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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

Lincoln County Health and Human Services makes organizational changes to enhance healthcare integration

NEWPORT, OR - Lincoln County Health & Human Services (LCHHS) today announced a series of changes to its organization and executive leadership designed to modernize its healthcare delivery system. Modern health care is patient centered, integrated between primary care and behavioral health and has strong community partnerships. LCHHS will implement a co-leadership model.

Commissioner Doug Hunt said today “We continue to modernize and improve the health services for the County. I am confident this reorganization will better enable the County to deliver superior health care services, reduce administrative costs thereby freeing additional funds to support vital services. This will further allow us to collaborate with community partners to assure we are providing the most needed health services for all.”

Rebecca Austen, who has been serving as the Interim HHS Director since January, will be the Health Department Director. She will oversee the Public Health, Developmental Disabilities and Administration sections of LCHHS. Rebecca McBee-Wilson, who has been with Lincoln County since July 2010 will be the Health Center Director. She will oversee Primary Care, Behavioral Health and Quality Management in her continuing role as the executive director of the Federally Qualified Health Center. Commissioner Doug Hunt will continue to serve as the liaison to the Board of Commissioners and will directly supervise Rebecca McBee-Wilson and Rebecca Austen.

“The types and number of programs under Health and Human Services has grown substantially and become more complex over the years. I believe the new co-leadership model will provide many great opportunities for teamwork and collaboration, positively impacting the services provided to the community” noted Rebecca McBee-Wilson.

The realignment of the department also includes some adjustments in duties for staff, including the development of Deputy Director positions to better align programs and foster integration and collaboration.

Additional staff changes implemented include:

- **Carolyn Fry** has been named Deputy Director of Behavioral Health. Carolyn recently served as the Developmental Disabilities Program Manager.
- **Tami Ewing** started June 25th as the Accounting Manager.

In the coming months LCHHS will continue to build a leadership team to support this new model and work on integration of services and staff. A Behavioral Health Consultant was recently hired who will be working with Primary Care providers to address counseling needs in the clinic. Health Education Specialists will be spread out among many services and into the community to foster better collaboration with partners.

Dawn Spielman, President of the Lincoln Community Health Council said “The Lincoln Community Health Council, in partnership with the Lincoln County Board of Commissioners, is excited to announce this new management structure for Health & Human Services and our Federally Qualified Health Center. We believe this change will better serve our community’s healthcare needs for both behavioral health and primary care services.”

Rebecca Austen, Health Department Director states “This is an exciting time for HHS, we feel this new model will allow for a more collaborative spirit between our person centered and population centered health services for everyone in Lincoln County. We are excited to embrace a new day for HHS and work more closely with our community partners to realize our goals of providing the best health care services, improving the health of our community while containing the costs”.

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