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*For Immediate Release*

### **WCHS Qualifies for Over 400k a Year in Tech Savings From USAC**

Winnebago, NE – Winnebago Comprehensive Healthcare System (WCHS) announces their qualification to receive future tech savings amounting to an average of 400K a year from a rural healthcare program. The rural technology rates will be utilized by WCHS to maintain and manage their new I.T. infrastructure.

The tech fund certification received by WCHS is part of Universal Service Administrative Company (USAC)'s Rural Health Care Program that aims to provide reduced telecommunications and internet access rates to rural healthcare providers. In rural communities, healthcare and the overall vitality of the community are linked, a high-quality healthcare system supports economic and community development initiatives and vice versa. Affording and securing an I.T. environment can be a challenge for many rural facilities. This aid is designed to help healthcare clinics and hospitals, like WCHS, shoulder the cost of maintaining, managing, and securing their network.

“Becoming USAC qualified allows WCHS to realistically afford operating, maintain, and securing our independent I.T. environment while provide us the flexibility to continue to innovate and grow to meet the needs of our patients.” explains Monti Molzen, WCHS Information Technology Manager. “Rural healthcare is essential to creating health and well-being for individuals who make up rural communities, but the raising costs of technology often present a unique challenge to these hospitals and clinics seeking to protect themselves with every changing landscape and cyber threats.”

According to a report from Definitive Healthcare, in 2023, the average cost to maintain healthcare I.T. yearly ranges from 500k to just under 1 million dollars for rural hospitals the size of WCHS. With this advantage pricing from the USAC Rural Health Program, WCHS will continue to be able to manage their own independent network. This includes having a fully staffed I.T. team, keeping up with the latest healthcare technology hardware, software, and security standards.

“As one of the first native health facilities to successfully cutover our I.T. network, it is important that we have a strategic plan for maintaining and growing that network. The security and confidentiality of patient medical records is of the utmost importance, and we take this responsibility very seriously.” David Edwards, CEO of WCHS, expressed.



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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.*