



Office of the Director

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February 20, 2015

The Honorable Senator Richard Devlin, Co-Chair  
The Honorable Representative Peter Buckley, Co-Chair  
Joint Committee on Ways and Means  
900 Court Street NE  
H-178 State Capitol  
Salem, OR 97301-4048

Re: Request to Apply Letter – Competitive Grant – HRSA-15-052: Grants to States to Support Oral Health Workforce Activities (OHA-PH-15-02)

Dear Co-Chairpersons:

### **Nature of the Request**

The Oregon Health Authority (OHA), Public Health Division requests permission to apply for a federal grant from the Health Resources and Services Administration (HRSA), Bureau of Health Workforce - Division of Medicine and Dentistry. The grant is for up to \$500,000 per year for 3 years, beginning September 1, 2015 through August 31, 2018, for a total of up to \$1,500,000.

The request for proposals was received on January 7, 2015, and the application is due on March 16, 2015. This grant funding requires 40 percent state matching funds or in-kind services. The matching requirement will be fulfilled with in-kind contributions from the Oregon Institute of Technology (OIT) Dental Hygiene Department and trainee supervisors from community-based clinics overseeing senior dental students. There is no federal requirement for maintenance of effort.

The intent of the grant is to develop and implement workforce programs designed to support innovative oral health service delivery models that will increase access to high quality oral health services for underserved populations located in Dental Health Professional Shortage Areas (HPSAs) or in other areas specifically designated as underserved.

## **Agency Action**

The Public Health Division's Oral Health Program piloted a voluntary certification program and curriculum for school-based dental sealant programs as part of a previous HRSA workforce grant. Local organizations can be certified after receiving training and signing a Memorandum of Agreement (MOA) with the state, assuring a minimum set of standards will be met while hygienists deliver dental sealant services in a school setting. This grant will enable the Program to expand these efforts by increasing access to school-based dental sealant programs located in rural and underserved areas that are certified. In collaboration with the Oregon Institute of Technology Dental Hygiene Department, the Program will help establish a comprehensive certified dental health program in Klamath Falls.

The Oral Health Program will partner with the Oregon Health & Science University (OHSU) Department of Community Dentistry to strengthen collaboration between senior dental students and dental hygienists through the Oregon statewide school-based dental sealant program. Grant funding will also be provided to OHSU to establish a sustainable community-based dental education program where senior dental students are placed throughout the year in rural community-based clinics. The OHSU Rural Health Campus in Klamath Falls will pilot expanding coordinated care to disadvantaged populations and test the feasibility of using teledentistry technology in a rural community.

At the conclusion of this grant, people living in rural and underserved areas will have improved access to preventive and restorative oral health care. This grant aligns with existing projects and builds stronger partnerships with dental training institutions. Senior dental students and dental hygienists will gain the necessary skills and cultural competence to address the oral health situation of disadvantaged populations in rural communities. Interprofessional collaboration will also be strengthened between senior dental students, dental hygienists, and medical and nursing students.

Three total positions will be requested for this grant. Two of the positions will be new for this grant: 1.0 FTE Project Manager (Operations and Policy Analyst 2) to manage all the grant activities; and 0.5 FTE Data/Evaluation Specialist (Research Analyst 3) to oversee the data and evaluation requirements. These positions will be limited duration. The third grant position will be filled by transitioning work of an existing permanent employee: 0.35 FTE Administrative Specialist (Administrative Specialist 1) to provide administrative support for the grant activities. The Administrative Specialist position will be split 0.65 FTE supporting the school-based dental sealant program and 0.35 FTE for this grant.

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There is no expectation that the state will continue to fund these activities or positions at the end of the grant period.

The OHA mission is to help people and communities achieve optimum physical, mental and social well-being through partnerships, prevention and access to quality, affordable health care. This grant directly supports the Public Health Division's State Health Improvement Plan and Strategic objective of improved oral health for Oregonians and aligns with the workforce development activities from the *Strategic Plan for Oral Health in Oregon: 2014-2020*.

### **Action Requested**

The Oregon Health Authority (OHA), Public Health Division requests authority to accept the federal grant from HRSA if the state's application is successful.

### **Legislation Affected**

None.

### **Additional Information**

For additional information from OHA, please contact Cate Wilcox at [cate.s.wilcox@state.or.us](mailto:cate.s.wilcox@state.or.us) or at 971-673-0299.

Sincerely,



Bill Coulombe  
Budget Director  
Oregon Health Authority

CC: Ken Rocco, Legislative Fiscal Office  
George Naughton, Chief Financial Office  
Linda Ames, Legislative Fiscal Office  
Kate Nass, Chief Financial Office  
Art Ayre, Chief Financial Office