



ARIZONA DEPARTMENT  
OF HEALTH SERVICES

September 20, 2019

Ms. Lindsey Perry, Auditor General  
Arizona office of the Auditor General  
2910 North 44<sup>th</sup> Street, Suite 410  
Phoenix, Arizona 85018

Re: Arizona State Hospital Audit

Dear Ms. Perry:

Attached please find our response to your audit on the Arizona State Hospital. We appreciate the critical role that the Auditor General plays in ensuring state agencies are performing at the highest level and in accordance with statutory requirements and generally accepted standards.

At the Arizona Department of Health Services (ADHS), as part of our mission of supporting *Health and Wellness for all Arizonans*, we take our responsibility of providing care to Arizona's most vulnerable residents very seriously. Our team at the Arizona State Hospital is committed to providing a safe and therapeutic environment for our patients and employees.

We appreciate your partnership and the opportunity to respond, and we are moving forward to implement the recommendation to enhance evaluation of implemented assault reduction strategies.

Sincerely,

Cara M. Christ, MD  
Director

Attachment

Douglas A. Ducey | Governor    Cara M. Christ, MD, MS | Director

**Finding 1:** State Hospital has not fully assessed the effectiveness of its assault response and reduction strategies

**Recommendation 1:** The State Hospital should develop, implement, and document a structured approach for evaluating its assault response and reduction strategies to support the safest possible environment for patients and staff, including:

- Prioritizing the order in which its multiple assault response and reduction strategies will be evaluated.
- Seeking and using stakeholder input in the evaluation process to ensure the right evaluation questions are identified, such as nurses or staff involved in program operations; patients and their families, and others affected by the program; and those who are in a position to make decisions about or fund the strategy, such as State Hospital or Department management, or the Legislature.
- Assessing and determining whether the selected strategy achieved its desired outcomes.
- Using evaluation results to identify ways to improve the strategy or to demonstrate the effectiveness of the strategy.

Department Response: The finding of the Auditor General is agreed to and the audit recommendation will be implemented.

Response explanation: The recommendation will be implemented by March 20, 2020