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ACTIVE SHOOTER EXERCISE TESTS AND STRENGTHENS REGIONAL HEALTHCARE AND FIRST RESPONDER PREPAREDNESS

Moses Lake and Wenatchee, WA: On Saturday, October 8th, Confluence Health partnered with Samaritan Healthcare and regional partners to hold a full-scale active shooter exercise in Moses Lake.

For the exercise, a simulated active shooter threat was addressed at the Confluence Health Moses Lake Clinic. Local first responders, including Moses Lake fire, police, and EMS departments, all participated in the exercise and responded to the incident. The exercise also involved a simulated mass casualty incident (MCI) in which volunteers who played the role of injured patients were first taken to Samaritan Hospital to be stabilized and, if needed, transported to other regional hospitals including Central Washington Hospital in Wenatchee. Confluence Health also activated their Hospital Incident Command System (HICS) for the exercise to help manage the fictional incident in Moses Lake as well as coordinating for Central Washington Hospital to receive “patients” as part of their MCI plan.

“Full-scale exercises are an important part of our emergency preparedness cycle as we continually strive to provide a safe and secure environment for our valued patients, staff, and providers,” commented Doug Jones, security and emergency preparedness director for Confluence Health. “Additionally, partnering with other local regional health care systems and first responders allows for unique insights into how we function together, allowing us to improve and coordinate better.”

The exercise sought to allow healthcare workers, first responders, and others involved in such real-life incidents to have an opportunity to practice, discover areas to improve, and to better prepare to make sure they can provide the best service and response possible should the need ever arise.

“This was a great exercise that allowed Samaritan to activate its Emergency Operations Plan and identify opportunities for improvement in the event we were to see an actual mass casualty event in our region,” reflected Matt Davis, plant services director for Samaritan Healthcare.

“While we hope the training will never need to be used in any real scenario, our job is to be prepared for whatever might occur and this exercise helps us to continue to provide the kind of excellence our communities deserve,” continued Jones.

The exercise went well with Confluence Health security officers playing the role of law enforcement quickly engaging and stopping the actor playing the role of the shooter. Other first responders quickly arrived on the scene to triage the “patient” volunteers to where they needed to be based on the severity of their injuries: green for patients who needed care but were in no danger, yellow for those who need immediate help but were stable, and red for those who had life-threatening injuries. In a real scenario, these decisions help to ensure that resources are allocated to best serve patient needs promptly and appropriately.

“While we learned about areas where we can make our response even better, I was pleased with the professional and excellent response of all of our medical staff and the work of local first responders,” said Gregg Fletcher, director of Grant County at Confluence Health and one of those leading the unified command on-site to handle the exercise. “It was especially important to work with Samaritan Healthcare as a unified front during this exercise since this continuous collaboration would be vital in a real incident which would require all the different facilities working in unison to provide the care our community needs.”

About Confluence Health

Confluence Health serves the largest geographic region of any healthcare system in Washington State, covering over 12,000 square miles of Okanogan, Grant, Douglas, and Chelan counties. Confluence is one of only two locally-lead healthcare systems in the state with the purpose of maintaining availability and access to high-quality, cost-effective healthcare services for North Central Washington. The Confluence Health Board of Directors provides governance for Confluence Health, the Clinic, Central Washington Hospital, and Wenatchee Valley Hospital, and includes nine community board members and six physician board members.

About Samaritan Healthcare

Samaritan Healthcare (Grant County Public Hospital District No. 1) provides healthcare services for Moses Lake and the surrounding communities. Our focus has been, and continues to be, to provide healthcare services that improve the well-being of the people of our community. Our board of commissioners is a diverse collection of publicly elected citizens with an important goal in mind: to provide high-quality healthcare services that are in alignment with our mission, vision, and values.

For More Information

Confluence Health

Katie Grove, *Marketing & Communications Director*

katharine.grove@ConfluenceHealth.org

509.885.0444

Adam MacDonald, *Corporate Communications Program Manager*

adam.macdonald@ConfluenceHealth.org

509.881.4322

Samaritan Healthcare

Alayna Webb, *Foundation Specialist*

awebb@samaritanhealthcare.com

509.793.9645

Miles King, *Marketing & Communication Specialist*

mdking@samaritanhealthcare.com

509.793.9648