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November 14, 2016

Dr. Edward Ehlinger, Commissioner
Minnesota Department of Health
P.O. Box 64975
St. Paul, MN 55164

RE: PrairieCare's Proposal to Add 21 Beds to its Psychiatric Hospital for Children and Adolescents in Brooklyn Park

Dear Commissioner Ehlinger:

I am writing to you on behalf of Ridgeview Medical Center and Clinics in support of PrairieCare's proposed 21 bed expansion of inpatient beds for children and adolescents. This proposal will increase their total number of beds from 50 to 71 at their Brooklyn Park facility.

Each year thousands of youth and their families struggle to find necessary psychiatric services. PrairieCare's expansion will help alleviate this demand and allow many to receive high quality care closer to home, and without enduring long waits in local emergency rooms or general medical units. Our state currently has inadequate capacity and a fragmented system for psychiatric care and PrairieCare's proposal will help address these shortcomings.

PrairieCare has been a great partner in helping to meet the psychiatric needs in our communities. In addition to inpatient services, they also offer substantial community-based services which help prevent the need for emergency psychiatric treatment. PrairieCare is an ideal health system to lead these expansion efforts and we can confidently support their expansion.

Thank you for your consideration.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Michael Phelps".

Michael Phelps
Chief Operating Officer
Ridgeview Medical Center & Clinics

