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Health Share of Oregon and partners announce significant behavioral health investments in Portland metro area

Health Share, CareOregon, Legacy Health, OHSU and Providence are partnering to substantially expand behavioral health services in the tri-county area

PORTLAND, Ore.—Health Share, Oregon’s largest coordinated care organization (CCO) serving 460,000 Oregon Health Plan members in the tri-county region, along with four of its collaborative partners, is announcing substantial investments to expand behavioral health resources for children and adults suffering from acute mental health and substance use disorders. This announcement falls on the heels of a report released by the Oregon Health Authority last week detailing disparities between record-high behavioral health needs and the system’s capacity to deliver related services.

The investments, totaling \$27.9 million, will add drop-off withdrawal management services at Unity Center for Behavioral Health and will create new outpatient bridge clinic services at both Unity Center and Randall Children’s Pediatric Care Clinic. Other projects funded include a feasibility study exploring the construction of a new 48-bed inpatient behavioral health unit at Providence Portland and a behavioral health capacity modeling initiative with Oregon Health & Science University.

“Health Share and our collaborative partners are committed to making meaningful and actionable investments in the Portland area to address behavioral health,” said Mindy Stadlander, CEO for Health Share. “These four investments build on the work we’ve been doing with Providence’s Center for Outcomes Research and Education (CORE), which has given us a much better understanding of the scope and nature of our mental health and substance use crises and allowed us to prioritize our investments based on where we can make the greatest impact. I’m proud of the commitment that Health Share and our partners have made to closing gaps to better care for people in crisis.”

Central City Concern, a founding member of the Health Share collaborative and one of the region’s largest behavioral health service providers, has seen firsthand the effects of limited behavioral health capacity and soaring community needs.

“Providing expanded mental health services, and substance use treatment including withdrawal support, is absolutely critical for the Portland region,” said Andy Mendenhall, CEO for Central City Concern. “We need additional capacity across the continuum of care to address our ongoing acuity crisis. I applaud this

commitment from some of the region's top health care organizations to take action in such a significant way. I'm proud that Central City Concern can be part of the evolution of this work, and optimistic about the positive change this will create for many of the most vulnerable people living in our community."

Health Share and CareOregon made the following investments:

- **\$7.5 million in capital construction costs to fund the addition of withdrawal management services at Unity Center:** This nine-bed expansion will allow Unity Center to serve those suffering from acute intoxication and provide drop-off access to emergency responders and police. These new services will be available 24/7 and will also include emergency mental health stabilization, peer support and recovery-focused care coordination and referrals among others. Construction is underway, with an expected completion date of late summer 2024. Visit [Unity Center for Behavioral Health](#) to learn more about this upcoming service.
- **\$19.2 million for new behavioral health outpatient bridge clinic services at Unity Center and Randall Children's Pediatric Care Clinic:** The bridge clinics will help close a mental health resource gap by providing outpatient care that patients can access immediately upon discharge from the hospital until a community behavioral health provider is identified for long-term care. Behavioral health services offered will include medication management, access to pharmacy services at Unity Center, individual and group therapy, and more.
- **\$650,000 for a feasibility study exploring the construction of a new 48-bed inpatient behavioral health unit at Providence Portland Medical Center:** The study will examine the possibility of replacing Providence's existing unit, which is housed in a 74-year-old facility, with a new, larger behavioral health unit on the Providence Portland campus. Over the next six months, Providence Portland will look at what it would take to create this new 48-bed unit, which would add 20 inpatient beds and allow for 700 additional admissions each year. Providence Portland will engage its behavioral health caregivers, patient advocates and community partners to explore options.
- **\$500,000 for a two-year capacity modeling project with Oregon Health & Science University (OHSU):** The Portland Tri-County Area Mental Health Crisis Investment Decision Support Simulation Model will help city and county leaders make decisions about how to build a better system by exploring the system-wide, short and long-term impacts of funding for acute behavioral health services. Local service providers and hospital leaders will be able to use the model to explore how expanding capacity in one area impacts their ability to provide the right care to the right patient at the right time, thereby improving patient outcomes and experiences.

About Health Share of Oregon

Health Share of Oregon is the state's largest Medicaid coordinated care organization (CCO), serving Oregon Health Plan members in Clackamas, Multnomah and Washington counties. Our mission is to partner with communities to achieve ongoing transformation, health equity, and the best possible health for each individual. Health Share was founded and continues to be governed by 11 health care organizations serving OHP members: Adventist Health, CareOregon, Central City Concern, Clackamas County, Kaiser Permanente, Legacy Health, Multnomah County, Oregon Health & Science University, Providence Health & Services, Tuality Health Alliance, and Washington County.

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