



**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**  
GREATER OREGON BEHAVIORAL HEALTH, INC.

**July, 2018**

**Vegetable prescription service expands in 'frontier' Oregon**

*GOBHI begins managing Frontier Veggie Rx in Gilliam, Harney, Sherman counties*

A fruit and vegetable prescription program is sprouting up in rural Oregon.

Since July 1, Greater Oregon Behavioral Health, Inc. (GOBHI) has begun managing Frontier Veggie Rx in three counties.

GOBHI supported the program's launch in Gilliam and Harney counties, and its continuation in Sherman County, where Gorge Grown Food Network previously operated the service.

The voucher program combats food insecurity in rural areas by connecting eligible low-income individuals and their families with prescriptions to buy fresh, healthy produce.

Local Community Advisory Councils (LCACs) affiliated with Eastern Oregon Coordinated Care Organization (EOCCO) identified the need for Frontier Veggie Rx. The LCACs provided funding for prescriptions and partnered with GOBHI as a contracted administrator to implement the program.

LCACs are a group of volunteers in each EOCCO county. The councils advise on improving services and programs through the CCO and its providers. They also organize activities that engage EOCCO members in addressing health issues.

Caitlin Blagg, Sherman County Health District Administrator, said, "Veggie Rx has been very successful in our community and has helped bridge a gap in access to fresh fruits and vegetables. The local markets, both in Moro and Wasco, have been incredible partners in making sure fresh fruit and vegetables were available to patrons coming into the stores."

Through Frontier Veggie Rx, individuals meet with their provider to discuss household eating and food shopping habits. If eligible, people may receive prescriptions to buy healthy fruits and vegetables at participating stores or farmers' markets.

Teddy Fennern, Gilliam County Family Services Coordinator, explained that the LCAC heard about the service's success in neighboring Sherman County and decided to pursue the program.

"We wanted to do something to help the food insecure in our county and felt that this would be a great program to try out in Gilliam County," Fennern said. "Overall, we hope to help in making families feel more secure and we also hope that people will become healthier overall by eating nutritious foods."

Jennifer Bold, Condon Child Care Executive Director, said, "I am eager to launch programs that improve the quality of life for frontier families."

"I'm ready to get started and look forward to seeing how this can work hand in hand with the enhanced food card for summer, as well as the take home bags for weekend meals," Bold said, referring to how Frontier Veggie Rx will supplement existing programs.

**Participating retailers:**

Gilliam County: Thrifty Food Center, Arlington. Two Boys' Meat and Grocery Farmers' Market, Condon.

Harney County: Grocery Outlet, Hines.

Sherman County: Huskey's 97 Market, Mobile/Farmers' Market; Moro. Grass Valley Country Market, Grass Valley. Wasco Market, Mobile Market; Wasco.

For questions about whether certain food items are approved or not, please speak with your cashier or call GOBHI at 541-298-2101.

**About GOBHI**

Greater Oregon Behavioral Health, Inc., headquartered in The Dalles, is a 501(c)(3) nonprofit corporation that is a National Committee for Quality Assurance accredited Managed Behavioral Healthcare Organization and is charged with administering all or part of the behavioral health Medicaid benefit in 17 rural and frontier counties in Oregon. GOBHI is a co-owner of the Eastern Oregon Coordinated Care Organization, and is responsible for the administration and oversight of behavioral health services for Columbia Pacific CCO.

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