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NEWS RELEASE

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\$874,898 HUD grant supports Multnomah County's Healthy Homes Program ***Multnomah County is one of 25 organizations nationwide awarded funds to protect children from lead paint and other household hazards***

A HUD Healthy Homes Demonstration Grant of \$874,898 will fund Multnomah County Health Department's Community Asthma Inspection and Referral project (CAIR). Multnomah County is one of 25 organizations nationwide to win a total of more than \$13 million from the U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development.

The three-year grant will enable the county's environmental health staff to identify sources of illness and hazards in the home environment. Health hazards may include allergens, asthma and respiratory illnesses, mold, combustion products, pests, lead sources, radon, pesticide residues and safety issues. An environmental health specialist, nurse and outreach workers will work with the families, landlords, and medical providers to improve the home environment and health.

"A healthy home is something we all want to provide for our children. Now, through this innovative program, low-income families can get the resources and support they need to remove dangerous lead and other health hazards from their homes," according to Multnomah County Commissioner Deborah Kafoury.

CAIR outreach workers will be based at two community organizations, Self Enhancement Inc. and Human Solutions, and will accept referrals from social service agencies and other organizations using a web-based data system. CAIR staff will identify problems which are contributing to the health conditions of the occupants and link the families and landlords to community resources and small grants.

The CAIR grant was able to leverage local funds to help landlords and low income home owners repair and improve their housing. The Portland Housing Bureau is managing dollars for repair and relocation assistance, the Lead Hazard Control Grant, and the Small Rental Rehab Program. Funding also is provided to Multnomah County Weatherization Program and other community programs.

"Low-income families, seniors and people with disabilities are among the communities most likely to live in poorly-maintained homes, which exacerbate chronic health conditions," said Margaret Van Vliet, Director, Portland Housing Bureau. "We are delighted to work with the county to ensure that Portland area landlords and residents have access to much-needed home repair funds."

A certified asthma educator community health nurse will work with children with uncontrolled asthma or related health issues. Multnomah County Health Department will provide a medical home to participants who do not have medical provider, and where residents continue to have health problems, despite education and household remediation.

Multnomah County Environmental Health Director Lila Wickham states, "This grant strengthens the building blocks that Multnomah County Health Department has employed to improve health through housing interventions. These include the AIR and Healthy Homes Programs that enhance health providers control of asthma; response to housing complaints in the unincorporated area; and landlord tenant education."

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