



To heal, help, and inspire hope

October 21, 2025

Mental Disabilities Board of Visitors
State of Montana
Attn: Sean Thomas Conroe
1204 8th Ave/P.O. Box 200804
Helena, MT 59620-0804

Re: Site Visit August 27 and 28, 2025

To the Mental Disabilities Board of Visitors,

Thank you for taking the time to visit our facility and your willingness to share thoughtful recommendations. We deeply appreciate your commitment to improving mental health services for Montana's children and their families. Your insights were both valuable and encouraging as we continue striving to provide high-quality mental health services.

Since your visit, we've reviewed your recommendations and would like to share the progress we've made in implementing these recommendations:

Recommendation 1: Actively reference Section 53-21-107 MCA in rights and responsibilities documentation to reinforce the superior nature of the topic, that these are rights by law.

Response: Shodair agrees that it is important to highlight that not only is abuse and neglect of a patient prohibited as part of Shodair policy, but its prohibition is also a right that is protected by law.

To reinforce the legal foundation of this patient right, Shodair has updated the Patient Bill of Rights, including all printed copies, to directly cite Section 53-21-107. This will more clearly communicate to patients and families that this is not only hospital policy, but a right by law.

Recommendation 2: On an annual basis, review treatment area information boards for accurate, up-to-date advocacy agency contact details, including direct contact with such agencies for verification.

Response: We recognize the importance of providing and maintaining reliable and accurate resources for patients and families. In response, we have added this review to our annual Environment of Care rounds. This will prompt our team to review the contact information listed for advocacy agencies, verify their accuracy, and make updates as needed. This will help ensure that patients and families have access to accurate, up to date supports.





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Recommendation 3: Consider utilizing a team-based naming scheme related to the murals and colorways of each unit.

Response: Thank you for this thoughtful recommendation. We think this is a great opportunity to engage staff and patients in an initiative that will result in more approachable unit names and help to a sense of identity and community within our care environment.

We plan to move forward with this initiative but have not formalized the process yet. We would like to plan a collaborative naming event involving both staff and patients.

Recommendation 4: Maintain recruitment and retention efforts for dually licensed therapist staff.

Response: We appreciate your insight and we also recognize the value that having dually licensed therapists can bring to our ability to meet the care needs of our patient population.

Historically, Shodair has employed dually licensed therapy staff. However, we've found that this role is particularly challenging to recruit for and despite efforts to do so, we have not been successful in filling recent vacancies with dually licensed candidates. Given the high number of licensed therapists already on staff, we do not believe that dual licensure is essential for meeting our current clinical needs.

In the future, Shodair may consider adding Licensed Addiction Counselors (LACs) as part of our staffing model. Broadening the licensure requirements may increase the number of applicants and generate greater interest in the positions.

Thank you again for your visit to Shodair and your thoughtful recommendations. We are proud to serve Montana's children and families in our mission to "Heal, Help, and Inspire Hope." This mission is not possible without the help and support of groups like the Mental Disabilities Board of Visitors. We look forward to future collaboration in advancing the mental health and well-being of Montana's children and families.

Sincerely,

Craig E. Aasved
Chief Executive Officer

