



**June 27, 2018**

**Contact:** Aaron Byzak  
Tri-City Medical Center  
Office: 760-940-7365

**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**

**Tri-City Suspends Inpatient Unit, Transitions Mental Health Care to an Outpatient Treatment Model**

OCEANSIDE, Calif. – During a special meeting of the Tri-City Healthcare District board of directors on June 26, 2018, trustees voted unanimously (7-0) to suspend operations of the medical center's inpatient Behavioral Health Unit (BHU) and Crisis Stabilization Unit (CSU), while expanding its outpatient mental health services in the community.

This transition, which is expected to be completed within the next sixty days, addresses operational challenges associated with significant structural modifications required to meet updated federal regulations related to the environment of care. Aging facility challenges, coupled with the shortage of mental health professionals across the country, have spurred many hospitals to close or transition services to outpatient settings.

"This was a difficult decision but one that was necessary in light of the regulatory barriers we are facing," said Jim Dagostino, board chairman for Tri-City Healthcare District. "We are committed to expanding our outpatient services and will continue to work with our public and private partners to identify approaches that meet the needs of the community."

Currently, outpatient services provided through Tri-City Healthcare District treat more than three times as many mental health patients as are treated in the inpatient BHU on a typical day.

Tri-City Medical Center's Outpatient Behavioral Health Services include intensive treatments for a full range of mental health issues. Care is provided by a multidisciplinary team of mental health professionals including psychiatrists, therapists and social workers. These services are available 2.5 miles east of the medical center at 510 W. Vista Way in Vista Monday through Friday from 7:30 a.m. to 4 p.m..

Outpatient Behavioral Health hours of operation have been expanded to include additional clinic time from 5:00 p.m. to 7:00 p.m. on Monday, Tuesday, and Thursday evenings and will be increased further based on community need. Additionally, Tri-City Healthcare District will be bolstering

partnerships with local non-profit organizations who specialize in mental health prevention and early intervention.

“Tri-City’s outpatient services are staffed with exceptional mental health professionals available to provide excellent care to community members facing mental health issues,” said Tri-City Medical Center Chief Executive Officer Steve Dietlin.

Tri-City Medical Center Outpatient Behavioral Health Services can be reached at 760-940-5051 during business hours.

People experiencing a life-threatening behavioral health crisis should call 911 to receive emergency medical services 24 hours a day, seven days a week.

People experiencing suicidal thoughts or in emotional distress can call 1 - 800 - 273 - TALK (8255) to reach the National Suicide Prevention Lifeline and its trained crisis workers 24 hours a day, seven days a week. These centers provide crisis counseling and mental health referrals.

Approximately 80 BHU and CSU employees will be transitioned, where possible, to staff Tri-City’s outpatient behavioral health services program and to help fill other suitable positions at the medical center, which is actively recruiting for approximately 200 open positions.

### **About Tri-City Medical Center**

Tri-City Medical Center has served its community for over 50 years and is a 388-bed full service, acute-care hospital in Oceanside, Calif. with primary care clinics and over 700 physicians practicing in 60 specialties. Its Gold Seal of Approval® from the Joint Commission recognizes its commitment to safe and effective patient care for the residents of the community it serves. Tri-City Medical Center received 2018 American Heart Association Gold Plus Quality Achievement Awards for Heart Failure and Stroke in addition to the 2018 AHA Mission Lifeline Gold STEMI award. It operates an Orthopedic & Spine Institute, a Cardiovascular Health Institute and a Neuroscience Institute along with the Tri-City Wellness & Fitness Center in Carlsbad, Calif. It also specializes in robotic surgery, women’s health, cancer and emergency care. For more information about Tri-City Medical Center and Tri-City Healthcare District, please visit [www.tricitymed.org](http://www.tricitymed.org).

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