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KDADS Announces Changes to Streamline Operations at Larned State Hospital

TOPEKA – Kansas Department for Aging and Disability Services (KDADS) Secretary Shawn Sullivan announced today the implementation of policies designed to streamline operations at Larned State Hospital (LSH) while providing patients with an enhanced quality of care.

The Secretary will propose to the Kansas Legislature that savings from these changes, estimated at about \$1.5 million over the next two fiscal years, be used to off-set scheduled cuts in federal Disproportionate Share Hospital (DSH) funding that is required by the Affordable Care Act, and to help pay for salary increases for MHDDs.

Earlier this year, KDADS contracted with Buckley & Associates LLC to conduct independent audits of all five state-operated hospitals. The purpose of these audits was to seek recommendations for ways in which the hospitals and facilities could operate more efficiently without compromising resident care. The LSH audit has been completed, and the auditors have made a number of suggestions for changes that could be carried out at LSH to make operations more efficient and improve patient care. KDADS intends to implement several of the Buckley Report suggestions over the next two years.

“These changes are intended to make LSH a better care facility as we move into the future. The intent of the Buckley Report was to find ways to strengthen LSH and its services,” Secretary Sullivan said. “While these changes may seem significant, LSH has made similar changes during the past two years,” Secretary Sullivan said. “It is essential for us to keep focused on our mission, which is to provide a strong safety net of mental health services for Kansans in partnership with patients, community providers, and the justice system.”

“I value the unwavering dedication and efforts of the people who work at LSH. I’m confident LSH staff will carry out these changes with limited disruption to the lives of the people for whom we care,” Secretary Sullivan said.

The Buckley group shared the following information:

In summary, we found that LSH management is focused on improving the quality and cost-effectiveness of their services and intent on helping their patients recover and be enabled to lead productive and purposeful lives. We also found, that in general, direct care staffing levels are appropriate; however, there is a need to expand the pool of direct care staff to reduce overtime. Social Services, Psychological Therapy (Therapy) and Activity Therapy are overstaffed in relation to the industry benchmarks we use. In contrast, LSH is underserved in Psychiatry and there is a need to recruit additional Psychiatrists.

As part of this operations assessment, we conducted an audit of 30 open patient charts. In general, there is a high level of compliance with CMS requirements for documentation. In part, compliance levels are high because LSH's electronic medical record system prompts caregivers to enter data related to care processes and clinical indicators.

In order to ensure LSH's care and services are provided in an efficient and cost-effective manner, the agency intends to implement several of these suggestions over the next two years. Here is a summary of the planned changes:

- LSH will work on achieving the staffing ratios reflected in the Buckley Report for Activity Therapy staff. Staffing-level adjustments will be accomplished through transfers and natural attrition.
- LSH will work on having staffing ratios reflected in the Buckley Report for Social Services staff. Staffing-level adjustments will be accomplished through transfers and natural attrition.
- LSH will work on having staffing ratios reflected in the Buckley Report for Therapist Staff. Staffing-level adjustments will be accomplished through transfers and natural attrition.
- LSH has a need for approximately 3.5 FTE additional psychiatrists, and recruitment efforts are under way.
- Nursing staff needs to be augmented, and recruitment efforts are under way.

Changes that will be made will not be immediate and will occur over time. There will be no drastic, immediate staffing-level changes made, and adjustments will occur naturally rather than suddenly. "LSH already has been working to become more efficient in its use of resources over the last year. Implementation of the Buckley recommendations will focus our efforts to continue that ongoing process. We are undertaking these changes in order to be good stewards of taxpayers' resources and to improve the delivery of behavioral health resources to the people of Kansas, most specifically, our patients," Secretary Sullivan said.

"I am confident that, by working together, we will be able to carry out these changes with limited disruptions to the lives of the people we care for and serve."

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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.