



FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE:

Heywood Healthcare

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Heywood Healthcare Celebrates Milestones and Community Commitment

Gardner, MA - [April 5, 2024] - Heywood Healthcare and community stakeholders convened today to commemorate achievements and reaffirm its commitment to the community. The event was attended by legislators Senator Jo Comerford, Senator Peter Durrant, and Susan Templeton representing Senator John Cronin, and Representatives Jon Zlotnik, Susannah Whipps, Natalie Higgins, and Kimberly Ferguson, city officials Michael Nicholson, Shaun Suhoski, and Elizabeth Kazinskas, former and current members of the Board of Trustees, and community stakeholders.

In June, Heywood Healthcare initiated a reorganization effort, appointing Rozanna Penney and Tom Sullivan as co-CEOs and subsequently transitioned Ms. Penney to the singular CEO, entrusted with navigating the system through challenges towards stability. Sullivan transitioned to the role of Chief Transformation and Restructuring Officer.

In October 2023, the Heywood system filed for protection under Chapter 11 of the bankruptcy code. This deliberate and strategic approach allowed the system to address numerous historic and problematic contractual agreements, reorganize its finances, and focus on service optimization.

Significant progress has been made through the optimization of service lines, expense reductions, and revenue enhancements. Achievements over the past 10 months include an increase in in-patient and out-patient system-wide volumes, citing diagnostic imaging (+ 1.2%), surgical services (+14%), and newborn deliveries (+16%), in addition to expanding behavioral health services by

reopening its inpatient Mental Health Unit in January. The inpatient Mental Health Unit is currently capped at nine beds, with plans to return to a full 12-bed license in May.

In addition to the growing volumes, Penney touted the retention and expansion of the Medical Staff and Heywood's ongoing commitment to the community.

At the event, Heywood Healthcare reaffirmed its commitment to meeting the needs of its community, as evidenced by its many program and service investments in mental health, maternity care, transportation, and palliative care, further citing the re-initiation of the Doula Program to support maternal care, the launch of the transportation partnership with Woods Ambulance (Woods Plus) which has provided 95 patient rides from September to February, ensuring access to essential medical services, and the expansion of Palliative Care to include Chronic Disease Palliative Care, providing additional support to patients.

Penney also noted significant enhancements in security over the last six months, including metal detectors, wand screening, staff training in MOAB (management of aggressive behaviors) and collaboration with local law enforcement agencies, and city and state leadership to provide the safest environment possible for staff and patients.

Additionally, Penney spoke to the successes of a myriad of community programs taking place. The system provides school-based acute care, telemedicine, behavioral health, substance use disorder treatment, and trauma support to hundreds of youth within the five districts of Heywood's primary service area.

In closing, Penney stated "Heywood Healthcare remains steadfast in its commitment to exceptional patient-centered care and local access to essential health services. We are grateful to our medical staff, employees, Board, community stakeholders, legislators, and city and state officials for their unwavering support."

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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 eight satellite facilities in MA: Ashburnham Family Medicine in Ashburnham, Heywood Rehabilitation Center, Summit Family Medicine & Heywood Primary Care, 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.