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*For Immediate Release*

### **WCHS REMOVES PATIENT BARRIERS TO CARE**

*Winnebago, NE* – Winnebago Comprehensive Healthcare System’s Primary Care Clinic is removing patient barriers to care by offering both drop-in flex appointments and walk-in STI testing services.

Over the past three months, WCHS conducted an audit of our patient appointments to explore if there was a trend in no-call and no-show rates. Additionally, WCHS uses survey programs like Press Ganey, HappyOrNot, or purposeful rounding to gather patient feedback.

“We have noticed a pattern of a healthy percentage of our patients scheduling appointments in advance and then not showing up for them. Additionally, we are receiving consistent feedback about people having trouble “getting in” or scheduling a same-day appointment,” explains Chief Medical Officer, Dr. Ganesh Kini. As a solution to this problem, WCHS Primary Care Clinic’s flex appointments concept was born. These ‘flex appointments’ are essentially our patient-centered guarantee that if you need to see a doctor and are willing to wait. We can take advantage of our no-show appointment capacities to offer some flex appointment time slots each day. “Patients might not be able to see their primary care physician or a specialist and they might have to be a little patient, but if you come to WCHS seeking care from a provider - you will be seen that day, I guarantee it!”

Many people who have infections that can be transmitted through sex or IV drug use, do not have symptoms. Syphilis and other STIs can be contracted from unprotected oral, anal, or vaginal sex. The impact these infections can have on your fertility and health can last a lifetime. In an effort to offer solutions to the people they serve, starting on October 9<sup>th</sup>, WCHS Primary Care Clinic started offering rapid sexual wellness screenings without the need for an appointment. This service will allow patients to get tested regularly and ask questions without the need to wait for a provider.

Primary Care Clinic Manager, Melanie Tuamoheloa BSN, RN “It is hard to get people of any age to talk about something as personal as their sexual health let alone but with the rising cases of syphilis across the country, we need to start the conversation and make it as simple as possible to seek care.”

The Winnebago Comprehensive Healthcare System is committed to remaining open to feedback and continuously striving to improve in everything that they do.

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*The Winnebago Comprehensive Healthcare System (WCHS) is dedicated to creating and sustaining a healthy community in Winnebago and all the populations we serve. Our organization provides an integrated approach to medicine by offering care services that are compassionate, innovative, and culturally-centered. Our goal is to lead the nation in health for indigenous people by challenging the culture of healthcare for the 10,000 Native Americans who live on the Winnebago Reservation and in the surrounding region. The rural healthcare services we provide include renowned acute care hospital services, a robust primary care clinic, and impressive prevention programs designed to educate, encourage, and support the mental, environmental, social, and physical wellness needs of the Winnebago community. Visit [www.wchs.health](http://www.wchs.health) to learn more.*

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