



NEWS RELEASE

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Highland Rivers Health governing board receives accreditation from CARF International

DALTON, Georgia – October 31, 2017 – The governing board of Highland Rivers Community Service Board (Highland Rivers Health) has received accreditation from the Commission on Accreditation of Rehabilitation Facilities (CARF) International. The governing board accreditation is separate from the agency’s overall accreditation and is a particularly notable accomplishment.

“Governing board accreditation is not an automatic part of an agency’s accreditation, it is above and beyond – a reflection of the board’s credibility, accountability and ability to competently discharge its duties,” said Highland Rivers governing board chair and Cherokee County representative Chantel Adams. “Every individual on this board takes his or her role very seriously – we have worked hard to implement and exceed best practices of governance, and are very proud to have our work recognized through accreditation.”

As part of the accreditation process, eight CARF surveyors conducted a four-day onsite survey of Highland Rivers in August that included rigorous reviews of policies and procedures, service delivery and agency governance. Surveyors reviewed governing board bylaws, meeting minutes and other board documents, and conducted in-person interviews with both the chair and vice chair, Polk County representative and Cedartown City Manager Bill Fann.

In particular, surveyors sought to assess how active the board is in appropriate governance, fiduciary oversight and upholding standards of accountability among members and agency leaders. The governing board’s planned transition later this year to a highly efficient all-electronic board management and documentation platform provided further evidence of the board’s strategic innovation and responsible governance ethic.

“We believe our governing board is both a resource and a partner in the success of Highland Rivers Health,” said Highland Rivers CEO Melanie Dallas. “Our agency has achieved substantial growth in revenue, program offerings and the number of individuals we serve over the past

several years, and we simply could not have accomplished that without the support and leadership of our governing board.”

Highland Rivers’ governing board includes a representative from every county in the agency’s 12-county service area (with two representatives from both Floyd and Polk counties) who are appointed by each county’s board of commissioners. The board has four officers (chair, vice chair, secretary and treasurer) who are selected by board members, and two standing committees: corporate compliance and finance. Members serve three-year terms and terms are staggered to ensure continuity of governance.

The board includes several individuals who have family members with mental illness, addictive disease or developmental disabilities, and includes representatives from the judicial system, family services, private industry, law enforcement, local government and healthcare, among others. The governing board meets every other month, six times each year, with all meetings open to the public.

This is the first time the Highland Rivers Health governing board has received accreditation, which is effective through September 2020. Highland Rivers Health has been accredited since 2003 and its current accreditation is also effective through September 2020.

About Highland Rivers Health

Highland Rivers Health provides comprehensive treatment and support services for adults, children, families and veterans affected by mental health disorders, intellectual developmental disabilities and addictive disease. One of the state’s largest public safety net providers, Highland Rivers operates more than two-dozen treatment facilities across a 4,400-square mile area of Northwest Georgia that includes Bartow, Cherokee, Fannin, Floyd, Gilmer, Gordon, Haralson, Murray, Paulding, Pickens, Polk and Whitfield counties, and serves nearly 16,000 consumers annually. Highland Rivers is accredited by the Commission on Accreditation of Rehabilitation Facilities (CARF) and is a Tier 1 safety net Core Provider for the Georgia Department of Behavioral Health and Developmental Disabilities. For more information, visit www.highlandrivershealth.com.

About CARF International

Founded in 1966 as the Commission on Accreditation of Rehabilitation Facilities, CARF International is an independent, nonprofit accreditor of health and human services in the following areas: Aging Services; Behavioral Health; Business and Services Management Networks; Child and Youth Services; Employment and Community Services; and Medical Rehabilitation. Headquartered in Tucson, Arizona, the mission of CARF is to promote the quality, value, and optimal outcomes of services through a consultative accreditation process and continuous improvement services that center on enhancing the lives of persons served. For more information, visit www.carf.org.

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