

**Statement by Kirsten Faessler, Chief Operating Officer of Lexington Regional Health Center on June 3, 2022**

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The closure of Avamere exacerbates an already critical situation around having a safe place that delivers high quality care for our community residents when/if the time comes that they need this level of assistance. Caring for this population and ensuring they can retain quality of life has been something as a physical therapist I have been passionate about my entire career. Through my 26 years as a physical therapist at LRHC I know the importance of this level of care. I personally have had close friends that have lived in Avamere and have been able to experience firsthand them prosper in an assisted living facility when they had been declining prior to moving in. We currently have an extremely difficult time in finding a facility that is able to take our patients from the hospital setting when they need to transition from their home to a new living facility that provides additional services and care for them. The loss of Avamere to our community would be detrimental.

Finally, it was a shock to hear corporate staff from Avamere state that the city and the hospital were made aware of the situation and were unconcerned. That statement is false, rather, since the city and the hospital were informed of this situation, they have been in communication about the potentially devastating announcement. As someone who has worked in healthcare my entire professional career advocating for patients and patients' rights is something I do on a daily basis. I can assure you that myself, the hospital administration, and every hospital employee were astounded and devastated by this announcement. We promise you we will be doing everything we are capable of to advocate for the residents of Avamere, the facility, the Avamere staff, and this community!

Thank you,

Kirsten