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## Smith Named Superintendent at Cherokee MHI

**CHEROKEE, Iowa** – The Cherokee Mental Health Institute and the Civil Commitment Unit for Sexual Offenders share a single campus. Now they have a single administrator.

Department of Human Services Director Charles Krogmeier announced Tuesday that he has appointed CCUSO Administrator Jason Smith, 44, to the additional job as superintendent of the mental health institute.

Smith has been interim superintendent since the resignation last fall of Dan Gillette, who left to pursue other interests.

While the two programs share a campus, the programs are completely separate. Mental health patients have no contact with patients in the high-security unit for sexual offenders.

The mental health institute, one of four in the state, has a total of 43 beds, with 31 devoted to the care of adults with acute mental illness, most of whom are admitted involuntarily.

An additional 12 beds are allocated equally to children and adolescents with mental health issues. Most patients stay a matter of weeks.

Last spring, the facility was one of 10 facilities nationwide, and the only one in Iowa, to receive recognition from the Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration as leaders in reducing the use of restraints or seclusions to deal with difficult patients.

These techniques are now a last resort at all facilities managed by DHS. At Cherokee in fiscal 2010, there were just 1.05 hours of restraints or seclusions per 1,000 inpatient hours, compared to 20 hours in 1999.

The CCUSO unit has 80 patients, all men, who have been civilly committed to the program after serving prison sentences. No patient has successfully completed the treatment program since the unit accepted its first patient in 1999.

The two programs together have about 250 employees and a combined budget of about \$22 million.

Smith has been CCUSO administrator since 2003. He has a doctorate in clinical psychology and recently completed coursework for a master's degree in clinical psychopharmacology from Fairleigh-Dickinson University.

Smith serves on the executive council for the Iowa Psychological Association and is a member of American Psychological Association, the Association for Treatment of Sexual Abusers, and the Iowa Board for the Treatment of Sexual Abusers.

His annual salary will be \$123,406.

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