



FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE  
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## HOSPITAL CORPORATION CONVICTED

### *"A nightmare right out of 'One Flew Over the Cuckoo's Nest'"*

(Fort Worth, TX) – Today, Sundance Behavioral Healthcare System pled guilty to violating the Texas Mental Health Code – a criminal conviction.

Charged with multiple Class B Misdemeanor counts, the corporation pled guilty to the most egregious count – that the hospital knowingly illegally held a female patient against her will for 21 days. A \$200,000 fine was levied, which was paid to the State by the corporation at the time of the plea.

The Sundance System offered behavioral treatment at their locations in Arlington, Fort Worth and Garland on both an inpatient and outpatient basis. Last year, the corporation was indicted by a Tarrant County Grand Jury for knowingly violating the Texas Mental Health Code by detaining multiple patients for longer than the statutory maximum of 48 hours without legal authority, and for refusing to allow voluntary patients to leave the facility.

Sundance ceased operations in December and subsequently filed for bankruptcy.

*"This is a groundbreaking conviction," said Criminal District Attorney Sharen Wilson. "Not just because a corporation has been found guilty of a criminal offense, but for the severity of their conduct – holding people at a mental health facility against their will for financial gain."*

*"This conviction is a result of excellent teamwork by our White Collar Crimes team, the U.S. Department of Health & Human Services' Office of the Inspector General, and the Arlington Police Department," said Matt Smid, chief of the Criminal District Attorney's White Collar Crimes/Public Integrity unit, and lead prosecutor in this case. "We saw a risk to Tarrant County residents, and we acted. We hope this brings awareness that even a hospital can become a convicted criminal if it violates the law in Tarrant County."*

*"Most importantly, these charges led to the shutdown of this facility, so no other unknowing patients can be subjected to this nightmare right out of 'One Flew Over the Cuckoo's Nest,'" said Wilson.*

## END ##