



September 27, 2013

JOHN A. KITZHABER, MD
Governor

Karen Joplin
Hood River County Commissioner
Chair, Columbia Gorge Health Council
511 Washington Street, Suite 101
The Dalles, OR 97058

Dear Chairwoman Joplin:

I am pleased to receive the request that the Community Health Teams concept be designated as an Oregon Solutions project. After reviewing the assessment conducted by Oregon Solutions staff, I feel this project supports Oregon's Sustainable Community Objectives and regional priorities. Therefore, I am designating it an Oregon Solutions project and appointing you and Frank Toda Ph.D., President of the Columbia Gorge Community College, as co-conveners. The co-conveners will lead a team of community partners to create a structure to connect and coordinate existing community health workers with each other and with primary care, social service and other resources in the Hood River and Wasco County area. As you know, another important Oregon initiative is the redesign of the Early Learning System and it is my expectation that as Early Learning Hubs are established you will connect and align with them as appropriate.

I am enthusiastic about the innovative and collaborative work the Columbia Gorge Health Council is doing. Focusing Community Health Teams on Oregon Health Plan (OHP) patients and then expanding beyond the OHP population will help achieve better health and cost outcomes. This project builds on your community strengths and will demonstrate the effectiveness and value of connecting and coordinating resources.

The Community Health Teams concept has the potential to strengthen the connection among non-profit, private and public sectors on the ground in your community. In addition, it may create a model which can be replicated in other parts of the state. Please keep the governor's office updated on this effort and thank you for your work and enthusiasm thus far.

Sincerely,

John A. Kitzhaber, M.D.
Governor

cc: Frank Toda, Ph.D.
Greg Wolf
Bev Stein

JAK:gw/lh