

Press Release - For Immediate Release

Dover, Strafford County, NH

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RE: Community Partners and South Eastern New Hampshire Alcohol and Drug Abuse Services Sign Acquisition Agreement.

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On November 25, representatives from Community Partners of Strafford County and South Eastern New Hampshire Alcohol and Drug Abuse Services (SENHS) signed an Agreement outlining a plan for Community Partners to acquire SENHS. Pending approval by the New Hampshire Attorney General's Office, this acquisition aims to integrate SENHS as a program under Community Partners, allowing both organizations to expand their impact and improve services for the community.

Serving all of Strafford County, Community Partners operates as the designated community mental health center. Community Partners also serves as the Area Agency for individuals with developmental disabilities and is the contracted ServiceLink vendor for the community.

This partnership has been in development since March 2023, supported by the New Hampshire Charitable Foundation, which funded the due diligence process. Community Partners' CEO, Chris Kozak, highlighted the importance of this acquisition, stating, "Every day, our staff are seeing people with a co-occurring substance use disorder that could benefit from integrated mental healthcare; with this partnership we will be better able to address the needs of those with co-occurring disorders. We like the Certified Community Behavioral Health Clinic (CCBHC) model that the state is moving towards. However, we are also very mindful that the cost to the NH Department of Health and Human Services in sustaining CCBHCs beyond the current Federal grant could become a barrier to fulfilling the promises of the CCBHC model."

The State of New Hampshire recently became one of ten states nationally participating in the CCBHC Medicaid Demonstration Program. Under the CCBHC model, individuals can access integrated substance use disorder, mental and physical healthcare services. Agencies can access a payment structure reflective of the "true cost" of delivering these whole health services.

SENHS, founded in 1979 by Anne Marie Connelly, has provided critical, trusted addiction treatment to the community for over four decades. Based in the Strafford County Complex, SENHS offers low-intensity residential care (Turning Point), Drug Court counseling, impaired driver services, affordable sober living for men (Kane House), and outpatient counseling, all of which will complement Community Partners' array of mental health and developmental services. SENHS Board Chairperson Mark Kennard expressed enthusiasm for the future, saying, "Becoming part of such a vital organization like Community Partners represents a wonderful opportunity to achieve both of these goals moving forward."

With their long-standing collaboration in serving clients with dual diagnoses, the two organizations believe this acquisition will enhance service delivery. "Community Partners is a long-time supporter of

the work we do. Access to the administrative support structure of such a large and well-respected organization sets us up to continue providing these essential services,” noted SENHS Executive Director Jon Cheyne. “The integration of SUD treatment into mental health treatment allows us to better serve those with co-occurring diagnoses.”

Bryant Hardwick, Board President at Community Partners, emphasized how SENHS’s role aligns with their strategic vision: “Southeastern Services is a community pillar, adding their staff and programs aligns with Community Partners’ strategic goal to add substance use disorder services to its array. Southeastern will continue to be an important resource for the community’s increasing demand for SUD treatment.”

Additionally, Dr. Allister, Medical Director at Community Partners, remarked on the positive impact of the acquisition, saying, “The addition of South Eastern’s knowledge and experience in the field of substance use disorder treatment will help us expand our staff’s ability to better treat people.”

Leadership at both agencies are optimistic that this new relationship will strengthen support networks for those dealing with a range of challenges across Strafford County.