



## BOARD OF COMMISSIONERS

# AGENDA REQUEST & STAFF REPORT

**MEETING DATE:** November 28, 2022

**SUBJECT:** Authorization to apply for PacificSource Behavioral Health Workforce Diversity grant

**RECOMMENDED MOTION:**

Move approval to authorize the application for a PacificSource Behavioral Health Workforce Diversity grant.

**BACKGROUND AND POLICY IMPLICATIONS:**

Pacificsource is extending one-time, non-competitive funding to a limited number of behavioral health (BH) providers and has made \$147,595.40 available to Deschutes County Health Services. The goal of this funding is to diversify the workforce so that PacificSource members have increased access to BH providers who are more reflective of the cultures and languages of PacificSource members.

Quality incentive metrics (QIMs) for Central Oregon include a required metric related to improving language access for members. This has increased demand for language services within Health Services. In addition, PacificSource members who reside in Oregon and who are Black, Indigenous, or People of Color (BIPOC), or who speak languages other than English, engage in BH services at lower rates compared to white and English-speaking members. Increasing access to a diverse workforce which reflects member race/ethnic, cultural background and language needs is an evidence-based strategy known to reduce health disparities and is a key workforce development priority for PacificSource. At this time, the largest need is for additional Latinx and Spanish-speaking BH providers.

The aim of the PacificSource BH Workforce Diversity funds are to:

- Retain culturally and linguistically diverse BH providers ;
- Decrease BH service utilization gaps for BIPOC and non-English speaking members;
- Improve member experience in BH care for BIPOC and non-English speaking members; and
- Improve diverse BH provider experience in providing services and/or working in BH settings.

If approved, DCHS intends to use the funds for staff training and to increase access to BH services for our BIPOC and non-English speaking communities. The department would hire

a temporary, 20 hour/week Language Access Liaison who would: provide translations and in-person interpreting, coordinate interpreting/translations with vendors, implement consistent processes to be compliant with HB requirements, and collaborate with the Language Access Coordinator to identify service area needs and solutions. To increase access to services, the department would contract for interpreter services and increase our contract with Promotoras de Salud to reduce barriers and increase engagement through culturally and linguistically-specific communication and outreach material for our Latinx and Spanish-speaking populations. Additionally, staff would receive training on working with interpreters and serving the BIPOC community.

The grant term begins December 2022. Reporting requirements are as follows: a virtual check-in meeting is required in March 2023, a progress report in June 2023 and a final report in October 2023.

BUDGET IMPACTS:

\$147,595.40 revenue.

ATTENDANCE:

Janice Garceau, Director, Health Services

Holly Harris, Interim Deputy Director, Health Services