



## **PRESS RELEASE**

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**For Immediate Release**

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### **Bucyrus Hospital Adds Forensic Services for the Community**

BUCYRUS – March 29, 2019 – Avita Health System announced that Bucyrus Hospital has implemented a forensic program to provide medical screenings and forensic exams to individuals for sexual assault and abuse, child abuse, domestic violence, human trafficking, strangulation and other criminal offenses.

Avita's forensic services are available 24 hours a day, 7 days a week in a private, dedicated room in Bucyrus Hospital's emergency department. Services are available to individuals of all ages and genders, and there is no charge for a medical forensic exam. In addition to the 24/7 emergency care, Avita's Forensic Coordinator, Tammy Robertson, RN, BSN, will also be available Monday-Friday from 8am-4pm to assess individuals who have been victims of chronic sexual abuse.

Robertson, who helped spearhead the forensic program at Avita's Ontario Hospital in December of 2017, has 19 years of experience as an emergency room nurse and 11 years as a sexual assault nurse examiner.

"When we started the forensic program at Ontario Hospital, we knew there was a need for services in both Richland and Crawford counties," explains Robertson. "With the support of the Avita Health Foundation and the generous donations from the community, our goal to add forensic services at Bucyrus Hospital became a reality in less than two years."

Bucyrus Hospital now has almost a dozen nurses in the emergency department who have undergone specialized training to perform adult and pediatric forensic exams on patients who present as victims of acute sexual assault and abuse.

It is recommended that individuals 15 years of age and younger have a forensic exam within 72 hours after an incident has occurred and that individuals 16 years and older have an exam within 96 hours. Anyone who has experienced a sexual assault should try to refrain from showering, urinating, brushing teeth, smoking, eating, drinking, or changing clothing prior to the exam. While the acute window is 72-96 hours, Robertson will see patients any time after an abuse or assault, even months later for pediatric patients.

"We want everyone to know that Bucyrus Hospital is a safe place for individuals who have experienced sexual assault or abuse," adds Robertson.

For more information on the Forensic Program at Bucyrus Hospital, contact Tammy Robertson, RN, BSN at 567-560-3649.

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