

Community group looks forward to new RMCH leadership

Written by Gallupsun Staff
Friday, 01 April 2022 04:32



To the Editor:

The Community Health Action Group (CHAG) is cautiously optimistic about the recent developments at RMCHCS, including the hiring of a new CEO, Robert Whitaker, and the County's initial commitment to ensure increased transparency and accountability by the Board of Trustees.

We look forward to working with Mr. Whitaker to rebuild the community's trust in RMCH.

However, it is still gravely concerning that management of the hospital has been wholly outsourced to CHC Consulting, with the CEO, CFO, CNO and Director of Human Resources all being employed by CHC.

Since taking over the hospital 1.5 years ago, CHC has not prioritized community needs, patient safety, or staff culture and retention.

Instead, under CHC's leadership, patient access has been severely compromised, >65% of nurses and >40% of permanent physicians have resigned, and the hospital has faced unprecedented financial losses.

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Termination of the management contract between CHC and RMCHCS (which does not expire for another 2 years) is the only way to begin to rectify the situation and to allow RMCH leadership to serve the community, not corporate interests.

County Commissioners' have an obligation to follow through on their important, bold decision with specifics that will result in meaningful change.

CHAG has proposed reasonable measures to provide sorely needed taxpayer accountability and oversight with regard to hospital operations. We recommend the reconfiguration of the Board of Trustees to be majority representative of the community and the formation and implementation of a Community Advisory Board.

Both of these recommendations are standard practices for the governing boards of small, rural hospitals.

Together, we must remain vigilant in our quest for a community-forward, patient-centered, fully functioning hospital.

Readers, please sign our petition at RMCHisOurHospital.org.

CHAG Core Committee (primary author, then alphabetical)

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