



Samaritan
North Lincoln
Hospital



Samaritan Pacific
Communities Hospital

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March 10, 2023

House Behavioral Health and Health Care Committee

Dear Chair Nosse, Vice Chairs Goodwin and Nelson, and members of the committee:

I am writing on behalf of Samaritan's two coastal critical access hospitals in Lincoln County in support of House Bill 2544, specifically to help increase statewide capacity of licensed residential facilities serving individuals with substance use disorders.

Inpatient treatment is a critical first step in the recovery process for many individuals, but there are currently no inpatient services in Lincoln County. The closest inpatient programs are over an hour away and have long waitlists that prioritize people from their own communities, leaving Lincoln County residents on waitlists or forcing them to travel up to 300 miles for treatment.

Samaritan Health Services owns and operates a Samaritan Treatment & Recovery Services (STARS) facility in Lebanon, and we would like to replicate this program in Lincoln County. The program provides holistic, evidence-based inpatient and outpatient treatment services, including group and individual counseling, medication-assisted treatment, and support for co-occurring mental health issues. STARS also supports community education around substance use disorder; peer support in the community to meet individuals where they are; peer support in the emergency department to assist patients in entering treatment; training for hospital staff to support patient entry into treatment; and distribution of Narcan, an opioid overdose reversal drug.

Historically, inpatient recovery centers require financial partnerships to create and maintain. As part of its mission, Samaritan is committed to operating a treatment and recovery center in Lincoln County but needs partners to finance the facility itself. As a nonprofit health care system, Samaritan doesn't turn anyone away for inability to pay or insurance type. In response to this community need, the Pacific Communities Health District purchased a former adult foster care facility at 5840 NW Biggs in Newport to serve as a 16-bed substance use disorder residential and intensive outpatient facility for adults (18+). An estimated 200 individuals will receive inpatient services annually.

While many community partners have contributed to help remodel this facility and build an 8000-square-foot addition, we need State legislation funding to make this project a reality. Last year, the community was hopeful that HB 5024 would help us create this sorely needed facility. While we understand the need for mental health residential facilities, we did not understand why people who suffer with substance use disorder were excluded. Disappointed but not discouraged, the community forged ahead and has made incredible strides towards building this facility. But we need your help to cross the finish line. Thank you for your consideration.

Sincerely,

Lesley Ogden, MD
Chief Executive Officer

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