



**Public Health**  
Prevent. Promote. Protect.  
*Lincoln County*



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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

**New Regional HIV Prevention Grant**  
*Regional Partners Come Together to End HIV Infection*

NEWPORT, Ore. – Since HIV was first identified in 1984, the public health and medical communities have made great strides in advancing effective prevention and treatment strategies. Despite this, we continue to see new infections every year including a consistent upward trend in newly identified HIV and other sexually transmitted infections (STIs) in our region. The Oregon Health Authority is launching new initiatives to end HIV infections around the state, and our region is taking part.

Linn, Benton, and Lincoln Counties and the Confederated Tribes of Siletz Indians are partnering on a five-year grant to expand comprehensive HIV prevention strategies throughout the region. Through this grant, the regional partners will hire Harm Reduction Outreach Workers who will use a person-centered approach to reach out to individuals in our community who are at high risk for HIV infection. They will offer rapid HIV testing and prevention resources in the field, educate individuals about HIV transmission and effective prevention methods, and refer persons with diagnosed STIs and HIV to treatment and other health care services.

A key component of the project is educating the community about HIV/STIs and the importance of testing and prevention. Across the state, six out of ten Oregonians do not know their HIV status. This is of particular concern because an individual can become infected with HIV and in turn infect others for years without noticing symptoms. In addition to providing testing through the project's Harm Reduction Workers, this project will help strengthen partnerships between local public health agencies and healthcare providers across the region to improve comprehensive HIV/STI education, testing, and treatment services.

The project will also work with medical providers to expand the use of new prevention measures. Pre-Exposure Prophylaxis, PrEP, is an example of a medication that can be prescribed by a medical provider and is effective in preventing HIV infection among those at high risk. This

medication coupled with other strategies like using condoms during sexual activity and not engaging in needle sharing are part of a comprehensive prevention strategy to reduce the risk of HIV infection and get our region closer to ending all HIV infections.

To find out more about the program, contact our Regional Coordinator, Erin Parrish, [eparrish@co.lincoln.or.us](mailto:eparrish@co.lincoln.or.us). For more information on Oregon's statewide initiative to end HIV infection, visit [www.endhivoregon.org](http://www.endhivoregon.org).

*Lincoln County Public Health, in collaboration with our community partners, provides leadership to assure the conditions for healthy communities.*

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