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Innovations Fund Awards Announced to test new ideas for improved services to seniors, people with disabilities

Oregon—long a national leader in services and supports for older adults and people with disabilities – has taken its next steps to improve these services and supports. The Department of Human Services (DHS) recently awarded nine grants to Oregon organizations to test new ideas for improved services through innovative projects and pilots.

These awards are supported by DHS' Aging and People with Disabilities Innovations Fund, which was approved by the Oregon Legislature in 2013. The large-scale grants include:

- Special Advocates for Vulnerable Oregonians, which will pilot a program of volunteers to monitor guardianships of vulnerable adults. \$242,846.
- Volunteers of America Oregon, which will pilot day services for individuals with advanced dementia. \$350,000.
- Multnomah County Aging and Disability Services, which will pilot services to vulnerable, hard to reach consumers with very high medical and social service needs. \$350,000.

The small-scale grants include:

- Rogue Valley Council of Governments, which will pilot a certification program for housing accessible to older adults and people with disabilities. \$50,000.
- Clackamas County Social Services, which will pilot a Ride Sharing application to serve transportation needs. \$49,960.
- Oregon Cascades West Council of Governments, which will pilot services aimed at preventing unnecessary hospitalizations and emergency department use. \$50,000.
- City of Sandy, which will pilot dental and oral health services to older adults and people with disabilities without dental insurance. \$50,000.

- Community Action Team, which will pilot a volunteer program for home repairs and accessibility upgrades for consumers. \$50,000.
- Oral Health Coalition, which will pilot a program of oral health training for long term service and supports providers. \$50,000.

As the testing begins, the Department will review progress reports for these pilots and projects on a quarterly basis. If a project or pilot is successful, it may be considered for further expansion.

The Innovations Fund supports projects and pilots that test ideas to improve quality and/or cost effectiveness of services for older adults and people with disabilities. A consumer Innovations Fund Board evaluated many proposals before awarding nine grants – three on a large scale and six on a smaller scale.

The Innovations Fund will be seeking another round of applications for projects and pilots, and the notice for Request for Grant Proposals will be posted the Oregon Procurement Information Network (ORPIN) at <http://orpin.oregon.gov/open.dll/welcome>.

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