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Governor Pence Announces Plan to Build a New State-of-the-Art Neuro-Diagnostic Institute

New institute in Indianapolis will be hub for advancing public mental health care and addiction treatment in Indiana

INDIANAPOLIS – Governor Mike Pence today unveiled the state’s plans to build a new state-of-the-art neuro-diagnostic institute that will provide major advancements to Indiana’s public mental health delivery system. The institute, scheduled to begin serving patients in 2018, will be a key component of the state’s initiative to improve Indiana’s network of state-operated mental health facilities.

“This new institute will serve as the centerpiece of our ongoing commitment to improve mental health care and address the scourge of addictions in Indiana,” said Governor Pence. “This new institute is another part of our strong commitment to improving health care in Indiana and to caring for our most vulnerable fellow citizens, including those living in poverty, with disabilities and impaired from psychiatric illnesses, brain diseases and addictions.”

This new 159-bed institute is projected to have the capacity to treat 1,500 patients each year. With the establishment of the new institute, which will be located on the campus of Community East Hospital in Indianapolis and operated in partnership with Community Health Network, Indiana will be better equipped to deliver expert neuro-diagnostic evaluations and treatment for patients upon their arrival and move them more efficiently and effectively into the most appropriate treatment settings within the state’s mental health system.

“‘Neuro’ is a word that pertains to the brain,” said Dr. John Wernert, Secretary of the Indiana Family and Social Services Administration (FSSA). “‘Diagnostic’ reflects the techniques used in diagnosing illnesses.”

Dr. Wernert explained that the focus of this new institute would be on the precise diagnosis and assertive treatment of brain-based disorders, including:

- acute and chronic mental illness
- chronic addictions
- intellectual and developmental disabilities
- traumatic brain injury
- neuro-degenerative illnesses such as Alzheimer’s disease

Dr. Wernert said precise and comprehensive diagnosis drives more effective treatment and better outcomes for patients. He added the term “neuro-diagnostic” also encompasses the integration of medical care, which will be made possible by locating the institute at Community East Hospital.

"As a practicing psychiatrist, I recognize that advances in brain research and clinical care of mental disorders have made it imperative that we strive to significantly move our public mental health delivery system forward," said Dr. Wernert. "FSSA is engaged in an ongoing effort to integrate the state's mental health facilities and other elements of the public mental health system into a comprehensive, integrated mental health network. This new, cutting-edge neuro-diagnostic treatment center will complement the development of the state-operated facility network and significantly improve the quality of care."

Construction will begin on the institute in April of 2016 and it will open for patient admissions in late 2018. It will eventually replace one of the state's six current facilities, Larue Carter Hospital in Indianapolis, which will be phased out of operation.

"As the largest provider of mental health services in Indiana, we know firsthand the desperate need that exists for these services," said Bryan Mills, president and CEO of Community Health Network. "We are committed to training providers through our psychiatric residency program and we are honored to work with the state to provide cutting-edge services through the Indiana Neuro-Diagnostic Institute."

This new facility represents a novel model of care for Indiana and will be a Center of Excellence and best practices, where modern genetic and imaging techniques will drive precise diagnosis and appropriate treatment regimens that maximize recovery and stable community placements.

Co-locating the institute with an acute care hospital and clinical partner will leverage the emergency services, specialty medical care and neuro-diagnostic techniques of the clinical partner, and provide needed integrated medical services currently unavailable to patients throughout the state system.

Additional information about the new Indiana Neuro-Diagnostic Institute, including a copy of a feasibility study, is available on FSSA's website at <http://www.in.gov/fssa/dmha/2935.htm>.

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