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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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**Horizon Health Care Suspends Patient Appointments at James Valley Community Health Center**

(HURON, SD – MARCH 25, 2020) Horizon Health Care reported on Wednesday that James Valley Community Health Center will be closed for patient appointments through Tuesday, March 31, 2020. An employee has tested positive for the Coronavirus (COVID-19), while exhibiting very mild symptoms. An additional employee test has come back negative, as the company awaits other pending test results.

“We have taken the proactive step to allow employees to self-quarantine for the time-being,” says John Mengenhausen, Horizon Health Care Chief Executive Officer. “The safety and wellbeing of all our patients, employees and community members is our top priority. We recognize in the coming weeks that many additional cases may be identified in our community, and we want to ensure our staff our available to meet those needs.” James Valley CHC staff are following the recommended 14-day self-quarantine, as advised by the South Dakota Department of Health for any potential exposure.

The employees were tested based on recommendation from the South Dakota Department of Health after notification that they had been in contact with a person under investigation. All staff and patients who may have been exposed at the location have been notified. In the meantime, all patients are encouraged to still call the clinic, where they will be advised by phone or referred to other methods of care.

Horizon Health Care continues to work closely with the South Dakota Department of Health, Huron public officials, and other Huron health care organizations to support community response efforts.

Horizon Health Care, a South Dakota Federally Qualified Health Center, had previously enacted a COVID-19 protection plan and precautionary measures prior to any employees being tested. This plan includes visitor restrictions, temperature taking of all staff and patients upon entry, symptom screening, vigorous cleaning protocols and more.

Horizon Health Care also has a COVID-19 task force that meets daily to monitor, adjust and enforce best practice policies for all its clinics, employees, and patients.

For more information, go to <https://www.horizonhealthcare.org/covid-19/> or call 605-772-4525.

**About Horizon Health Care**

For the past 40 years, Horizon Health Care has been providing personalized, affordable, high-quality medical, dental and mental health care through a rural, community-based network in South Dakota. Horizon is a Federally Qualified Health Center (FQHC) that serves the medical, dental and mental health care needs of South Dakotans in rural, medically underserved areas through 110,000 patient visits annually in 32 community health centers in: Aberdeen, Alcester, Bison, Bryant, De Smet, Eagle Butte, Elk Point, Faith, Fort Thompson, Howard, Huron, Isabel, La Plant, Lake Preston, Martin, McIntosh, Mission, Plankinton, Wessington Springs, White River, Woonsocket, and Yankton. For more information please visit [www.horizonhealthcare.org](http://www.horizonhealthcare.org).

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