BOARD OF COMMISSIONERS

AGENDA REQUEST & STAFF REPORT

MEETING DATE: April 1, 2026

SUBJECT: Central Oregon Health Information Exchange Grant

RECOMMENDED MOTION:
Move to authorize applying for—and accepting, if awarded—a Central Oregon Health Information Exchange Grant.

BACKGROUND AND POLICY IMPLICATIONS:
The Central Oregon Health Information Exchange's (COHIE) mission has been to provide the framework to enable the comprehensive management of health information and its secure exchange between consumers, providers, government, quality entities and insurers. COHIE has recently partnered with the Central Oregon Health Quality Alliance (COHQA) to be a fiscal sponsor, allowing COHIE to wind down its 501-c3 entity, and to host a small grant program for 2026, in partnership with COHQA.

The COHIE 2026 grant program priorities include technical assistance, interoperability projects, data security and informatics policy development, and support for Health Information Exchange.

Deschutes County Health Services (DCHS) requests approval from the Board of County Commissioners to apply for and, if awarded, accept a $70,000 COHIE grant. DCHS intends to use the funds to support community-based Health Information Technology (HIT) initiatives aligned with COHIE's mission, including but not limited to protecting patient data, optimizing electronic medical record utilization, and relieving clinic processes reliant on fax-based workflows. Funding would be used as follows:

- $27,150 – Contractor services (Robotic Process Automation/RPA):
  Hire a contractor to use RPA to convert approximately 21,000 medical records from Profiler into pdf-ready document for migration into OCHIN EPIC. This will improve the ability to search, retrieve, and share records in a timely manner, supporting more effective coordination of care.

- $6,087 - County IT staff time:
  County IT staff time to coordinate the RPA work, including technical oversight, data handling logistics, and implementation support.

- $20,400 – Data hosting (one year):
  One year of data hosting to support secure storage and availability of records/data necessary for the project and ongoing operational needs.

- $10,000 - County IT and Medical Records staff time (AI-support tools):
  County IT and Medical Record staff time to develop medical-records related AI Assistants to help the public and providers more accurately complete medical request forms, Requests for Information (ROI), and other required documents. This will reduce incomplete submissions and shorten the turnaround time for fulfilling records requests.

- $6,363 indirect costs (10%).

BUDGET IMPACTS:
$70,000 if awarded.

ATTENDANCE:
Cheryl Smallman, Deputy Director, Health Services
Zachary Neeman, Information Security Manager