

Testimony by Tim DeWeese, Director of Johnson County Mental Health Center to the House Committee on Health and Human Services in support of House Bill 2578

Providing that programs and treatments provided by a Certified Community Behavioral Health Clinic (CCBHC) be granted a renewal certification if such programs and treatments have been previously certified or accredited.

January 30, 2024

Chair Landwehr and members of the committee, my name is Tim DeWeese, and I serve as the director of Johnson County Mental Health Center. I appreciate the opportunity to provide testimony today in **support** of HB 2578.

Johnson County Mental Health Center began operating in 1962 by providing outpatient services with four employees in one location. Today, we have over 400 employees in five locations throughout Johnson County providing community-based mental health and substance use treatment services to 12,000 residents annually. We are a department of Johnson County Government, licensed by the State of Kansas as Community Mental Health Center, accredited by the Commission on Accreditation of Rehabilitation Facilities (CARF) International and certified as a Certified Community Behavioral Health Clinic (CCBHC) by the Kansas Department of Aging and Disability Services (KDADS)—all three of which are referenced in this proposed legislation.

The legislation passed by the Kansas Legislature in 2021 to implement the CCBHC model in Kansas has been a game-changer for community mental health centers like ours. The resulting increase in Medicaid funding has helped us expand our staff, make our mental health and substance use services more accessible, and provide a link between behavioral and physical health care for our community.

To achieve CCBHC certification, our staff worked tirelessly to ensure our services met the Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration's (SAMHSA's) criteria for certification and passed a formal, in-person review from KDADS. The criteria address a range of requirements, including scope of services, care coordination, evidence-based programs, client outcomes, quality improvement, and crisis response, among other things.

JCMHC was provisionally certified as a CCBHC in July 2022. That date is notable because just two months prior, in May 2022, we achieved a three-year accreditation from CARF International, a similarly-rigorous process that also involves meeting a national set of standards and passing an in-person review. We have gone above and beyond to demonstrate we are meeting the CCBHC certification criteria by earning both our initial certification as a CCBHC and a national accreditation.

By tying recertification as a CCBHC to a national accreditation like CARF, this bill would provide for a streamlined recertification process, while also ensuring we stay up to date with future changes to national criteria.

Because this bill is a common-sense change that would streamline the CCBHC recertification process for centers that—like Johnson County Mental Health Center—have met multiple national and state criteria for accreditation and certification, we support HB 2578 and ask the members of the committee to recommend its passage.

Again, thank you for the opportunity to provide testimony. If you have any questions or need any additional information, please do not hesitate to reach out.