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For Immediate Release

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Jefferson County's CHIP Program Receives \$2,000,000 Federal Grant

Port Townsend, WA – Jefferson County's Community Health Improvement Plan (CHIP) has been awarded a \$2,000,000 federal grant to continue work with the Behavioral Health Consortium (BHC), which was created with funds from a planning grant awarded in 2019, and a \$1,000,000 Implementation grant in 2020. The focus of these efforts are Opioid and Behavioral Health Treatment and Recovery. The grant, a Rural Communities Opioid Response Program Behavioral Health Care Support grant, has been awarded by HRSA, the federal Health Resources and Services Administration. The grant period runs from September 1, 2022 through August 31, 2026.

The grant provides funding to expand the BHC's strategic plan to include support in the two new areas: Jefferson County School Districts, and the Jefferson County EMS Council. Strategies funded include assessment, implementation, enhancement, and improved coordination of school behavioral health services for four school districts to support individuals and their families and/or caregivers at risk, diagnosed, in treatment and/or recovery of Substance Use Disorder (SUD) or Any Medical Illness (AMI); and support to the EMS Council to affect improved approach and coherence for BHC's data collection, insight generation and action across the EMS Council and BHC Members

This extension of the BHC's work will allow the BHC to better address the concerns outlined in the Surgeon General's Advisory on Youth Mental Health that are prevalent in our county.

"The BHC has identified key areas of expansion to assure we are giving our county's youth and their families critical support in each child's formative years, and to efficiently gauge, assess and act on collective data insights of all our first responders" said Lori Fleming. "This grant's funding also allows us to enact 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 through the BHC and led by Lori Fleming, Executive Director of CHIP. Representatives from 12 Jefferson County Stakeholder sectors comprise the BHC. "These stakeholders came together to address Opioid Use Disorder (OUD), Substance Use Disorder (SUD), prevention, treatment, and recovery," said Lori Fleming, "they have built a strong foundation that allows the BHC to continue building programs to assist our community in OUD/SUD issues."

The CHIP partnership is an innovative collaboration between 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 Director Lori Fleming (lfleming@co.jefferson.wa.us), or visit CHIP's website at <http://www.BeHealthyJefferson.com>.

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