



Newport Hospital and Health Services

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### **Hospital and School District Collaboration Results in Grant**

NEWPORT, WA – Newport School District was recently awarded a \$31,600 grant to enact a School Population Health Program. The program is made possible in part by a grant from the Group Health Foundation and allows the Newport School District and Newport Hospital and Health Services (NHHS) to share a nurse who will complement the services being provided on both campuses. On the hospital campus, the nurse will work within the primary care clinic, serving as population health nurse for adults. In the school setting, the nurse will focus on three key areas for student population health improvement. The program goals under this unique collaboration are to positively affect health measures for rural children in the following areas:

- Increase immunization compliance, including human papillomavirus (HPV) education
- Reduce absenteeism in students with asthma, diabetes, and other chronic health conditions
- Improve health education and health literacy (e.g. tobacco cessation, obesity prevention, diabetes management, wellness events)

To address these issues, the Student Population Health Program will forge a stronger relationship between the Newport school's health programs and the primary care services delivered by NHHS. This Chronic Care Model, derived from the Improving Chronic Illness Care



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Initiative in 2003, will leverage linkages between community resources and patient-centered primary care. Tom Wilbur, NHHS CEO, said, “One of NHHS’s goals is to make sure we can narrow the treatment gaps that can arise and ensure care is delivered in a timely manner, before a chronic condition such as diabetes or asthma becomes acute.”

The program will also rely on collaborations with the Pend Oreille Health Coalition (POHC). This grassroots community coalition is working to improve health outcomes and quality of life for the residents of Pend Oreille County through a partnership between Newport School District, NHHS, Northeast Tri County Health District, Kalispel Tribe of Indians, Pend Oreille County Counseling Services, Rural Resources and a wide variety of local stakeholders including city and county government, social service organizations, law enforcement, business owners and local media. Continued collaboration with the POHC will help Newport School District solidify and further leverage funding opportunities to sustain the Student Population Health Program.

The Student Population Health Program will bring a specific focus on child and adolescent health to the Pend Oreille Health Coalition’s efforts, using the school setting as a venue for delivering services to children and their families and linking those services to other local resources including the NHHS Patient Centered Medical Home (PCMH). It should even afford an opportunity for children to directly impact the health of their families. The new student population health nurse will be hired Summer 2016 and begin work immediately with



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both entities. The goal is to create a sustainable program that can be easily duplicated in other rural communities.

Dr. David Smith, Newport School District Superintendent, added, “With limited state funding provided to employ sufficient nursing staff, the successful implementation of this grant will model for other districts how the coordination of services will not only improve the overall health of our student population, but also provide the school district nurses (through additional support) the much needed time to address the immediate health emergencies that arise during any given school day. It will also provide all district staff with critical training, enabling them to respond to student medical emergencies.”

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