



## BOARD OF COMMISSIONERS

# AGENDA REQUEST & STAFF REPORT

**MEETING DATE:** Wednesday, December 8, 2021

**SUBJECT:** Request to apply for COHC Grant for the "Central Oregon Regional Childhood Immunization Rate Quality Improvement Project"

**RECOMMENDED MOTION:**

Move approval of Grant Application.

**BACKGROUND AND POLICY IMPLICATIONS:**

Although many infants and toddlers receive the vaccines by age 2 that are recommended by Advisory Committee on Immunization Practices (ACIP), a significant proportion in some communities do not. This leaves the child and the child's community at increased risk for disease outbreaks. According to the CDC, immunity levels between 80 and 94 percent (varies by disease) are needed to keep preventable disease from spreading in a community.

The percentage of two-year-olds in Crook, Deschutes, and Jefferson County who were up to date for immunizations was 75%, 71% and 66% respectively (according to the Oregon Health Authority Immunization Program data from 2020). These rates are below immunity thresholds to prevent disease spread. They are well below the Regional Health Improvement Plan goal of 80%. Additionally, Deschutes and Jefferson Counties immunization rates have decreased through the course of COVID-19 pandemic.

Deschutes County Health Services is asking for permission to apply for funding to support the Central Oregon Regional Childhood Immunization Rate Quality Improvement Project through Central Oregon Health Council. We propose to hire a Registered Nurse (RN) or Medical Assistant (MA) for three years in order to support AFIX-based IQIP programs in participating clinics throughout Central Oregon.

Here is a brief explanation of the acronyms AFIX and IQIP. AFIX stands for Assessments, Feedback, Incentives and eXchange and is a program that was established by the U.S. Centers for Disease Control (CDC). IQIP stands for Immunization Quality Improvement for

Providers and is the updated version of the AFIX program that is supported by CDC and the State of Oregon.

This Immunization Quality Improvement Coordinator will work in the tri-county (Jefferson, Crook and Deschutes Counties) area, as well as in the Confederated Tribes of Warm Springs and Northern Klamath County, (limited to Gilcrest, Chemult, Crescent and Crescent Lake Junction) to reestablish connections with clinics that participated in previous AFIX grants, and reestablish the AFIX program in clinics in which the response to the COVID-19 pandemic may have redirected focus away from prioritizing early childhood immunization programs.

The Coordinator will also work to identify clinics that serve children who are two years old and younger at clinics that had not previously participated in this program, both in the tri-county area as well as in Northern Klamath County and the Confederated Tribes of Warm Springs.

The Coordinator will work with Immunization Coordinators in Crook and Jefferson Counties to conduct initial Assessments, facilitate Feedback sessions at 25% or more of the clinics in each county annually, coordinate Incentives and facilitate the eXchange (Best Practice and Immunization Coalition Meeting) portions of the program. Participating clinics will be required to run updated assessments for their clinic on a semi-annual basis with technical assistance from the Immunization Coordinators as needed.

An "Assessment" of clinic immunization rates is generated by the Oregon Immunization Program and the data is presented and discussed as a "Feedback" meeting facilitated by the Immunization Coordinator and/or State Immunization Program staff. Clinic staff will choose two evidence-based strategies for implementation in their clinic over the course of each year of the project. Participating clinics will receive Incentives that include funds to cover the cost of additional education on the public health importance of childhood immunizations, and provide educational materials for staff, clients and their families.

The Immunization Champions at each participating clinic attend a meeting twice annually for the "eXchange" portion of the project to discuss successes, challenges and best practices for quality immunization services. This project aligns with the Regional Health Improvement Plan Workgroup goal of "Upstream Prevention: Promotion of Individual Well-Being" of improving immunization rates of children birth to two years of age.

A major focus of this project will be equity and serving prioritized populations. We will seek to reach out to clinics that serve clients who are vaccine-hesitant, children and families who are experiencing houselessness, live in rural communities and those who identify as Black/African American, Native American, Latinx, or another minority group, and children who are migrant or receive support from the foster care system. We will use the existing Deschutes County COVID-19 Equity Plan as a model for childhood vaccine outreach for this project.

**BUDGET IMPACTS:**

Deschutes County Health Services is asking for funding in the amount of \$419,428 to support the Central Oregon Regional Childhood Immunization Rate Quality Improvement Project. We propose to hire a Registered Nurse (RN) or Medical Assistant (MA) for three years in order to support AFIX-based IQIP programs in participating clinics throughout Central Oregon.

\$356,428 is being requested over three years to cover personnel costs.

\$63,000 is being requested over three years to cover training, (\$1000) materials and supplies, (\$60,000) and a stipend for immunization coordinators in Crook and Jefferson Counties (\$2000).

**ATTENDANCE:**

Adrea Rodriguez-Lovejoy, Communicable Disease Supervisor  
Rita Bacho, Program Manager