



AGENDA REQUEST & STAFF REPORT

MEETING DATE: December 13, 2023

SUBJECT: Veteran Behavioral Health Peer Support Specialist Program Grant Application

RECOMMENDED MOTION:

Move approval to apply for a Veteran Behavioral Health Peer Support Specialist Program grant from the Oregon Health Authority.

BACKGROUND AND POLICY IMPLICATIONS:

Deschutes County Health Services (DCHS) is seeking approval to apply for the Oregon Health Authority's Veteran Behavioral Health Peer Support Specialist Program. The purpose of this grant program is to expand the availability of peer-delivered services to veterans with behavioral health needs to improve their health and well-being. Peer support offers participants a unique opportunity to engage in their behavioral health recovery within the context of an affirming and empowering peer-to-peer relationship. Services are to be low-barrier, community-based, and directed by the person being served. OHA intends to award up to ten grants for this program.

The Veteran Behavioral Health Peer Support Specialist (VBHPSS) position funded by this program would be part of the Adult Outpatient team, providing outreach and engagement services to difficult to engage and high-risk veterans in the community. The position would collaborate with the Adult Outpatient Team clinicians as well as North and South County Hub clinicians, psychiatrists and case managers to wrap services around up to 20 eligible veterans per year.

Duties of the VBHPSS include the following:

- Working closely with veterans and their care teams to support each veteran client in self-identifying strengths, needs, and goals, while also addressing barriers to behavioral health recovery and wellness;
- Striving to improve the behavioral health of veterans and address social determinants of health which impact veterans and military personnel in their communities by helping to navigate, as requested by the client, the VHA, state systems, local municipal systems, or local community resources;
- Linking veterans to appropriate resources, assisting veterans in overcoming barriers to availability and accessibility of services, and supporting veterans in developing and strengthening community connections and natural supports through, but not limited to, the peer relationship; and

- Providing a suite of regularly delivered peer support services and taking part in care teams.

If awarded, DCHS would use the \$227,000 funding to support the following for a 19-month term:

- \$199,364 for personnel: a 1.0 FTE VBHPSS, a 0.15 FTE Behavioral Health Supervisor, and a VBHPSS supervisory stipend (all positions are currently filled),
- \$1,000 for Training,
- \$1,000 for Travel,
- \$5,000 for Social Determinants of Health, and
- \$20,636 for indirect

BUDGET IMPACTS:

If awarded, \$227,000 revenue for the term February 1, 2024 through August 31, 2025

ATTENDANCE:

Kristin Mozzocchi, Manger, Behavioral Health Program