



FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE:

Dawn Casavant, Vice President of External Affairs
Heywood Healthcare
978-751-1289

Heywood Hospital Inpatient Mental Health Unit Scheduled to Reopen on January 11th.

Gardner, January 2, 2024 — Heywood Hospital received approval from the Department of Mental Health to reopen 6 (six) beds of the proposed 12 (twelve) bed adult unit on January 11, 2024. Additional beds will be added at a future date. Admissions will proceed according to approved staffing and a gradual and planned progression. Heywood Hospital was forced to close the Mental Health Unit in October of 2021 due to lack of qualified personnel, which persisted beyond the COVID public emergency period.

“Delivery of Mental Health Care services locally is essential to the overall health of our community. Recruitment of licensed mental health clinical staff continues to be the greatest challenge. The Mental Health Unit operates 24/7, requiring the staffing of professionals for all three shifts. We offer sign-on bonuses, flexible scheduling, tuition reimbursement, and competitive salaries, and are seeking individuals with the desire to make a difference in our community.” - stated Rozanna Penney, co-CEO.

Heywood has invested in several upgrades prior to reopening, including a sensory room, funded by Robert J. Mullen Charitable Trust, that provides a calming environment such as a soothing mural, relaxation music/sounds, dimmer lighting, and safe rocking chairs. Additional sensory resources such as fidgets, stress balls, weighted blankets, and music and art therapy supplies will be integrated into therapy to equip patients with coping strategies after discharge. Enhanced security measures include Alertus Safety Fobs for staff, new cameras, and MOAB training (Management of Aggressive Behavior) training for all staff and security personnel.

In addition to the Inpatient Mental Health Unit, Heywood also operates a Partial Hospital Program which serves approximately 40 adult patients daily, Heywood Medical Group provides outpatient psychiatric services and counseling to adult and pediatric patients, and maintains robust school-based behavioral health services. School-based services include mental health counseling, both in person and virtually, and serve approximately 700 students annually throughout five school districts. Rozanna Penney added: “Heywood Healthcare remains dedicated to supporting the overall health of not only our patients, but also the youths and families in need in the region”.



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About Heywood Healthcare

Heywood Healthcare is an independent, community-owned healthcare system serving north central Massachusetts and southern New Hampshire, comprised of Heywood Hospital, a 134-bed acute care community-owned non-profit hospital in Gardner, MA; Athol Hospital, a 25-bed not-for-profit, Critical Access Hospital in Athol, MA; and Heywood Medical Group, with primary care physicians and specialists located throughout the region.

The organization includes nine satellite facilities in MA: Ashburnham Family Medicine in Ashburnham, Heywood Rehabilitation Center, Summit Family Medicine & Heywood Primary Care and Urgent Care in Gardner, The Winchendon Health Center & Murdock School-based Health Center in Winchendon, Tully Family Medicine and Walk-In Care and ACES Athol Community Elementary School Based Health Center in Athol. The organization also includes the Heywood Healthcare Charitable Foundation. For more information, visit www.heywood.org.