

APPENDIX N-1



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Contacts: Gail Fisher, ISHC
603.388.2430

Scott G. Colby, UCVH
603.388.4110

James Patry, NCH
603.326.5606

For Immediate Release:

Indian Stream Health Center & Upper Connecticut Valley Hospital Agree to Pursue Merger

Aligning primary care, behavioral health services and retail pharmacy operations under Upper Connecticut Valley Hospital [UCVH] and North Country Healthcare [NCH] will ensure access to high quality, predictable healthcare for our region

Colebrook, NH – The Board of Directors of Upper Connecticut Valley Hospital ["UCVH"] voted at a special meeting on February 23, 2021 to proceed with pursuing a merger with Indian Stream Health Center ["ISHC"]. This follows a similar vote taken by the ISHC Board of Directors on February 3, 2021. The goal of the transaction will be for UCVH to continue to operate as a Critical Access Hospital and to establish a Rural Health Clinic ["RHC"] at ISHC's Colebrook location. In addition to primary care, the plan is for the RHC to operate an outpatient behavioral health program and a Medication Assisted Treatment or M.A.T. program in Colebrook to help treat those afflicted by substance use disorder. Additionally, it is expected that the ISHC retail pharmacy will continue to be operated at its current location under new ownership.

In a joint statement, ISHC Board Chair Gail Fisher and UCVH Board Chair Odette Crawford said, "Aligning the missions of ISHC, UCVH and NCH to continue to offer our area high quality primary care, outpatient behavioral health services and access to affordable medications has been the goal of the discussions we have had over the past several months."

UCVH and ISHC will move forward with negotiating a formal letter of intent followed by definitive documents for the transaction, which will need to be approved by the Boards of both organizations. The proposed transaction will also be subject to review by the New Hampshire Attorney General's Charitable Trust Unit. Public listening sessions will be scheduled. The process for negotiation of the transaction and the subsequent regulatory review may take many months.

Following years of collaboration, a transaction with UCVH "made a tremendous amount of sense." Gail Fisher commented. She continued, "The working relationship between ISHC and UCVH has deepened over the past several years and while ISHC explored other merger and affiliation options, merging with UCVH proved to be the most beneficial for our communities."

About ISHC: Indian Stream Health Center is a Federally Qualified Health Center (FQHC) serving the health care needs of Coös County, New Hampshire and surrounding areas in Maine and Vermont; maximizing the quality of life of area residents. Indian Stream serves patients via clinical locations in Colebrook, NH and Canaan, VT, in local schools and in the community setting.

About UCVH: Upper Connecticut Valley Hospital, an affiliate of North Country Healthcare, is a 16-bed critical access hospital serving 20 communities and 8,500 people in its service area which includes communities in New Hampshire, Vermont, and Maine. UCVH provides over 4,000 emergency department visits, 325 outpatient surgeries, 300 inpatient admissions, 7,000 imaging studies and 140,000 laboratory tests annually. UCVH offers a broad array of services including a 24/7 fully staffed emergency department, outpatient surgical care, cardiac rehabilitation, inpatient care, ambulatory care, x-ray, MRI, CT scans, mammography, outpatient rehabilitation, laboratory services and more.

About NCH: Named a 2020 Best Place to Work by Modern Healthcare, North Country Healthcare (NCH) is a non-profit affiliation of four medical facilities in the White Mountains Region of New Hampshire. NCH includes numerous physicians and medical providers at multiple locations. This leading comprehensive healthcare network which employs hundreds of highly-trained individuals delivers integrated patient care through three community hospitals, medical laboratories, and home health and hospice services. NCH remains committed to the health and well-being of the communities it serves.

Member organizations include Androscoggin Valley Hospital in Berlin, Upper Connecticut Valley Hospital in Colebrook, Weeks Medical Center in Lancaster, and North Country Home Health and Hospice Agency in Littleton. NCH is proud to be the largest employer in the North Country.