

Media Statement from Rick Harding, CEO, Clear View Behavioral Health, Jan. 31, 2019

At Clear View Behavioral Health hospital, we are committed to providing safe, high-quality care and to continually improving our ability to help our patients while working collaboratively with regulators to ensure we comply with all laws and regulations.

As part of that commitment, we are always seeking feedback from patients and their families, as well as our employees. We take very seriously any concerns they raise, and use that information to help us improve our care.

The high quality of our care is evidenced by our accreditation by the Joint Commission, the leading healthcare accrediting organization in the United States, which recently completed its regular review of Clear View and found that we continued to meet their standards.

In addition, our rates for readmission of patients are lower than the national average, which can be an indicator that a greater percentage of our patients are successfully adapting to a return to life in the community and that we are providing the right treatment. In 2018, the readmission rate for adults discharged from Clear View was 8.9%, compared with 22.4% of a similar population nationally of adults with acute mental illness.

That said, it is important to emphasize that people admitted for in-patient behavioral health care frequently face substantial challenges that cannot be addressed overnight. It is one of our core responsibilities to determine whether a patient is ready for discharge, meaning that they are stabilized and have the resources and support they need after treatment. In the case of patients who are involuntarily committed to our hospital it is our legal obligation to make this determination. It is important to note that the staff at Clear View cannot involuntarily admit a patient — that is a legal process involving a medical professional and requires certifying that the patient is an immediate danger to themselves or others. Discharging a patient prematurely can make it much more difficult for them to successfully re-enter the community.

A key to success in this area for any behavioral health hospital is careful discharge planning, which must account for a variety of factors. It is a standard practice for behavioral health hospitals around the country to seek to have a smooth flow of admissions and discharges — while always prioritizing the needs of the patient and regulatory requirements — to ensure that necessary resources are available to best assist patients entering and leaving.

We would also like to emphasize that we always do everything possible to guard the privacy of our patients, and have very careful policies about visitors to our facility as a result. This is not only a legal requirement but is also our ethical obligation as caregivers to ensure that patients can trust that they are being treated in a safe and confidential environment.

Late Wednesday afternoon, we received a notice from the Colorado Department of Public Health & Environment that they have approved a quality improvement plan that we proposed in response to a review they conducted at Clear View in July. Under the notice, Clear View will operate under a conditional license, which means that our facility will continue to operate as usual as long as we successfully implement the plan. There will be no disruption to our services, and patients will continue to receive the highest quality care from Clear View.

The plan, which takes effect Friday, provides that Clear View will retain an outside quality assurance consultant to work with the facility on improving processes, and will also retain an outside nurse educator consultant to provide training for the nursing staff. Under the plan, Clear View will also improve its processes for determining staffing levels.

We welcome any opportunity to improve our patient care, and look forward to working with the state health department on this important project.