



Founded in 1956, Pawnee Mental Health Services is a private, not-for-profit licensed community mental health center and substance abuse treatment facility serving ten counties in north central Kansas. Pawnee's service area includes all of the towns, cities, and counties adjacent to and surrounding Ft Riley. In FY 2006, Pawnee had over 300 employees, a \$13.5 million budget, and served approximately 7200 clients.

As a state licensed community mental health center, Pawnee must meet standards of quality in several areas, including the provision of specified programs, the employment and supervision of staff, and the development of standardized clinical practices. All of our Qualified Mental Health Professionals (QMHPs) meet the licensing requirements of the state professional licensing boards.

Fort Riley's expansion has a significant impact on our ability to fulfill our mission "to provide quality mental health and substance abuse services to enhance and strengthen the wellness of our communities." Some of the reasons for this are:

- TRICARE does not credential many of our QMHPs, which results in significant waiting periods for the military dependents who come to us for services. It also means that we often do not get reimbursed for the services we provide to military dependents in crisis situations.
- In addition, Title 32 of the Code of Federal Regulations (CFR), Section 199.4(e)(4)(ii) requires that all substance use disorder treatment be provided by a TRICARE authorized *institutional* provider. This regulation excludes not only our facility but every other licensed provider in the area, so Fort Riley TRICARE beneficiaries needing substance use disorder treatment have at least a two-hour round trip drive to the nearest TRICARE approved substance abuse provider.
- Pawnee has lost experienced staff to the significantly higher salaries offered by Fort Riley contractors, and we have difficulty recruiting new staff for the same reason. So, even if Fort Riley is successful in filling their open positions, there is no net increase to the number of providers in the surrounding communities.
- Many people come to our area who are attached to an active duty person but who are not TRICARE-eligible military dependents. When they have no insurance, we absorb the cost of their treatment as part of our mission to provide services regardless of ability to pay.

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