

# News Release

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

DATE: October 31, 2022

CONTACT: Meredith Avery  
Cunningham,

[Meredith.Cunningham@stjoe.org](mailto:Meredith.Cunningham@stjoe.org)

(806) 725-6358



## **COVENANT CHILDREN'S TO PARTNER WITH TEXAS TECH PHYSICIANS TO OPEN OUTPATIENT RELATIONAL HEALTH CENTER**

LUBBOCK, TX- Covenant Children's is expanding their partnership with Texas Tech Physicians – Psychiatry to open an outpatient relational health center at Covenant Children's hospital.

According to the American Academy of Pediatrics, early relational health explores how a child, their family, and their community help support the child's development and maintenance of safe, stable, and nurturing relationships. The child can then leverage those relationships to build resilience and effectively respond to future adversity.

This partnership with Texas Tech Physicians, the medical practice of the Texas Tech University Health Sciences Center (TTUHSC) School of Medicine, brings to light how much mental, emotional, behavioral and psychological health impacts overall well-being. There is no health without mental health.

Covenant Children's CEO, Dr. Amy Thompson, said for so long, health care has focused only on the physical needs of the patient.

"This center will allow us to get to the core of adolescents' issues," Thompson said. "Not only will we reach the patient, but we can address how the entire family has been impacted and how the entire family can help in the healing process."

Thompson and TTUHSC Department of Psychiatry Chair Dr. Sarah Mallard Wakefield agree relational health belongs at the hospital to improve access and reduce the mental health stigma.

Covenant Children's will undergo renovations that will include the TTUHSC Department of Psychiatry relocating their children's services. TTUHSC will expand their mission through a collaboration not only with Covenant Children's, but additionally with other TTUHSC, Texas Tech Physicians, Texas Tech University child-serving departments and with StarCare Specialty Health System.

Wakefield said this will be a unique collaboration, not only for this region, but also in the state and likely the country.

“What we are building here is a no-wrong-door system,” Wakefield said. “If a child is in need, we want to help serve that child and the family system supporting that child; we want to do it as early as possible, and we intend to provide the highest standard of care. We will do this with a multidisciplinary, collaborative array of services so that families have options in treatment. And while we are delivering this care, we will be training the next generation of clinicians so that wherever they may go in our region, children will get the best care possible. The impact of this collaboration will have a ripple effect that we think will shift the paradigm of mental health care.”

The Relational Health Center at Covenant Children’s, set to open in Spring 2023, will provide a continuum of outpatient services from education and prevention services to group interventions for children and parents to individualized therapy and medication management.

The cost of renovations for the outpatient clinic at Covenant Children’s was provided generously by donors to the Covenant Health Foundation.

**About Covenant Health:**

Covenant Children’s is the only independently licensed, freestanding, children’s hospital in West Texas and eastern New Mexico and is one of only eight members of the Children’s Hospital Association of Texas and is the only one in our region. As a faith-based health care system, it is Covenant Health’s vision to create Health for a Better World. As the Best Hospital in the Panhandle Plains region as voted by U.S. News and World Report, Covenant Health has consistently provided exceptional health care to West Texas, and eastern New Mexico for more than 100 years. Our clinically integrated health network of eight hospitals, and more than 6,000 caregivers allows us to provide our patients with better access to care using more innovative technology and procedures, while focusing on new age approaches to health care like education and preventative medicine. To learn more about Covenant Health, please visit [covenanthealth.org](http://covenanthealth.org) or our [Facebook](#), [LinkedIn](#), or [Twitter](#), pages.

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