



FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE:  
February 10, 2020

CONTACT: Jodi Boyne  
jboyne@leadingagemn.org

### **Carris Health Care Center Receives Star Workplace Award**

SAINT PAUL, MN – (Feb 10, 2020) – Carris Health Care Center in Willmar recently received a Stars Among Us Workplace Award from LeadingAge Minnesota for transforming the traditional role of the certified nursing assistant into new Clinically Needed Advocates (CNAs) that are fully integrated into the clinical team and improving health outcomes for the seniors they serve.

“Certified nursing assistants are the foundation of quality care, core to creating a person-centered partnership with the people they serve and often the first to identify the need for a change in care delivery. By redefining their role and further integrating them into the clinical team, Carris Health is advancing the leadership and clinical skills of these dedicated caregivers and elevating the profession of caregiving for our entire field,” said Gayle Kvenvold, President and CEO, LeadingAge Minnesota. “This innovative work is driving culture change at Carris Health and serves as an example of the positive health outcomes that can result from clinical care coordination in aging services settings.”

Carris Health recognized a need to develop a more clinically-minded team that integrated all caregiving staff to best meet the evolving needs of the residents and patients they serve. Provided with the tools to recognize and respond quickly to changes in health conditions, the newly-defined Clinically Needed Advocates are better able to respond to unexpected situations, bring on-the-spot education to their peers and champion quality improvement projects.

Since creating the Clinically Needed Advocate, quality measures in falls, infection rates and pressure ulcers have all improved. Falls rates are down 43%, infection rate and antibiotic use are down 37%, and pressure ulcers in long-stay residents are down 68%. Carris Health has also been able to staff above industry standards as a result of this organizational change.

To help advance and support this position, Carris Health has invested in the education of its staff by offering a generous college scholarship program, provided flexible scheduling for students and added two Clinically Needed Advocates to its leadership team.

“We recognize and value our front-line staff and made a commitment to help them grow as people and in their careers,” said Pam Adam, Administrator, Carris Health Care Center and Therapy Suites. “The Clinically Needed Advocate program has instilled confidence, enhanced skills and improved clinical outcomes.”

#### **About LeadingAge Minnesota**

Driven to transform and enhance the experience of aging, LeadingAge Minnesota works alongside its members, caregivers, advocates and consumers to collectively shape the future of aging services and ensure older adults in every community live with dignity, meaning and purpose. Together with more than 60,000 caregivers, LeadingAge Minnesota members provide quality services and supports to nearly 70,000 older adults every day in independent senior housing, assisted living, adult day, home care and skilled nursing settings.

###