

# HOSPITAL DISTRICT PULSE

North Pine Area Hospital District

[www.PineHospitalDistrict.com](http://www.PineHospitalDistrict.com)

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Saving Lives, Restoring Health

## Message from the Chair Ron Osladil



The North Pine Area District's (Hospital District) new Pine Healthcare Campus is being enthusiastically received by area residents. As a result, Essentia Health and Gateway Family Health Clinic have added many new therapies and services. Essentia Health needed more space for the infusion center, therefore, the Hospital District invested \$350,000 to help build the new administrative building that will house the administrative offices and the ambulance garage and sleeping rooms for staff. Additionally, a new mental health therapy service has joined the Pine Healthcare Campus by locating with Gateway.

This progress is great but it is important to remember how critical local access to a broad range of quality health care is. We are, therefore, committed to supporting our hospital, clinic and pharmacy partners as well as fill in other healthcare gaps for the area. Our citizens deserve top notch healthcare and we are dedicated to help bring more health-related services and support.

We have, therefore, taken a pledge to foster creative collaborations with healthcare leaders in the area. This is to celebrate the "Power of Rural," which is a yearlong commitment to partner with area healthcare providers to explore new solutions for our health care challenges.

## Rural Health Day November 21 – Hospital District Signs Rural Health Pledge



The Minnesota Office of Rural Health and Primary Care states that National Rural Health Day is an “opportunity to ‘Celebrate the Power of Rural’ by honoring the selfless, community-minded, ‘can do’ spirit that prevails in rural America, gives us a chance to bring to light the unique healthcare challenges that rural citizens face, and showcase the efforts of rural healthcare providers, all State Offices of Rural Health and other rural stakeholders to address those challenges.” The Hospital District is honoring the ‘Power of Rural’ by signing the National Organization of State Offices of Rural Health pledge “to begin new conversations about the power of pioneering rural partnerships.” More will be coming in 2020 about this.

## ‘Healthcare Leadership Award’ Goes to Cheryl McHugh and Eric Neilson



The Hospital District has launched the first annual ‘Healthcare Leadership Award’ in recognition of Rural Health Day. Two outstanding leaders have been selected to receive this year’s award. Cheryl McHugh of Therapeutic Services Agency (TSA) and Eric Nielson of Gateway Family Health Clinic stepped out of the usual boundaries to partner with the Hospital District and bring mental health therapy to the Pine Healthcare Campus. Eric made an office available for TSA to begin offering this therapy service, which is a great fit with the Gateway Tele-Psychiatry Service introduced last year.

## Mental Health Therapy Grant Awarded to Therapeutic Services Agency – New Mental Health Service Now Located at Pine Healthcare Campus

The first use of the grant program was in response to the escalating mental health care problems in the area. One in five Minnesotans face mental illness each year according to the Minnesota Department of Human Services (DHS). The DHS data also indicates that 1 in 10 young people experience a period of major depression. Additionally, lifespans are decreased by 10 – 25 years for people with serious mental illness.

“These statistics are alarming, and we know Pine County is no exception to these trends,” states Fran Levings, vice chair of the Hospital District and chair of the Health Care Services Committee. “We have been focusing on mental health issues and are proud to help fund the start-up costs for Therapeutic Services Agency (TSA) to begin offering mental health therapy services for the Sandstone area.”

## Grant/Funding Program Available for New or Improved Healthcare Services

The Hospital District was established to ensure local access to quality healthcare in the Pine County area. As such, we have authority to give grants to healthcare providers and organizations who wish to provide a needed healthcare service or to those who currently operate at the Pine Healthcare Campus and wish to improve their services.

These funds may be used for the initial start-up costs, special equipment needed or other purposes essential to starting or improving quality healthcare service. The intention is for the healthcare service to become self-supporting over time.

*Applications and more information are available by going to the 'Grant/Funding Program' button at the top of the website home page, which is [www.PineHospitalDistrict.com](http://www.PineHospitalDistrict.com).*

## \$350,000 Invested for New Ambulance Garage and Administrative Offices

The Hospital District contributed \$350,000 for the construction of a new ambulance garage and administrative building. The ambulance garage's ideal location is next to the hospital. The old ambulance garage was at the former hospital location, which is now owned by Sandstone Health Center. It was demolished to make room for additional senior living rooms and services.

Since the new infusion center required Essentia Health to move its administrative offices, it made sense to build the structure for both purposes. It is scheduled to be completed in December 2019.



**Cheryl McHugh, TSA CEO and Fran Levings Review the Grant**

TSA began operating out of the Gateway Family Health Clinic beginning in August 2019 and is providing mental health services 2 days per week. Their outpatient mental health therapy is for children, teens and adults. This grant helps TSA get established and develop a sustainable client base to continue services in the coming years.

“TSA is enthusiastic about coming to the Hospital District area and offering our mental health services to all in need,” states Cheryl Smetana McHugh, owner, of Therapeutic Services Agency, Inc. “Being located on the Pine Healthcare Campus will enable us to develop relationships and collaboration with Essentia Health and Gateway Family Health Clinic to better meet the physical and mental health needs of our citizens.”

Selena Stevens provides the mental health therapy all day Thursdays and Friday afternoon. Her case load is rapidly growing and she is still taking referrals. Selena can see people under most insurance plans (not Medicare or Health Partners - employer paid, but can see Health Partners PMAP). Symptoms treated can be related to anxiety, depression, trauma, life changes, family disruption, self-esteem, stress, grief, etc.

Appointments can be scheduled by calling 320-629-7600.

## Sandstone Food Shelf Support



Recognizing how critically important nutritious food is to good health, the Health Care Services Committee recommended and the Board approved a grant of \$1,000 per month for 5 months be given to food shelf in Sandstone, Family Pathways. At the end of that period, the Hospital District will evaluate the success of this donation.

Fran Levings, Chair of the Health Care Services Committee stated, “there are two consistent areas of health care concern for Pine County. First, Pine County is the third poorest county in the state. Second, it is the seventh unhealthiest county in the state.” The Hospital District has also provided a fact sheet on healthy eating, which is given to each person using the food shelf.

The monthly grant for the Sandstone Food Shelf will go directly to Chris's Food Center where the food shelf can draw on that account to

purchase the needed food. They have operated on a budget of \$1,750 per month, which has never been enough to adequately stock the necessary food supplies.

No one comes in expecting to get food on a regular basis. It is almost always someone in an emergency situation. The majority of the clients are senior citizens, usually women who have outlived their husbands and their assets. There are also many people with disabilities in need of food.

## New Dosey Enthusiast After 5 Years Of Hospital District Membership

By Fran Levings, Hospital District Board Member Representing New Dosey

New Dosey Township joined the Hospital District in October of 2014. This was the best investment we could have ever made for our citizens of New Dosey. We helped shape the future of health care for our area, making the Hospital District a model community that I am so proud to be a member.

As our Township Chair, Dave Fornengo said 5 years ago, “the residents of New Dosey are pleased to become a responsible partner of the Hospital District.”

We were successful in not only keeping the critical care hospital in the area but we have seen exciting new medical services being offered. This includes the infusion center, telemedicine, tobacco treatments, pulmonary function testing, rheumatology and vascular services and rehabilitation at Essentia Health. Gateway Family Health Clinic has added tele-psychiatry medication management and brought a new Certified Family Nurse Practitioner with another being added in the fall of 2019. Golden Horizons assisted living and memory care located next to the Pine Healthcare Campus to have ready access for its residents who need emergency and routine health care.

The minimal additional tax has had a great return. We don't need to go to Duluth or the Cities for much of our health care because we have such high-quality services right in our home area. This only costs on average \$30/year for \$100,000 assessed value of each property owner since the tax levy is about 2 – 3% of the property values. This tax levy has stayed unchanged since 1999 and if other contingent cities or townships join the hospital district, the taxes will do down.

The health care future for our residents has never looked brighter.



The North Pine Area Hospital District offices are in new offices at 501 Main Street, Sandstone, MN 55072.  
**For more information go to [www.PineHospitalDistrict.com](http://www.PineHospitalDistrict.com).**

**You can email the Hospital District by going to the ‘Contact Us’ page.**

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