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For Immediate Release

Winnebago Comprehensive Healthcare System Celebrates 5 Years

Winnebago, NE – The Winnebago Comprehensive Healthcare System (WCHS) celebrated its 5-year Anniversary with a short program and reception this past Wednesday, July 26th, 2023, in Winnebago, NE. This community event featured speakers, notable guests, and announcement of Twelve Clans Unity Hospital's Center for Medicare and Medicaid Services (CMS) Certification.

The event began with [short video highlighting the organization's past five years](#). Prior to the Winnebago Tribe of Nebraska's assumption of the hospital, it was run by Indian Health Services (IHS). In July of 2015, the Omaha-Winnebago IHS Hospital's CMS certification was revoked as the care being provided by the hospital was deemed inadequate. The Winnebago Tribe, who had been managing and growing the Public Health Department for more than 30 years, was forced to take immediate action for the health and safety of the Winnebago people. They were quick to act, exercising their right to self-governance. In July of 2018, WCHS was established as an organization that supported both the Winnebago Public Health Department and Twelve Clans Unity Hospital.

The keynote address from this past week's event was from former WCHS CEO, now Big Fire Law Partner, Danelle Smith, and centered on the importance of self-governance. "The journey of WCHS has been one of hard work, determination, and commitment of the Winnebago people to make a better life for ourselves." Since 2018, they have been working to establish infrastructure and services with the mission of creating and maintaining the health of the Winnebago community.

"For the past 5 years, we have focused on preparation and transparency for this moment," WCHS CEO David Edwards. Next, attendees were further delighted to learn about WCHS collective achievements from board members and executive leadership, including the official announcement of their forthcoming CMS Certification. Edwards went on to explain "We have worked to ensure everything we do - from organizational structure, to policies, to care culture - is centered on our patient experience and compliant with CMS's standards. A site visit without notes is pretty unique and very unusual for a first-time organization being certified by CMS."

The program concluded with a complementary traditional meal of buffalo meat and other picnic fare to allow the community to celebrate with WCHS employees. "Congratulations to everyone at WCHS for achieving this impressive milestone in our organization," Edwards stated, and ended the program by offering his gratitude to "everyone in the communities we serve for entrusting us with your health. "



Established by the Winnebago Tribe of Nebraska
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About: WCHS is operated by the Winnebago Tribe of Nebraska and consists of two divisions. Twelve Clans Unity Hospital is a 13-bed state-of-the-art healthcare facility that serves an estimated 10,000 Native Americans who live on the Winnebago Reservation and in the surrounding region. Healthcare services provided by the hospital include an outpatient clinic, inpatient care, pharmacy, radiology, emergency care, medical laboratory, physical therapy, social services, and more. The Winnebago Public Health Department strives to create and maintain a healthy community by providing a wide range of total health and wellness programs. These programs include physical, mental, safety, and social services that benefit the Winnebago community. Please visit www.WinnebagoHealth.com to learn more.

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