

February 6, 2023

**VIA E-MAIL AND OVERNIGHT DELIVERY**

Walter Mackie, J.D.  
Licensure Unit Coordinator  
Massachusetts Department of Public Health  
Division of Health Care Facility Licensure and Certification  
67 Forest Street  
Marlborough, MA 01752

Re: Notice of Intent to Close: Willimansett Center West

Dear Mr. Mackie:

Please accept this Notice of Intent to Close Willimansett Center West (“Willimansett Center West” or the “Facility”) located at 546 Chicopee Street, Chicopee, Massachusetts 01013, effective on or about June 6, 2023, or such other date as may be approved by the Department of Public Health, following completion of the required regulatory process for voluntary closure of a long-term care facility pursuant to federal and state law. Our draft Closure and Relocation Plan (the “Closure Plan”) is attached.

On April 30, 2022, The Northeast Health Group Inc., Operator, (d/b/a Willimansett Center West), achieved compliance with the State of Massachusetts Bed De-densification Regulations, which required Willimansett Center West to stop admissions until they reached the new State occupancy requirements. To achieve compliance, this 103-bed facility was required to reduce its bed capacity to 74 beds, losing 28% of its beds. The cost to operate a 103-bed facility with only 74 beds has led to the facility’s financial insolvency.

The Facility’s representative whom residents, family members, staff or other interested parties may contact with questions regarding the proposed closure is:

Andrew Yurack, Facility Administrator at Willimansett Center West  
(413) 536-2540 or by e-mail at [administrator@willimansettcenterwest.com](mailto:administrator@willimansettcenterwest.com)

We request that the Department of Public Health coordinate with Willimansett Center West for the scheduling of a public hearing on the proposed closure of the skilled nursing facility, which will be held as soon as practical. At least 14 days prior to the public hearing, Willimansett Center West will provide (i) a copy of the draft closure plan and (ii) written notice regarding the date, time, and place of the hearing to each person who is receiving this Notice of Intent to Close.

The draft closure plan and notice of the hearing will each be in a format approved by the Department of Public Health and will be available in the Facility. A copy of the draft Closure Plan will be made available to each of the individuals who are required to receive notice. Interested parties may file comments on the proposed closure and the draft closure plan with the Department of Public Health up until the date of the public hearing.

We will be working with residents and their families, with our employees and with the state agencies, including the Department of Public Health, throughout this process to assure the orderly transition of care for our residents.

Please let me know if you have any questions.

Very truly yours,

A handwritten signature in blue ink that reads "Ann Mullen DelCollo". The signature is fluid and cursive, with a long horizontal stroke at the end.

Ann Mullen DelCollo  
Northeast Health Group Chairperson

PROPOSED CLOSURE PLAN  
FOR WILLIMANSETT CENTER WEST  
546 Chicopee Street, Chicopee, MA 01013

Dear Resident and other Interested Parties:

On February 6, 2023, Willimansett Center West (“Willimansett Center West” or the “Facility”) issued a Notice of Intent to Close the Facility located at 546 Chicopee Street, Chicopee, MA 01013. This is the Closure Plan referenced in that notice.

**Background**

On April 30, 2022, The Northeast Health Group Inc., Operator, (d/b/a Willimansett Center West) achieved compliance with the State of Massachusetts Bed De-densification Regulations, which required Willimansett Center West to stop admissions until they reached the new State required occupancy levels. In order to achieve compliance, this 103-bed facility was required to reduce its bed capacity to 74 beds, losing 28% of its beds. The cost to operate a 103-bed facility with only 74 beds has led to the facility’s financial insolvency.

**Notice to Residents and other Interested Parties**

Willimansett Center West issued the Notice of Intent to Close on February 6, 2023. On that date, the Notice of Intent to Close was posted at the Facility and issued to residents by hand delivery, by First Class mail to their legal representative or designated contact on file and other interested parties as required by the applicable regulations, as set forth on the attached Notice List. The Facility will close on or about June 6, 2023, or such other date as may be approved by the Department of Public Health, following completion of the required regulatory process for voluntary closure.

**Relocation Assistance**

The Town of Chicopee and the neighboring towns within twenty-five miles have a substantial supply of licensed long term care placements available. The Town of Chicopee has one additional skilled nursing facility. A total of thirty-one skilled nursing facilities are located within twenty-five miles of Chicopee based on Medicare.gov data.

Willimansett Center West will be in contact with representatives of these nearby skilled nursing facilities to seek information regarding available beds, particular specialties, and other pertinent information. Willimansett Center West will collect written information from these other facilities and will make that information available in its common areas, and to each resident or their legal representative. Willimansett Center West will accommodate planning communication between representatives of the nearby skilled nursing facilities and any resident or legal representative at their request in accordance with current COVID-19 protocols.

Willimansett Center West will work with the residents and their families to identify appropriate placements for all residents in a facility capable of meeting their needs, including the consideration of the resident's and family's choice of facility.

### **Resident Counseling**

Willimansett Center West will assist residents, their families, and representatives in preparing for closure of the facility, including the following steps. We will provide individual and group meetings to prepare the residents for the transfer options and process, including psychological preparation or counseling of each resident as necessary. We will consult with each resident or legal representative regarding placement options and the placement process being considered, and to obtain required consent.

**Willimansett Center West will hold an initial Family Meeting at the Facility (546 Chicopee Street, Chicopee, MA 01013) on Tuesday February 7, 2023, at 5:00 p.m. Additional Resident and Family Meetings will be held as needed.** Notice of these scheduled events is posted at the Facility and is being delivered to all designated Family/Resident Representatives. The Facility will monitor feedback from families and determine how best to schedule additional meetings. In addition, the Facility will schedule individual meetings with any resident/family representative requesting one. At each family meeting, we will provide information on the closure process and steps the Facility will undertake to ensure the appropriate transfer or discharge of each resident.

### **Admissions and Readmissions**

Willimansett Center West has made the decision to not admit new residents effective February 1, 2023. We will follow all applicable state and federal regulations related to residents who are admitted to hospital care, including applicable bed holds. We will continue to readmit all hospitalized patients as required and will accommodate any resident who desires to transfer to another facility following hospitalization.

### **Medical Records Storage**

Willimansett Center West will work together to assure the collection and proper storage of medical records occurs. Patient records for residents who transfer to another facility will be transferred to and maintained by that facility and Willimansett Center West will designate a contact person for communications with the destination facility regarding resident care and needs. Willimansett Center West will collect, catalog, and store all medical records not transferred with residents and any closed records upon closure of the Facility and have those documents stored and available in compliance with applicable state retention periods. Northeast Health Group will manage this process, utilizing Iron Mountain, Willimansett Center West's medical records storage partner. Former Facility Residents records will be stored and maintained by Iron located at 1 Federal Street, Boston, MA, 02110.

### **Information and services for our Employees**

Willimansett Center West is committed to working with its employees to ease the difficulties associated with the transition by attempting to help employees explore job opportunities at other facilities in the area as operations wind down, including contacting the Massachusetts Dislocated Worker Center and the Massachusetts Career Center, enabling employees to take advantage of those services.

Employee meetings will be scheduled to communicate the closure plan and answer their related questions. We will continue to update employees as the plan unfolds and additional information is available. Employees may direct any questions or concerns to Andrew Yurack, Administrator, or email at [administrator@willimansettcenterwest.com](mailto:administrator@willimansettcenterwest.com).

### **Revisions to this Closure Plan**

Willimansett Center West may revise this Closure Plan to provide additional information in response to public comments, resident and family comments, and its ongoing communication with state agencies including the Department of Public Health.

### **Ongoing Communications**

We will be working with the residents and their families, the employees, and with state agencies including the Department of Public Health throughout this process to assure the orderly transition of care for our residents. Information will be posted at the Facility on a regular basis. We will provide advance notice of meetings to be conducted with residents, their families, and representatives to those persons and to the Resident Council.

Residents, their Families, and Representatives may contact the following for further information:  
Andrew Yurack, Facility Administrator at Willimansett Center West, (413) 536-2540.

Very truly yours,



Ann Mullen DelCollo

Northeast Health Group Chairperson