



August 21, 2024

North Lake County Hospital District
c/o M. Meredith Kirste, P.A.
7928 U.S. Highway 441, Suite 3
Leesburg, Florida 34788

RE: Primary Care Clinic Allocation FY 2024-2025

Dear Ms. Kirste:

Last year even Care Clinics served 80 eligible clients for a total of \$12,240 in office visit claims. These clinics are designed to serve individuals with mental illness who do not receive services from community physicians. We are requesting \$103,000 to pay for medically indigent services at our medical clinics in North Lake County.

Research demonstrates individuals with serious mental illness die on average 25 years before the general population. Individuals with mental illness often experience multiple health challenges concurrently and often lack access to necessary, continuous medical care. The Wellness Integrated Network (WIN) Clinic marked a drastic shift in the care and overall quality of life for behavioral health patients in Lake County. The WIN Clinic is an integrated care clinic that locates primary care providers with mental health providers to allow patients to receive primary care services and consultations from a psychiatric care team at the same time. The WIN Clinic staff understand the needs of individuals suffering from mental illness and this is incorporated into the standard of care the clinic practices.

While providing integrated primary and behavioral health care is a major aspect of the clinic, the WIN Clinic emphasizes preventive care, offers nurse care managers that provide home visits, includes referrals to specialists and enhanced care coordination for free and/or reduced specialty care in the community, provides transportation and offers a variety of wellness activities and workshops.

Patients of the WIN Clinic also have access to LifeStream Behavioral Center's full continuum of care, including behavioral health and substance use disorder services, as well as wellness testing, health screenings, in-home education and more.

In addition to on-site clinical staff, nurse care managers work directly with patients in their home to form personal relationships and help them manage their conditions. The WIN Clinic has

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provided services to over 2,200 individuals since it opened its doors. The WIN Clinic's services and nutrition education has resulted in over 53.4% of the patients reporting improved BMI and 52% of patients have improved their waist circumference. Medication maintenance and education increased medication adherence by 94% which in turn has lowered psychological distress by 88%. Other notable outcomes include decreased cholesterol levels, improved plasma glucose and/or HbA1c, improved blood pressure and decreased tobacco usage.

Many of the individuals served by the WIN Clinic did not have access to primary care services and often over utilized the local hospital emergency rooms. The majority of individuals served often ignore their health needs, resulting in unhealthy lifestyles and aggregated conditions that could have been prevented. The WIN Clinic has created a medical home for many in Lake County with great success, resulting in a favorable return on investment.

We believe we have been a good partner with the Taxing District by providing primary care to indigent individuals with mental illness and substance use disorders. I trust this information will be sufficient for you to make a determination with regard to our request. Should you need any additional information, please do not hesitate to contact me at (352) 315-7507.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in blue ink that reads "Rick Hankey".

Rick Hankey
CEO / President