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Wexford Health Expands Arizona mental health program

Camp Verde, Ariz. (September 1, 2010) — In April of this year, Wexford Health Sources partnered with the Yavapai County (Ariz.) Sheriff's Office to implement a new mental health program with the potential to save the county a million dollars each year. The project is a Restoration to Competency (RTC) program aimed at detainees who, due to mental illness or cognitive or developmental defects, do not understand what is happening to them and therefore cannot stand trial. The RTC program addresses treatable disorders and provides instruction in legal concepts, so the detainees can understand the court proceedings and participate in their own defense.

In five months, the program has expanded to include one third of the State of Arizona's 15 counties. As of September 1, four counties — Mohave, Graham, LaPaz, and Navajo — have signed inter-governmental agreements to use the Wexford Health/Yavapai program as their primary RTC resource. Utilizing the jail-based RTC program will help these counties save money in program costs, and will also provide income for the Yavapai County Sheriff's Office. Since the program's inception on April 1, four detainees have been admitted to the RTC program. Three of those patients have already successfully completed the course and been declared competent to stand trial.

According to Dr. Ronald Smith, Wexford Health's Director of Behavioral Health Services, the RTC program offers substantial benefits to the court system and the detainee, while also providing county taxpayers with significant cost savings. "Wexford Health designed the RTC program to decrease the amount of time mentally ill detainees typically wait — at County expense — until they are legally permitted to stand trial. Our program uses experienced clinical staff and the most up-to-date treatment approaches to prepare individuals for their trials in an expeditious fashion," says Smith.

Wexford Health has partnered with Yavapai County since 2003 to identify and implement creative solutions that save taxpayer dollars while making the County a safer place to live.

About Wexford Health Sources, Inc.

Serving approximately 90,000 patients, Wexford Health Sources is one of the nation's largest correctional health care providers. The company provides medical, mental health, pharmacy, substance abuse, utilization management, claims processing, and technology services to more than 100 state, regional, and local clients across the country. The Pittsburgh-based corporation helps government agencies and institutions control health care costs without sacrificing quality of care.

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