

## AUDIT PROPOSAL

### Evaluating Staff Safety at Osawatomie State Hospital

#### SOURCE

This audit proposal was requested by Representative Samantha Poetter Parshall, Senator Caryn Tyson, Representative Carrie Barth, Representative Fred Gardner, and Senator Molly Baumgardner.

#### BACKGROUND

Osawatomie State Hospital is a state psychiatric facility that serves adults 18 years of age and older. It is located in Miami County but provides mental health services to adults in 45 counties in Kansas. The hospital is comprised of two facilities. The state hospital provides treatment for acute and chronic mental health disorders, while Adair Acute Care provides treatment for people who are in crisis or need short-term hospitalization. As of June 2023, Osawatomie State Hospital, including Adair Acute Care, was authorized for 532 FTE staff but only 347 FTE positions were filled. The hospital is operated and managed by the Kansas Department for Aging and Disability Services (KDADS).

Osawatomie State Hospital has experienced consistent challenges with its work environment. It is a difficult job, pays comparatively low salaries, and suffers from consistently high vacancy rates. These challenges have led to safety issues for staff and patients over time. For example, the federal Centers for Medicare and Medicaid Services (CMS) temporarily terminated Medicare funding to Osawatomie State Hospital from 2015 to 2017 due to repeated safety deficiencies at the facility. A staff member was sexually assaulted by a patient in 2015 and a staff member helped a patient escape the facility in 2022.

Legislators have expressed concern that the environment at Osawatomie State Hospital does not ensure staff safety and may be contributing to continued turnover at the facility.

#### AUDIT OBJECTIVES AND TENTATIVE METHODOLOGY

*The audit objective listed below is the question we would answer through our audit work. The steps listed for the objective convey the type of work we would do. These may change as we learn more about the audit issues.*

**Objective 1: Does Osawatomie State Hospital adequately ensure the safety and security of its staff?** Our tentative methodology would include the following:

- Read CMS survey results, agency budget documents, prior audit reports, and other available information to understand the history of Osawatomie State Hospital's work environment, including changes to its staffing and salaries.
- Survey current and former hospital staff to collect their opinions about the work environment at the facility. This would include questions about whether staff feel safe and why or why not. It would also include questions about staffing levels, workload, turnover, overtime, pay, training, morale, safety and security, and management action.

- Review a selection of human resource records, staff complaints, recent safety and security incidents, and incidents mentioned in the staff survey. Review them to identify patterns or themes in the causes for those incidents and to determine what actions management took to address identified issues.
- Review federal guidance, KDADS policies, and Osawatomie State Hospital's policies and staffing plans to understand their standards and expectations for staffing, training, and workloads in the facility.
- Review data on staffing ratios, turnover rates, vacancy rates, overtime hours, and training hours for the last 3 to 5 years. Compare these statistics to standards and policies to determine potential problem areas.
- Review federal guidance, KDADS policies, and hospital policies to understand the major physical security requirements such as door locks, cameras, key assignments, and staff access protocols. Conduct test work to evaluate if these security requirements are followed.
- Talk to KDADS and Osawatomie State Hospital officials about identified issues and actions they have taken or plan to take to address any deficiencies.

### **ESTIMATED RESOURCES**

We estimate this audit would require a team of **3 auditors** for a total of **4 months** (from the time the audit starts to our best estimate of when it would be ready for the committee).