

## For Immediate Release

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### **Larned State Hospital Celebrates the 100<sup>th</sup> Year of its Founding**

LARNED – Kansas Department for Aging and Disability Services Secretary Shawn Sullivan joined staff and members of the community Thursday to observe and celebrate the 100<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the founding of Larned State Hospital.

“A century ago, the people of Kansas established this hospital with the worthy intent to provide humane care for the mentally ill. I am proud to be here to celebrate their achievement. All Kansans have a reason to be proud of what they have accomplished here,” Secretary Sullivan said.

“Today, Larned State Hospital is the largest public institution of its kind in our state. Its management and staff maintain a constant commitment to providing high quality treatment with the support of the town of Larned and the surrounding communities. I am here to day to commend those efforts, and to pledge that the state will do all it can to set the highest standards of care here,” the Secretary said. “I believe history will judge us on the way we care for the most troubled and vulnerable.”

Larned State Hospital Superintendent Dr. Tom Kinlen said, “It is my honor and privilege to serve as the Superintendent at Larned State Hospital as we begin our next 100 years of providing quality care and treatment to all those we serve.”

Dr. Kinlen has been on the staff of Larned State Hospital since 2003 and served as Larned’s Director of Psychology from 2008 through his appointment as Superintendent in 2012.

Dr. Kinlen then rang the bell, which is a landmark on the hospital grounds, saying, “This bell represents the chains and shackles that were used to restrain mental health patients in state institutions or asylums as recently as 60 years ago. In 1956, the McShane Bell Foundry melted the iron of those chains and shackles and recast them into a 300-pound mental health bell. It serves as not only a reminder of the on-going

invisible fetters hindering those with mental illness today, but also as a source of hope and victory.”

Larned State Hospital was founded by the people of Kansas and their state Legislature. It first opened on April 17th, 1914 to ease overcrowding at Osawatomie State Hospital and the Topeka State Hospital, and to offer a refuge for patients from the western half of Kansas. The Larned location was chosen for the new hospital because of its plentiful supply of water. In those early years, before modern advances in the treatment of the mentally ill, “useful employment” (farming) was the method of treatment most frequently used at the hospital, so male patients were given priority. No female patients were admitted until 1916. Those farming operations continued until the 1950s.

The State Security Program, which was called the program for the “criminally insane,” first opened at Larned State Hospital in March 27, 1939. It was and continues to be the only such forensic facility in Kansas. The Kansas Legislature established the Sexual Predator Treatment Program at Larned in 1994. Over the past 100 years, Larned State hospital has treated more than 58,000 individual patients, many of whom were cared for on multiple occasions.

Secretary Sullivan concluded his remarks with a reading of Governor Brownback’s Proclamation of the 100<sup>th</sup> anniversary of Larned State Hospital. The Proclamation will be displayed in the hospital’s administrative reception area.

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*The Kansas Department for Aging and Disability Services mission is to foster an environment that promotes security, dignity and independence for all Kansans.*