

# Early Learning Hub of Linn, Benton & Lincoln Counties Health Care Integration Work Group Meeting Minutes

<b>MEETING COMMENCED</b>	9:30 am, December 9, 2025 Online Via Zoom
<b>MEETING CALLED BY</b>	Deanna Barclay
<b>PRESENTERS</b>	Beck Low, Reproductive Health Program Coordinator at Benton County Health Services
<b>WORKGROUP MEMBERS PRESENT</b>	Andrea Bartell, Amy Bliege, Monica Boylan, Karol Elizondo, Kat Lavigne, Nilly Livesay, Misha Mayers, Kristty Polanco, Paul Smith, Candace Tawiah, Sara Yaeggy
<b>STAFF MEMBERS PRESENT</b>	Connie Adams, Matt Grams, Antonia Huerta, Jinguang Lin, Sam Rounsavell, Carmen Santacruz, Leanne Trask
<b>RECORDED</b>	Yes

## Agenda Topics

<b>Discussion Item</b>	Welcome and Introductions
Workgroup members introduced themselves.	

<b>Special Presentation</b>	Beck Low, Benton County Reproductive Health
<p>Beck Lowe, Reproductive Health Care (RHC) Program Coordinator with Benton County Health Services, provided an overview of the RHC program and a recap of last year's Program Element 46 (PE46) activities. She reviewed how RHC clinics are funded through Title X, CCARE, and REA, and how certification ensures standardized, client-centered reproductive health services. Lowe summarized eligibility requirements, recent program updates related to privacy and immigration concerns, and the data reporting process required by OHA.</p> <p>She presented findings from the 2023–24 community needs assessment, which gathered 272 survey responses across Benton and Linn counties. Key gaps identified included:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• limited awareness of sterilization, pregnancy options counseling, and emergency contraception;</li> <li>• reduced knowledge and higher privacy concerns among Spanish-speaking and multilingual respondents;</li> <li>• challenges with language access; long wait times for appointments;</li> <li>• and the need to improve screening rates.</li> </ul> <p>Based on these findings, the department is prioritizing the development of a Reproductive Health Community Coalition to strengthen partnerships, improve communication, and identify project-based solutions such as a community resource guide. Beck outlined coalition expectations, including monthly meetings, shared agreements, and the creation of a Teams channel to organize materials as the coalition continues its first-year development phase. Email <a href="mailto:RHprogram@bentoncountyor.gov">RHprogram@bentoncountyor.gov</a> for a meeting invite and any questions.</p>	

**Discussion Item**

Partner Updates

**Linn County Health Department**

Monica reported that all programs continue to accept referrals and operations are steady. The team is collaborating closely with the immunization department to host pop-up clinics in preparation for school exclusion day in February. Staffing has been challenging due to multiple team members being on maternity leave at the same time. Monica also noted ongoing work with the hospital to strengthen the standing referral process for Family Connects. After years of effort on the MOU, progress is finally moving forward, and she is optimistic.

**Benton County Health Department**

Karol stated there were no major updates beyond what had already been shared earlier in the meeting. She echoed Linn County's comments about the continued work on the Family Connects MOU.

**Oregon Department of Human Services (ODHS)**

Misha introduced herself and shared an update on SNAP work requirements. The Able-Bodied Adults Without Dependents (ABAWD) work program is now active statewide. Under recent federal changes (HR1), some parents who previously qualified for exemptions will now be required to meet work requirements—specifically, households with dependents ages 14 and older. She emphasized that this is a significant shift and encouraged partners to be aware when supporting families. Misha offered to provide a full SNAP presentation if this workgroup or outside partners were interested.

**Oregon Health Authority (OHA)**

Kristty introduced herself as the region's Innovator Agent and provided several updates:

- Confirmed the SNAP changes discussed by ODHS and noted that notices have begun going out to households impacted by reduced benefits or loss of eligibility.
- Shared information about ongoing national litigation related to Medicaid policy changes, including efforts to prevent restrictive federal rules that would limit services for individuals unable to disclose their immigration status.
- Flagged that approximately 2,000 people in Oregon may lose SNAP eligibility under HR1, including some refugees, asylees, trafficking survivors, and conditionally authorized non-citizens.
- Offered to return with a more detailed update on Medicaid program changes.
- Highlighted resources for partners—including OHA's behavioral health A Time for Families program. It is a weekly drop-in discussion hour for parents and family members.  
<https://www.oregon.gov/oha/hsd/bh-child-family/pages/families.aspx>

Links were shared with the workgroup in the chat –

- ABAWD <https://www.oregon.gov/odhs/food/Pages/snap-time-limits.aspx>
- Federal updates <https://www.oregon.gov/odhs/news/pages/federal-updates.aspx>

- OHA Federal updates <https://www.oregon.gov/oha/pages/federal-changes.aspx>
- For more information on SNAP, visit the SNAP Page. For non-citizen information, look at the "who is eligible" tab. <https://www.oregon.gov/odhs/food/pages/snap.aspx>

### Young Roots Oregon

Andrea provided an update on behalf of Young Roots Oregon, which serves pregnant and parenting youth ages 10–24 and their children, as well as any older partners. She shared several announcements:

- **Winter Celebration & Gift Drive:**  
Their annual winter celebration is coming up next week. The team is preparing to support 70 families. A holiday gift drive is underway, with donation drop-off sites located in Albany. This is the final week to contribute, and partners are encouraged to share the information with their networks.
- **2026 Literacy Initiative:**  
Beginning in 2026, Young Roots Oregon will launch a new early literacy initiative in partnership with the Greater Albany Public School District. The program will serve families with children ages 0–5, prioritizing their enrolled population but opening remaining spaces to the broader district community.
- **Independent Transportation Program:**  
The organization is also starting an independent transportation initiative funded through an IHN DST grant. The program will support young parents in accessing licensed childcare while they attend driver's education courses, and it connects to Young Roots' existing vehicle ownership program. The goal is to strengthen transportation independence so young parents can reliably attend school, work, and other essential activities.

Discussion Item	Project Updates
	<p>Connie introduced herself and shared that the Asset Mapping Project is nearing completion, with all county and community reports expected to be finalized by the end of the month. She noted that while she did not have a formal slide presentation, the project webpages are now live on the Pollywog website.</p> <p>Under the Special Projects tab, partners can find the Asset Mapping Project page, which includes links to each completed report. Reports are listed on the right-hand side of the page, and available documents include both English and Spanish versions. Connie invited anyone with questions about the project or specific reports to reach out to her directly.</p>

Discussion Item	Pollywog Update
	<p>Sam provided updates on behalf of Kelly, the Family Resource Specialist, who was not present. In the last quarter, Kelly supported 123 families across Linn, Benton, and Lincoln counties. The most common requests involved HRSN services—especially housing, gift assistance, counseling, prenatal support, and general parenting resources. Referrals continue to come in through phone, text, email, website inquiries, and Unite Us.</p>

Sam discussed the two most recent parent newsletters, the Holiday Resource Guide and the Holiday Event Guide. She gave an overview of upcoming newsletter topics, including Baking with Little Ones, Inclusive Practices, and an Easter Event Guide.

<b>Discussion Item</b>	New Business
LeAnne reviewed the 2026 meeting schedule with the workgroup.	

<b>Next Meeting</b>	9:30 am, January 13, 2026 Online Via Zoom
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<b>Meeting Adjourned</b>	10:17 am
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