

---

---

**Testimony to the Senate Public Health and Welfare Committee**  
**Senate Bill 138 “Certified Behavioral Health Clinics (CCBHCs)”**

February 23, 2021

Chairman Hilderbrand and members of the Committee, my name is Stacy Manbeck and I am the Executive Director for Spring River Mental Health & Wellness, Inc. (SRMHW), the Community Mental Health Center (CMHC) serving the residents of Cherokee County. SRMHW, licensed by the State of Kansas as a CMHC is considered the local Mental Health Authority of the coordination and delivery of publicly funded community-based mental health services, operating as the “safety net” for Cherokee County residents with mental health needs.

I appreciate the opportunity to provide testimony in support of Senate Bill 138 “Certified Behavioral Health Clinics” (CCBHCs) as I consider it to be critical to the future infrastructure, sustainability, and necessary enhancements to our current statewide CMHC system.

SRMHW provides services in two separate facilities located in Cherokee County. The county is composed of several rural communities located in the southeastern corner of Kansas and lacks an adequate basic resource, public transportation, which is often a barrier to accessing necessary behavioral healthcare services for many individuals

As the State considers pursuing the CCBHC system of care model, please consider what an expansion of services in Cherokee County would mean to our residents and community partners. The expansion would allow SRMHW to provide 24/7 mobile crisis, assertive community treatment (ACT) services, and patient-centered treatment planning, allowing us to remove transportation barriers and provide community based services beyond the “four walls.” The ability to serve clients where they are will also provide necessary support and response to our law enforcement departments, jails, and emergency room departments, which frequently encounter individuals experiencing a mental health crisis. The expansion of services can decrease incarcerations and rearrests as well as decrease suicides.

Additional areas of focus will be dedicated to providing community-based mental health services to active duty military as well as veterans, whom currently have to travel, often long distances, to access essential services.

The ability to recruit and retain qualified mental health professionals is extremely difficult, and our Kansas workforce often travels across state lines in pursuit of increased salaries and compensation for the same work. Contingent, and sharing a border with Oklahoma and Missouri, Cherokee County, is just a handful of miles from each of these states, which creates a serious workforce shortage for SRMHW.



Further exacerbating the issue, Missouri and Oklahoma both partake in federal initiatives, participating in the Certified Community Behavioral Health Clinic (CCBHC) Program, which was created by the Federal Excellence in Mental Health Act, allowing for significant increases in revenue, allowing them to utilize this funding toward staff investment, which entices Kansas professionals to seek employment outside the state. We anticipate additional negative impacts to our workforce with the recent passing of Medicaid Expansion in both Missouri and Oklahoma.

Bringing the CCBHC system of care to Kansas will improve our ability to recruit and retain a qualified workforce by offering our Kansas workforce fair and comparable compensation to that of neighboring states. Maintaining a robust and qualified staff is essential to the delivery of the wide array of services which will be made available through the CCBHC model.

Thank you for the opportunity to stand before the Committee today.