2026 Oregon Rural Health Conference Presentation Slides

Bridging Health and Social Care: Promising Practices from Oregon's Rural Communities

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ORPRN

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Northeast Oregon Network

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Crossroads Communities

OHSU

ORPRN
Oregon Rural Practice-based Research Network
www.OHSU.edu/orprn

NEON
Northeast Oregon Network

Crossroads Communities





Agenda

- Overview of topic
- Presenters each share about their work
- Facilitated panel discussion
- Audience Q & A

Oregon Rural Practice-based Research Network (ORPRN)

We are a statewide network founded at OHSU in 2002.

Mission: To improve health for all Oregonians through community partnered research, education and health system transformation.

ORPRN's Impact Reports are available at: https://www.ohsu.edu/orprn

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Project ECHO®
Oregon ECHO Network

REACH & IMPACT

Since 2019, we've worked with:

- Over **400** primary care clinics
- **All** of Oregon's Coordinated Care Organizations (CCOs)
- Over **5,200** unique learners in education programs
- Nearly **70,000** individual patients
- Partners and professionals in all **36** Oregon Counties

Research

- **Clinical quality improvement** in chronic disease prevention and management
- **Community-based research**, pragmatic trials, implementation studies
- Dissemination of **evidence-based practices** to rural areas

Education

- Provide **innovative, and effective educational programming** to Improve knowledge confidence and skills of the Oregon workforce
- **Tele-mentoring** learning framework for rural and under-resourced areas
- Statewide utility for the **Project ECHO** model

Health Systems Transformation

- Support OHA, CCOs and CBOs to **navigate complex policies and systems**
- Help partners make **systems changes** that single organizations can't do alone
- **Connect the dots** across siloes



ORPRN Health and Social Care Work

- Social needs screening in clinics
  - *Work with Clinics on: Developing new workflows; choosing screeners, etc.*
- Medicaid spending flexibilities
  - *Work with OHA and CCOs on: Health Related Services, Flexible Services, Community Benefit, In Lieu of Services*
- Social needs screening and referral quality metric
  - *Support statewide implementation of CCO incentive metric*
- HRSN Benefit Implementation
  - *Work with CCOs to develop robust local networks*

Vision: People have easy access to health care and social services in their communities when they need it





Image generated with the use of AI

- Community care hubs?
- Social care networks?
- Community health workers?
- Care coordination?
- Other?



Lessons Learned from Community Partner Survey

- Rural social and health partners are already **highly networked with one another**, but not necessarily with health care partners
- HRSN benefit implementation increased the **use of technology for referrals and capacity for Medicaid billing**
- Workers **embedded in community settings are crucial to success** (e.g., community health workers, peer support specialists and personal health navigators)
- There are many ways to build seamless health and social care systems

Today's Speakers

Liberty Avila,
Executive Director

Northeast Oregon Network (NEON)

La Grande, Oregon





Michael Couch,
Executive Director

Crossroads Communities

Lebanon, Oregon





Thank you.

Northeast Oregon Network (NEON)

Liberty Avila, MS, CHW
Executive Director

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About NEON

- 501(c)3 health-focused nonprofit
- Launched in 2004 from small group of individuals who recognized the value of community collaboration in supporting the health of our communities to fill gaps between health and social service systems
- Serves Baker, Malheur, Umatilla, Union, and Wallowa Counties in Eastern Oregon with direct services and fiscal sponsorship
- Supports individuals and organizations with training and consulting statewide

Our **vision** is that all people in rural communities are healthy, happy and thriving.

Our **mission** is to support individuals, communities, and systems to collectively promote equity, health, and wellbeing at home and beyond.

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What is a Community Health Worker?

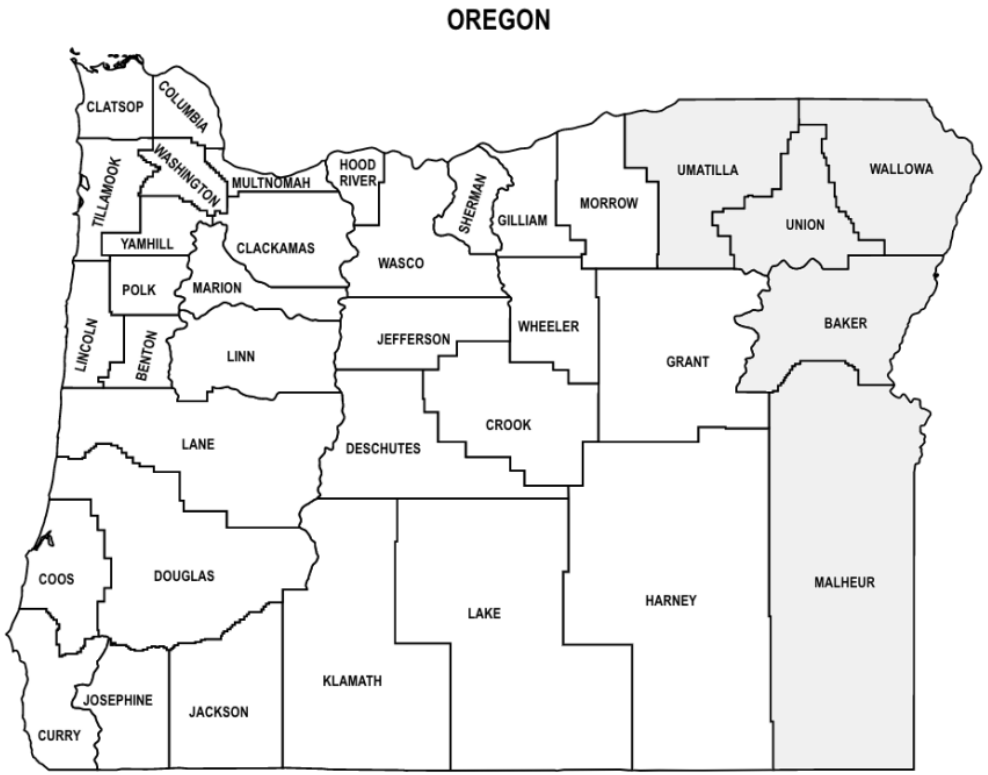
A Community Health Worker (CHW) is a frontline public health worker who is a trusted member of and/or has a close understanding of the community served.

This trusting relationship enables the worker to serve as a liaison/link/intermediary between health/social services and the community to facilitate access to services and improve the quality and cultural competence of service delivery. (APHA.org).



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NEON Direct Service and CHW Programs



- Healthcare Interpretation (Union County)
- Community Health / Family Support & Connections (Union, Baker, and Wallowa counties)
- Health Insurance Outreach, Enrollment and Access (5 Counties)
- Health Related Social Needs benefits

Focusing Together On Health

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Support for Organizations

NEON Umbrella Program: A fiscal sponsor handles administrative and fiscal tasks so small community projects don't have to. It also allows them to seek tax-deductible donations and grants, provides liability insurance, and gives the ability for projects to enter into contracts, such as leases.





NEON Consulting Program: NEON's expert staff specialize in providing training programs, health systems planning, and grants management for organizations and agencies throughout the region, with a focus on working with rural and socioeconomically disadvantaged populations.

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NEON Training Program

The NEON training program offers Community Health Worker (CHW) Certification and Continuing Education for CHWs and other professionals working in the front lines of community-based work. Trainings are offered virtually and occasionally in person. All trainings use a popular education method of facilitation which includes role plays, activities, group discussion in large groups and small, and case studies.

NEON Training Offerings

- Community Health Worker Certification
- Home Visiting
- Essential skills of supervision
- Motivational interviewing
- Palliative Care pilot (4-week series)
- Ethics and Boundaries
- The Art of Regulation: Techniques for Supporting Client Emotional Well-Being
- Suicide Prevention and Risk Training

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Health Related Social Needs (HRSN) at NEON

- Contracted as a Medicaid Provider with Eastern Oregon Coordinated Care Organization (EOCCO) since the beginning of the benefit
- Focused on Outreach and Engagement and Housing Benefits due to capacity, though we also navigate individuals to other benefit components such as nutrition
- Currently one CHW does all outreach and engagement and tenancy support, with connections and support from other members of the team.
- Partnered with another, smaller organization, Youth 360, to provide rent payments while they provide outreach and engagement and tenancy support under their own contract with EOCCO.
- Uses Pear Suite Case Management System to track time spent on a claims basis and progress toward goals .

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Health Related Social Needs (HRSN) Numbers

- Over $800,000 in rent and utilities payments provided to date
- 225 Households receiving benefits
- $659,392 in CCBF funds received

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Thank you!

Liberty Avila, Executive Director

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Learn More About Our Upcoming Trainings!

trainings.neonoregon.org

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WHAT DOES CROSSROADS COMMUNITIES DO?

Crossroads Communities

WE HELP GET PEOPLE HOUSED

- We work with coordinated entry systems to identify those who need housing.
- We serve as advocates and advisors for landlords and developers who are looking to build housing or offer property to rent affordably.
- We provide guidance to cities and counties seeking to address their housing problems.



WE SERVE LINN COUNTY AS ITS REGIONAL SHELTER SERVICE PROVIDER(SSP) COORDINATOR



- We ensure shelters are funded via dollars provided by Oregon Housing and Community Services.
- We provide logistical and operational support to partners providing shelter, outreach, and housing supports in Linn County
- We work closely with providers to ensure Homeless Management Information System (HMIS) is used.

48 UNITS OF AFFORDABLE HOUSING THAT WOULD NOT EXIST IF NOT FOR COLLABORATION BETWEEN CROSSROADS COMMUNITIES, THE CITY OF LEBANON, AND APPLEGATE HOMES, AN AFFORDABLE HOUSING PROPERTY DEVELOPER.



Applegate Terrace, West Salem



48 units of affordable housing serving as a sister site to Applegate Landing, brought to Polk County by the continued partnership between Crossroads Communities and Applegate Homes, an affordable housing Property Developer.

CRC PROVIDES ON SITE COORDINATED CARE FOR THE HOUSEHOLDS OCCUPYING THE COMBINED 96 UNITS AT APPLEGATE LANDING AND APPLEGATE TERRACE.



Cascade Cottages



21-unit market rate apartments purchased and renovated to create affordable housing focused on serving residents with Severe & Persistent Mental Illness (SPMI), low-income seniors, and low-to-moderate income working households including single parents.

Crossroads Connections



A 10-bedroom transitional housing facility for individuals recovering from substance use disorder, treatment for severe and persistent mental illness, & homeless individuals stuck in the Emergency Department of the Lebanon Hospital



THE CORNERSTONE COMMUNITY CENTER

CRC'S NEWEST ACQUISITION (AUG 2026).

THE FAITH LUTHERAN CHURCH IN ALBANY WAS GIFTED TO CRC AND IS BEING TRANSITIONED INTO A HOUSING FACILITY FOR YOUNG FAMILIES. THE "C3" WILL INCLUDE APARTMENTS AND SOCIAL SERVICES WITH FAMILY SUPPORT AT A SINGLE SITE

WE HELP COORDINATE, CASE MANAGE, AND HOST SERVICES.



One of the largest barriers to obtaining service for low-income families is transportation.



Crossroads Communities reduces that barrier by providing locations for program partners to offer services.



Crossroads Communities is in the process of funding the creation of the Lebanon Community Services Center (LCSC) to co-locate service providers.





FOOD AND NUTRITIONAL SUPPORT PROGRAMS INCLUDE FOOD BOXES & FRESH MEALS FOR THOSE IN NEED





ON-SITE PHYSICAL AND MENTAL HEALTH SPACES FOR PARTNERING SERVICE PROVIDERS

L.A.S.A.R. & B.A.S.I.C

Coordinating the staff and service of over 30 program partners, Crossroads Communities leads the Linn Area Service, Advocacy, and Resource (LASAR) Partnership and Benton Area Service Intervention & Coordination (BASIC) Partnership, two coalitions of nonprofits, faith-based organizations, school districts, community members, and city/county agencies in two separate counties the mid-valley.

These groups meets monthly to discuss the needs of the communities served and address the specific concerns of households who are in crisis, including collaborative activities to provide stabilization assistance and, if needed, money to address those needs.



FEDERALLY ADA COMPLIANT TRANSPORTATION SERVICE FOR VULNERABLE RURAL POPULATIONS

- CRC provides transportation at no cost in Marion, and Polk County as well as program-aligned transportation in Linn and Benton Counties. We are hiring more drivers and looking to grow our fleet of vans.
- Not just medical transportation– this program helps low to moderate income families with their activities of daily life: parent/teacher conferences, veterinary appointments (yes, we're pet friendly), peer support meetings, and even grocery shopping trips!





PARTNERING WITH SLEEP TRAILER LLC TO OFFER MOBILE PROGRAM-BASED SHELTER SERVICES

- Staff conduct outreach, intake, sign-ups, check-outs, coordinated entry, and housing case management for those using the Sleep Trailer pods brought to Lebanon by CRC.
- There is current talk of identifying a place to run the Sleep Trailer program-based shelter system in Albany, Corvallis, and Stayton.





WE HELP EDUCATE

- Crossroads Communities hosts a quarterly Lunch & Learn event in Lebanon to bring together program partners, community members, and local city/county staff to discuss activities in our service area and increase awareness of community needs.
- Partnering with Oregon Health Authority (OHA), CRC has conducted listening sessions on chronic illness, communicable diseases, and disaster preparedness in Linn County for.
- CRC believes strongly in youth education and advancement, positioning itself to lead a coalition of youth-focused organizations in 33 of Oregon's 36 counties (the proposed program excludes the Porland area as CRC is designed for non-urban communities).



DENTAL PROGRAM

- CRC has helped to provide services to nearly three dozen clients for over 60 procedures. This includes an ongoing free dental exam program (with x-rays) offered quarterly, which will continue past this pilot.
- More than $60,000 of services were provided off only $15,000. The amount of leveraging achieved was unanticipated and allowed for an amazing impact.
- Not counted in leveraged funds were the free exams, which were an added bonus service from CRC's program partners.
- Although this program is on hiatus in Linn and Benton due to funding reductions, free exams and x-rays are still being done monthly at CRC's Polk location.

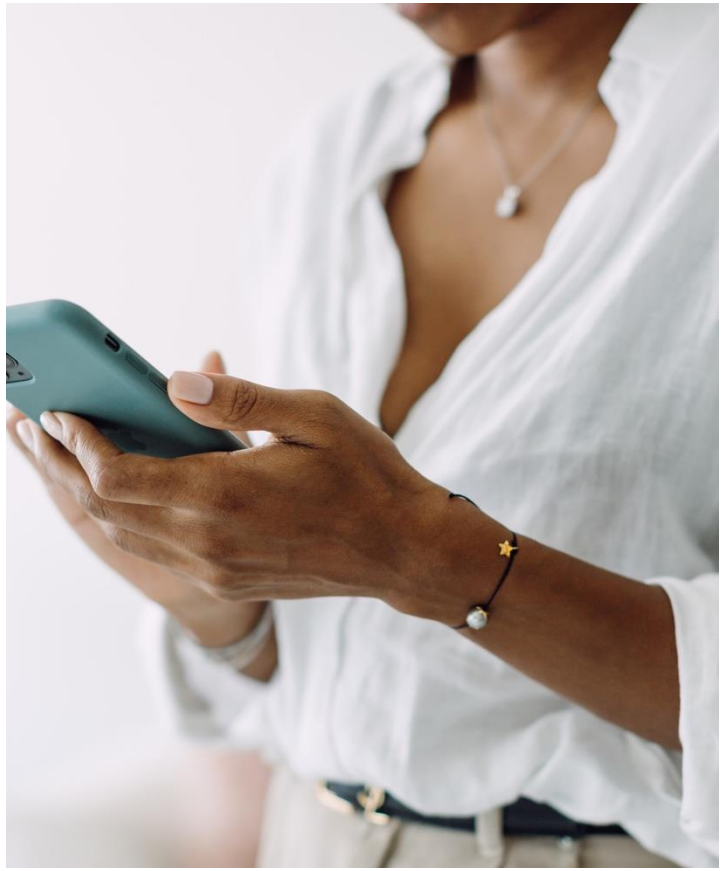


COMMUNICATION CONNECTIVITY PROGRAM

Staying in contact is imperative, and many households in Oregon have no phone service, keeping them from contact.

Crossroads Communities implemented program in September of 2024 that allowed us to help up to 50 individuals by providing a no-cost flip phone with unlimited talk and text to help them remain in contact with service providers, healthcare professionals, friends, and family.

This program is on hiatus as the trial run revealed many changes necessary, but CRC is looking forward to restarting it in the future.



WHAT DOES CROSSROADS COMMUNITIES DO?

- We **help** get people housed.
- We **help** *keep* people housed.
- We **help** coordinate.
- We **help** educate.
- We **help** transport.
- We **help** connect.
- We **help** involve the community.
- Crossroads Communities **helps**.



QUESTIONS?

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