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News Release

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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VA Mental Health Programs Received Full Accreditation

VA Black Hills Health Care System's (BHHCS) Mental Health Service was awarded full accreditation by the Commission on Accreditation for Rehabilitation Facilities (CARF) for its residential and outpatient programs related to homeless services, employment services, addictions treatment and PTSD programming. The accreditation is for a three-year period, May 2012-2015.

This is the fifth time Mental Health Services has been awarded CARF certification for Residential Programming. In keeping with VA's desire to demonstrate their commitment to quality of care, the Homeless Programs and Compensated Work Therapy Programs were reviewed and accredited for the first time. Not only did these programs pass the survey with no noted deficiencies, several best practices were noted.

The accreditation decision represents the highest level of accreditation and shows the VA BHHCS's Mental Health Services substantial conformance to the CARF standards. An organization receiving a three-year accreditation undergoes a rigorous review process. Mental Health Services employees demonstrated to a team of surveyors, during a three-day survey, that they are committed to improving the quality of the lives of Veterans they serve. The services, personnel and documentation reviewed clearly indicated an established pattern of practice excellence and program offerings of the highest quality.

"This achievement is an indication of your organization's dedication and commitment to improving the quality of the lives of persons served," said Brian J. Boon, PH.D., chief executive officer of CARF in an announcement letter. "Your organization should take pride in achieving this high level of accreditation."

During the CARF accreditation process, inspectors examine medical records, physical sites where programming occurs, programming handbooks, policies and procedures and conduct private interviews with Veterans served within the programs. Founded in 1966, CARF is an independent, nonprofit accrediting body. This stringent inspection program is designed to specifically ensure the highest standard of care for all Veterans.

For more information on VA BHHCS Mental Health Services or the recent CARF accreditation, please contact Dean Cromwell at 605-745-2053.

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