Health and Board of County Commissioners:

Burke County Public Health has completed its first-quarter financial review. Overall, the department has expended or encumbered approximately 14% of its $5.82 million revised operating budget. Most program areas remain within anticipated spending levels; however, we are closely monitoring expenses within the Maternity Clinic.

In FY 2025–2026, the Maternity Clinic expended its full allocated budget and required an additional transfer of $37,500 to cover costs above the original appropriation. In the current fiscal year, approximately 31% of the Maternity Program budget has already been expended or encumbered. If current projections remain consistent, the department has sufficient funding within its overall budget to reallocate funds to Maternity and maintain uninterrupted services.

However, we want the Board to be aware that the clinic's baseline funding need has increased. This growth is associated with variability in ultrasound interpretation costs, laboratory testing and medical supplies, and language interpretation requirements. Staff will continue monitoring these expenses, reviewing purchasing practices, and identifying opportunities to manage costs. Future budget requests may need to reflect the program's higher recurring operating expenses more accurately.

We are also evaluating the long-term sustainability of our Child Health Program. The program serves a relatively small number of patients while requiring specialized provider availability and clinical oversight. To ensure that children and families continue to have access to appropriate, high-quality services, the department plans to transition the program to a qualified local healthcare agency that meets applicable program requirements and has both the capacity and desire to fill this need. Public Health will work closely with the agency to establish referral pathways, communicate with affected families, and minimize any disruption in care.

These actions reflect the department's commitment to transparent financial stewardship, responsible use of county resources, and continued access to essential healthcare services. We will keep the Board informed of any material budgetary concerns and the progress of the Child Health Program transition.

Sincerely,

Ashley Jarrett

Ashley Jarrett, DNP, RN, CPH
Interim Public Health Director