



FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

Monday, May 9, 2016

Columbia Valley Community Health

Sarah E. Wilkins

Marketing & Communications Specialist

P: 509-664-3564 / E: selizabeth@cvch.org

Health Center Recruits Community Help To Avert Critical Shortage

Columbia Valley Community Health opens up \$5,000 referral bonus to combat shortage of primary care providers

Monday, May 9, 2016: **Wenatchee, WA:** [Columbia Valley Community Health](http://www.cvch.org) (CVCH) is offering a \$5,000.00 referral bonus to anyone in the community who refers a Family Physician who is hired at the health center. As rural communities all over the country face a shortage of primary care providers, CVCH is deploying creative recruiting practices, including this incentive which was previously only available to its employees.

According to a [recent workforce report](#) released by the [Association of American Medical Colleges](#) (AAMC), the United States could be short between 14,900 to 35,600 primary care physicians by 2025. In efforts to be proactive against the shrinking pool of candidates, the CVCH human resources team looked internally and began offering a referral bonus to its employees.

“Many of our current providers, management and leadership are not originally from this area,” said **Sarah Wilkinson**, Director of Human Resources for CVCH, “but they have family, classmates and colleagues who may be looking for new employment opportunities. If we hire a family practice physician who was referred to us by any CVCH employee, we will pay a referral bonus of \$5,000.”

To cast a wider net, the CVCH leadership team decided to leverage the expansive networks within the community in attempts to identify and hire qualified medical providers. They know how hard it is to compete against bigger cities, especially those with residency programs. CVCH Medical Director **Dr. Malcolm Butler** attributes the lack of a local medical residency program as a significant contributor to the shortage.

“The physician shortage is real and almost 70% of physicians who complete their medical school and residency in a single state end up staying there to practice,” said Butler. “Across the nation, communities are expanding or opening new medical schools, and developing new residency programs in hopes that physicians will cultivate the solid professional and personal relationships that will tie them to the area. Until we begin to train our own physicians, we cannot assure ongoing access to high quality healthcare in this valley into the future.”

For more than three years, Dr. Butler has been leading the CVCH effort to establish a family medicine residency program in the Wenatchee Valley. However, they have not been able to garner the support or necessary partnerships from the other local health care organizations to make this a reality.



CVCH Press Release: Community-wide Recruiting Bonus

If you have questions about the community-wide referral bonus or know a family practice physician, please contact Sarah Wilkinson, HR Director, at 509.664.3587. For information about the family medicine residency program, contact Dr. Malcolm Butler at 509.662.6000.

About Columbia Valley Community Health

[Columbia Valley Community Health](http://www.CVCH.org) is a Federally Qualified Health Center (FQHC) that offers medical, dental, behavioral health, pharmacy, WIC and outreach services to everyone in Chelan and Douglas Counties. Their mission is to provide access to improved health and wellness with compassion and respect for all.

Established in 1972, CVCH is now an industry leader and was the first in the Pacific Northwest to achieve the Joint Commission's Primary Care Medical Home certification. CVCH serves over 26,000 patients a year between all of its departments and locations in Wenatchee, East Wenatchee and Chelan.

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