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Wexford Health opens new mental health unit for Yavapai County Sheriff's Office

Prescott, Ariz. (April 16, 2010) — On April 1, Wexford Health Sources and the Yavapai County Sheriff's Office opened the doors of a new mental health program that could save the county millions of dollars each year. The project is a Restoration to Competency (RTC) program aimed at defendants who, due to mental illness, do not understand what is happening to them and therefore cannot stand trial. The RTC program helps defendants regain their sanity, so they can understand the court proceedings and participate in their own defense.

Located in central Arizona, Yavapai County currently sends mentally incompetent defendants south to Phoenix, to the Arizona State Hospital for the mentally ill. The new RTC program enables the Sheriff's Office to provide the same mental health services within Yavapai County, saving the Agency approximately \$1.5 million annually on security, transportation, and hospital bed fees.

According to Dr. Ronald Smith, Wexford Health's Director of Behavioral Health Services, the Restoration to Competency program offers substantial benefits to the court system and the inmate, while also providing county taxpayers with significant cost savings. "Wexford Health designed the RTC program to decrease the amount of time mentally ill inmates 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. We look forward to continuing our collaboration for many years to come.

*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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