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CHESTNUT HEALTH SYSTEMS ANNOUNCES NEW CEO

Bloomington, IL. Chestnut Health Systems Chief Clinical Officer David Sharar was named yesterday as Chestnut's new Chief Executive Officer, succeeding Russ Hagen who announced his retirement last week. Sharar (pronounced shuh-RAHR) will assume his new duties on January 7, 2018. His appointment was made by the Chestnut Board of Directors, which met yesterday afternoon.

"This appointment is the result of a lengthy key staff succession planning process. In making this decision, the Board recognized Dave's long tenure at Chestnut, his experience in so many of the varied services Chestnut offers and the leadership skills he has exhibited over the years," said Judy Smithson, Chair of the Chestnut Board of Directors. "The Board has every confidence that Chestnut's position at the forefront of the health and human service field will continue to flourish under Dave's leadership in the years ahead," she added.

Sharar joined Chestnut 29 years ago to help develop its new employee assistance program for companies and governmental units. He later managed that operating division, now known as Chestnut Global Partners, which today provides services in more than 150 countries across the globe and operates joint ventures with business partners in China, Russia, Brazil, Hungary and India. For the past three years, Sharar has served as Chestnut's Chief Clinical Officer, responsible for a variety of behavioral and primary health service programs throughout central and southwest Illinois. He will continue those responsibilities in conjunction with his position as Chief Executive Officer.

As Chestnut Chief Executive Officer, Sharar will lead a diverse healthcare and wellness organization that provides substance use disorder treatment for adults and adolescents, mental health treatment, a nationally-reputed applied research and training division on best substance use treatment practices, housing services for individuals with mental health and substance use disorders, consumer credit counseling, employee assistance services for U.S.-based and multinational companies and primary health care through two Federally Qualified Health Centers (FQHCs) in Bloomington and Madison County, IL.

"Chestnut has a well-deserved reputation - locally, statewide, nationally and internationally - for providing high quality care for its patients and customers," said Sharar. "I look forward to continuing to work with an outstanding staff of caring professionals who are devoted to Chestnut's mission of 'Making a Difference'. I thank the Chestnut Board for its confidence in me and the opportunity to build on the success that Russ, the Board and our staff has achieved over the years. I know I have big shoes to fill given Russ' exemplary leadership for these last 36 years as CEO. I could not have had a finer mentor."

Sharar, a Galesburg, IL native, earned degrees from Knox College in Galesburg and Northern Illinois University and a Ph.D. from the University of Illinois at Urbana Champaign. He is the author of more than 75 articles and studies related to employee assistance, managed care and behavioral health services.

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