

June 5, 2024

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To Whom It May Concern:

I am writing to express our support for taking the necessary steps to create a 708 Mental Health Board in Piatt County. This will provide a healthy framework and funding for those seeking services related to mental health, substance use treatment, and developmental supportive services.

The need for mental health services continues to increase. In the Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration's (SAMHSA) 2022 National Survey on Drug Use and Health, nearly 60 million adults aged 18 or older had a mental illness (defined as a mental, behavioral, or emotional disorder). Adolescents are also facing significant challenges, as 3.4 million people aged 12-17 had serious thoughts of suicide and 1 in 5 had a major depressive episode. Not enough people are getting the care they need. According to the survey, in the year prior, only 1 in 4 people had received the substance use disorder treatment they needed, only half of the adults received the necessary mental health treatment, and more than 40% of youth aged 12-17 indicated not receiving the mental health treatment they needed.

Finally, when talking about the services related to serving those with Intellectual and/or Developmental Disabilities close to home, 14% of Piatt County residents have a disability and The Center receives calls weekly for those in need of support to serve additional adults with disabilities.

For over 50 years, The Center has proudly stood as a beacon of support for those in the mental health and developmental disability service field. Their reputation and collaborative approach are widely-known, including their relationship with Kirby Medical Center. One of the bigger challenges to The Center has been navigating rising operational costs with a woefully low state-reimbursement rate that is not connected to reality. Without a supplemental revenue stream to support and grow necessary programs and services, existing services could be cut. These changes would be catastrophic for those under-resourced individuals.

Please join us in this proactive step to ensure our community has a strong network of support for those seeking services by supporting the establishment of a 708 Mental Health Board on November 5th. Vote yes for 708. I remain,

Very truly yours,



Steven D. Tenhouse, FACHE
Chief Executive Officer
Governing Board Secretary