RMCHCS announces new CEO Robert Whitaker

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The Rehoboth McKinley Christian Health Care Services Board of Trustees is pleased to announce that Robert A. Whitaker, MPH, MBA, will serve as Chief Executive Officer, beginning April 15. This announcement comes after the months-long coordinated recruitment effort between the RMCHCS Board of Trustees and Community Hospital Consulting.

The announcement comes on the heels of demands made by McKinley County commissioners. One of which was to find a full-time CEO or else face losing their lease with the county.

Hiring a CEO is at the top of the checklist of things that the commission and county officials wanted the hospital to make a reality in order to keep their lease going with the county.

Whitaker comes to RMCHCS and Gallup from Southwest Medical Center in Liberal, Kansas, where he has been serving as Chief Executive Officer since 2020. Prior, he served as Chief Operating Officer for the facility from 2015 to 2016.

According to a news release, Whitaker brings several years of experience as a successful hospital CEO/Administrator with a focus on operational and financial performance, collaborative process improvement, and medical staff relations.

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His top priority will be to continue to lead the financial improvement plans laid out by the hospital Board and Community Hospital Consulting, while developing new initiatives that advance RMCHCS as a healthcare destination for the region.

"We are very excited for Robert to join our hospital leadership team and become an integral part of our community," Steve McKernan, RMCHCS Board Chair, said. "We appreciate all the hard work, dedication and support from our Board directors and hospital leadership during the past few years. Together, we commit to our steadfast mission to make a profound and lasting difference in the health and quality of life for all people in the community."

Whittaker's executive leadership roles prior to Southwest Medical Center CEO include: CEO for critical access hospital Kiowa District Healthcare and its clinic, located in Kiowa, Kansas; CEO for Hamilton County Hospital, Syracuse, Kansas, where he led turnaround efforts preventing hospital closure; and Associate Administrator for two Universal Health Services' hospitals, Valley Hospital Medical Center and Centennial Hills Hospital Medical Center, both in Las Vegas, Nevada.

Whittaker earned his Bachelor of Science degree in Industrial Engineering and his Master of Business Administration from the University of Houston, and his Master of Public Health degree from Yale University. He and his wife Amy have five children.

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