



FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE:

Heywood Healthcare

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Athol Hospital Recognized with 2025 Performance Leadership Award by The Chartis Center for Rural Health

Gardner, MA – December 5, 2025 — Athol Hospital proudly announces that we received the **2025 Performance Leadership Award for excellence in Outcomes**. Compiled by The Chartis Center for Rural Health, the Performance Leadership Awards program recognizes rural hospitals performing in the top quartile nationwide in Quality, Outcomes, and Patient Perspective.

The award is based on findings from the Chartis Rural Hospital Performance INDEX®, a trusted and comprehensive framework widely used to benchmark performance across all rural hospitals, health systems, hospital associations, and state offices of rural health in the United States.

“This recognition is a testament to the dedication and expertise of the entire Athol Hospital team,” said Rozanna Penny, President and CEO of Heywood Healthcare. “Every day, our employees and medical staff demonstrate an unwavering commitment to delivering high-quality care and improving outcomes for the patients and families of our region. We are honored to be recognized among **the nation’s top rural hospitals** and remain focused on strengthening the health of our community.”

Athol and Heywood Hospitals, as well as all inpatient and outpatient Heywood Healthcare diagnostic and treatment services, are fully operational and open. Our patients can continue to rely on the quality, safety, and compassionate care that define our organization.

This national recognition affirms the exceptional work of our clinicians, staff, and community partners. Their dedication to delivering high-quality, patient-centered care is reflected in this national acknowledgment of our strong outcomes and commitment to our rural communities.

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Athol Hospital / Heywood Hospital / Heywood Medical Group

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.