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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

Rock River Community Clinic Welcomes Elizabeth Lucht as Behavioral Health Director & Integrated Care Specialist

Whitewater, WI, March 28, 2023 - Rock River Community Clinic (RRCC) has recently announced the hiring of Elizabeth (Beth) Lucht as a Behavioral Health Director & Integrated Care Specialist to implement and oversee the addition of integrated behavioral health services at all RRCC clinics located in Whitewater, Fort Atkinson, Jefferson & Watertown.

“We are delighted to have Beth join our RRCC team and lead our efforts towards providing integrated behavioral healthcare to our patients,” states Olivia Nichols, CEO/Executive Director of RRCC. “Behavioral health is a vital component to the overall health of our patients, and it’s something we know our communities are lacking. Having someone with Beth’s background, experience and passion for this type of care will help ensure that our transition into this crucial service is as effective as possible for all those we serve.”

Lucht is a Certified Physician Assistant (PA-C) and Licensed Clinical Social Worker (LCSW) with Masters of Science degrees in both Social Work and Physician Assistant Studies with Pathway of Distinction in Global Health, both from University of Wisconsin - Madison. Her three decades of experience have spanned positions as a Physician Assistant, Psychiatrist Physician Assistant, Clinical Specialist, Psychotherapist and Adjunct Faculty member of the UW-Madison Physician Assistant Program.

“During my time as a PA, I've worked in specialty mental health care, primary care and in leadership positions. This has given me a lot of insight into the primary care world, and strengthened my belief that patients do best when we can meet as many healthcare needs as possible at the primary care level,” states Lucht. “Offering patients integrated behavioral health services removes barriers, allows a team approach that can be tailored to their needs and desires, and ensures more seamless communication between primary care and behavioral health clinicians.”

Lucht’s role will be responsible for helping build and support patient care teams of providers, therapists, social workers, and care navigators at all RRCC medical and dental clinics. Her

overall duties will include, but are not limited to, developing clinical policies and procedures, supporting clinical operations of behavioral health integration, recruiting & training physicians to engage in behavioral health services, working with the Quality Assurance committee to achieve program goals and objectives, establishing behavioral health services priorities, creating long-range development strategies, and much more.

“I’m passionate about helping people access behavioral health services, especially people with limited resources and barriers to care,” states Lucht. “I also love the chance to build something from the ground up, so helping RRCC get a behavioral health program going was exactly the kind of job that fits for me in terms of my values and what I enjoy doing.”

In December of 2022, RRCC received an official designation as a Federally Qualified Health Center Look-Alike (FQHC-LAL). A primary goal of becoming an FQHC-LAL was to expand access to needed behavioral health services in the community. Integrated Behavioral Health services are a cornerstone of many FQHC’s in the state of Wisconsin, and have a track-record of strong success in supporting access to services.

“Our organization is in an exciting time of transition and growth, and we knew our next step was to focus on integrating more care services and addressing behavioral health needs,” adds Nichols. “Our designation as an FQHC-LAL puts us in a stronger position to pursue and sustain that work long-term, and we couldn’t be more thrilled to work and learn with Beth to do so.”

“I’m excited about the opportunities to collaborate with RRCC community providers,” adds Lucht. “I’m also excited to collaborate with the wonderful primary care providers and support staff already in place at the clinic and work together to make sure our patients can get their behavioral health care needs met. The energy at RRCC is fantastic! I love the focus on the patient and the opportunities for creativity and creation.”

Lucht officially began her role with RRCC early February, and will begin seeing patients through their primary care visits in April.

Rock River Community Clinic is actively hiring for additional clinic positions, including a part-time nurse practitioner or physician assistant at their Watertown location. The Fort Atkinson dental clinic also has open hygiene and dental assistant positions. Both part-time and full-time options are available. Interested applicants can visit <https://rockrivercommunityclinic.com/careers/> for full details.

All three RRCC medical clinics accept BadgerCare, Medicare, and most private health insurance plans for health services. RRCC dental clinic accepts BadgerCare and continues to be the only provider for BadgerCare/Medicaid in Jefferson County. Financial assistance is also available for uninsured families to ensure all have access to high quality, affordable healthcare. For a full list of insurance plans and eligibility details, visit <https://rockrivercommunityclinic.com/eligibility/>.

Rock River Community Clinic (RRCC) provides comprehensive and cost-effective health care services to ensure all community members have access to care. Serving families in Jefferson, Dodge, and Walworth County, RRCC includes three medical clinics located in Whitewater, Watertown, and Jefferson, and one dental clinic located in Fort Atkinson.

At RRCC, all community members are welcome and accepted, regardless of ability to pay, with discounted prices for patients who are uninsured or underinsured (high deductible plans). RRCC also provides care coordination services to help patients overcome barriers to accessing healthcare and coordinate referrals. Bilingual staff (Spanish & English) are available to support patients and their families. By increasing access to health care services, offering care at affordable costs, and assisting with healthcare navigation, RRCC works to create a healthier, more equitable, community. For clinic hours and directions, visit www.rockrivercommunityclinic.org

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