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For Immediate Release

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Jefferson County's CHIP Program Receives \$1,000,000 Federal Grant

Port Townsend, WA – Jefferson County's Community Health Improvement Plan (CHIP) has been awarded a \$1,000,000 federal grant to continue work with the Behavioral Health Consortium (BHC), which was created with funds from a planning grant awarded in 2019. The focus of these efforts are Opioid and Behavioral Health Treatment and Recovery. The grant, a Rural Communities Opioid Response Program Implementation (RCORP-I) grant, has been awarded by HRSA, the federal Health Resources and Services Administration. The grant period runs from September 1, 2020 through August 31, 2023.

The grant provides funding to support strategies outlined in the BHC's strategic plan. Those strategies include implementation, enhancement, and improved coordination of programming and service efforts focused on Opioid and Behavioral Health Treatment and Recovery in Jefferson County. The continuation of this project will allow the BHC to engage activities such as support of Recovery Café; extending services in south county; developing integrated case management; and promotion of already existing Community Prevention and Wellness Initiative activities throughout the county. The BHC will also continue to explore the feasibility of a crisis stabilization center located in Jefferson County.

"The BHC has identified several initiatives that take a comprehensive look at what originally began as an exploration to establish the feasibility of a crisis stabilization center," said Lori Fleming. "While that exploration is still ongoing, this grant's funding also allows us to enact several strategies to move the County's behavioral health-related interactions to ever earlier intercept points. There are multiple benefits to connecting an individual with programs or services before they are at a crisis point: prevention improves the lives and outcomes for individuals, families, and our community as a whole; and at the same time, reduces the use of costly Law Enforcement and EMS services."

The grant's work plan, developed over the past year, is a joint effort of the BHC, led by Lori Fleming and John Nowak, co-executive directors of CHIP. Representatives from ten Jefferson County Stakeholder sectors comprise the BHC. "These stakeholders came together to address Opioid Use Disorder (OUD), Substance Use Disorder (SUD), treatment, and recovery," said John Nowak, "they have created a strong foundation that will allow the BHC to build programs to assist our community in OUD/SUD issues."

The CHIP partnership is an innovative collaboration between The City of Port Townsend, Jefferson County, Jefferson Healthcare (JCH), and Jefferson County Public Health (JCPH) devoted to identifying the most pressing health priorities for Jefferson County and taking actions that will lead to improvements.

For additional information, contact CHIP Co-Directors Lori Fleming (lfleming@co.jefferson.wa.us) and John Nowak (jnowak@jeffersonhealthcare.org), or visit CHIP's website at <http://www.BeHealthyJefferson.com>.

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