SOUTHERN OREGON MEDICAL WORKFORCE CENTER (SOMWC) PROJECT
PROJECT TEAM MEETING SUMMARY

Wednesday, June 1st, 2022 Virtual Meeting

Oregon Solutions reconvened a meeting of the Project Team on June 1, 2022 after a hiatus due to the impact of the COVID-19 pandemic on project partners.

The Umpqua Valley Development Corporation (UVDC) shared an update about academic program development and business planning since the last convening. UVDC has been meeting with different potential academic partners and expects to work with multiple academic partners to begin rolling out the first phase of academic programming in 2023 or early 2024. UVDC is also exploring how to incorporate remote delivery or a hybrid model of remote and on-site education. UVDC is also exploring other funding sources in addition to the $5 million awarded by the legislature.

Kelly Morgan and Lisa Yop provided an overview of the staffing needs in hospitals regionally. Their update included:
- staffing needs have become more critical in all areas throughout hospital;
- they have continued to see challenges in recruiting talent to area; and
- they have seen more retirements due to Covid.

Project Team members discussed the project goals and the impacts of the pandemic on project plans. The original project goals of local economic development and retention of a local medical workforce continue to be important. Project team members noted that the medical workforce needs have been exacerbated and become more visible to the public during the pandemic. In addition, there is a greater need for social workers, other behavioral health professionals, and community health workers, along with nurses.

Project team members remain supportive of moving this project forward and believe utilizing the expertise around the table, as well as the existing academic resources across the state will support the success of the SOMWC.

The project team will next meet in early fall. In the meantime, Oregon Solutions staff and conveners will continue to check in individually with team members and begin to draft a work plan for the project team.