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NEVADA STATE HEALTH DIVISION

NEWS RELEASE

Health Division Reaches Settlement with West Hills Hospital

(Carson City) – Health Division Administrator Richard Whitley today announced his office has reached a settlement agreement with West Hills Hospital in Reno whereby the hospital will remain open and treating patients.

“I’m very pleased we were able to reach an agreement that will allow West Hills to continue serving the mental health needs of northern Nevada,” Whitley said. “There is a significant need for the services it provides, and the course of action we have taken will ensure patients are treated in a safe environment.”

On June 9, 2009 the Health Division suspended West Hills’ license and issued notice of its intention to revoke the hospital’s license following a series of breakdowns that jeopardized the safety of several patients. Two days later the Health Division withdrew the suspension to allow West Hills to continue accepting patients after it agreed to accept and pay for a temporary manager who has overseen hospital operations and patient safety. On June 25, 2009 West Hills submitted a plan of correction and has made substantial progress in addressing the deficiencies that led to the state’s action.

“After seeing first-hand our day-to-day mission of providing quality care to our patients, we are glad that the Health Division has confidence in our West Hills Hospital,” said Dave Damschen, CEO, West Hills Hospital. “We will continue to work hard every day to meet and exceed the quality standards that our community expects from us.”

Under the settlement agreement, West Hills agrees to retain and fund the temporary manager through Sept. 11, 2009 if needed based on how the hospital is progressing in its plan of correction. The settlement also outlines a penalty of \$5,500, but credits the hospital that amount based on its expenditures for the temporary manager, training and other significant costs it has incurred addressing the plan of correction.

(more)



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“This settlement is a positive step,” Whitley said. “It is never the state’s desire to shut down a facility. Unfortunately, we felt suspending the hospital’s license was the best way to ensure patient safety issues were addressed. I believe this settlement showed that the steps we took were effective. West Hills was very responsive to our concerns and took extraordinary measures to improve.”

For more information about the Nevada State Health Division, go to: <http://health.nv.gov>.

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