



**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**

**August 30, 2023**

**CHA STATEMENT ON SHARON HOSPITAL PROPOSED DECISION BY OHS**

*WALLINGFORD* – The **Connecticut Hospital Association (CHA)** released the following statement in response to the Office of Health Strategy’s (OHS) proposed decision to deny the closure of Sharon Hospital’s labor and delivery unit:

“It’s concerning that OHS’s proposed final decision disregards declining births, recruitment challenges, and financial pressures that pose significant challenges to maintaining birthing services. Closing a birthing unit is not a decision that is made lightly. Hospitals want nothing more than to provide access to the highest quality care to every patient in every situation. But staffing shortages, decreases in births, and skyrocketing temporary worker costs are serious challenges. Ignoring them doesn’t make the challenges go away and it moves Connecticut further away from our goal to make healthcare more affordable.

“We need the state to be a partner in confronting the issues that are forcing hospitals to make these difficult decisions in the first place. If Connecticut is to maintain world class healthcare delivery and simultaneously slow healthcare cost growth, we must continue collaborating on solutions to the challenges that drive up costs, from administrative burden and bureaucracy to the underfunding of Medicaid that disadvantages many patients. Turning a blind eye to the issues that threaten hospitals’ ability to sustain exceptional care and slow the rate of cost growth will not increase the affordability or accessibility of care for patients.”

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