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For Immediate Release

**LEGISLATIVE ACTION CHANGES NAME OF LOCAL HEALTHCARE FACILITY:
WESTERN STATE PSYCHIATRIC CENTER NOW
THE NORTHWEST CENTER FOR BEHAVIORAL HEALTH**

On April 8, 2003, House Bill 1266 was signed by Governor Brad Henry effectively changing the name of Western State Psychiatric Center to the **Northwest Center for Behavioral Health**. “We were aware and supportive of the proposal to change our name, but we were surprised by the emergency clause in the bill that made it effective immediately,” said Steve Norwood, executive director of the center.

The change is supportive of the national trend and current language that consolidates the services of both mental health and substance abuse. The use of the term “behavioral health” better illustrates the facility’s comprehensive healthcare mission, and that of the Oklahoma Department of Mental Health and Substance Abuse Services (ODMHSAS), to serve both mental health and substance abuse consumers.

“Since 1998, we have been changing our services from the traditional state hospital to a community mental health and substance abuse provider. The new name helps to reflect those changes that were made,” said Norwood.

The Northwest Center for Behavioral Health provides inpatient psychiatric services to 24 counties in northwest Oklahoma and outpatient counseling to nine counties, with satellite offices in Alva, Fairview, Guymon and Woodward. The Lighthouse, which is a residential substance abuse treatment facility located in Woodward is also a provider of this facility serving clients throughout the state.

“It will take time for everyone to make the connection with this name change, but it will be a good change to reflect our mission,” said Norwood.

The legislative bill also included the establishment of the Tulsa Center for Behavioral Health. The ODMHSAS during the past year took over responsibility to administer these services in Tulsa County. Additionally, the name of Eastern State Hospital in Vinita was changed to the Oklahoma Forensic Center.

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