Other formats and languages
You can get this document in other languages, large print, braille or a format you prefer free of charge. Contact HOWTO Grant Program at howto.grant.program@odhsoha.oregon.gov or 541-671-9239 (voice/text). We accept all relay calls.

HOWTO Grant Program: 2019-2026 Impact Report

Program overview

HOWTO is a grantmaking program supporting community-based workforce initiatives in rural and medically underserved areas of Oregon. Administered by Oregon Health Authority in partnership with Oregon Health & Science University, HOWTO funds projects addressing local workforce shortages and expanding the diversity of the health care workforce.

This report includes information from 2019, when HOWTO started awarding funding, to June 30, 2026.

Core values

- Increase trauma-informed, racial/ethnic, cultural and linguistic diversity and inclusion in Oregon's health care workforce to address health inequities
- Expand access to health professional training and career advancement

Statewide impact

Since 2019, HOWTO's grantmaking has invested in people, programs, and communities across Oregon:

- **1,850 newly trained individuals** entered health care roles.
- **3,318 current workers** received upskilling, career advancement, or retention opportunities.
- **Over $33 million awarded to 53 projects** statewide.

Explore past and current projects on the HOWTO Dashboard to learn more.

How HOWTO advances workforce development

HOWTO projects show how community-driven workforce strategies and equitable training opportunities can grow Oregon's health care workforce. Grantees' projects focus on recruiting, advancing, and retaining various health care professional roles. Through partnerships with hospitals, community-based organizations, colleges, workforce boards, and Tribal organizations, HOWTO helps develop shared solutions that address critical workforce needs.

Professions supported

- Physicians, Nurse Practitioners, and Physician Associates
- Behavioral health professionals
- Community Health Workers, Peer Support Specialists, and Birth Doulas
- Medical Assistants, Dental Assistants, and Pharmacy Technicians
- Licensed and certified health occupations across the continuum of care

Training pathways and focus areas

- **Behavioral Health Workforce:** 28 grantees expanded training in certified and licensed behavioral health roles.
- **Traditional Health Workers:** 18 grantees expanded opportunities for Community Health Worker, Birth Doula, Peer Support Specialist, and Peer Wellness Specialist pathways.
- **High school students:** 17 grantees offered health career exploration opportunities, behavioral health pre-apprenticeships, and certifications in medical and dental assisting.
- **Graduate Medical Education:** 8 grantees provided residency and advanced clinical training for Physicians, Nurse Practitioners, and Physician Associates.
- **Oral health**: 9 grantees expanded dental assisting, dental hygiene, and Tribal dental health aide training options.

Reducing barriers and increasing training access

Grantees used many strategies to improve recruitment and completion results:

- Paid internships, apprenticeships, and scholarships
- Childcare and transportation stipends
- Help with costs for equipment, uniforms, and fees
- Mentorship and career-exploration activities
- Training that includes participants' culture and languages

- Distance-learning so that participants can stay in their communities

Participant experiences

Participants reported that HOWTO-supported projects promoted career advancement, expanded access to culturally aligned training, and increased confidence in entering health care professions, with examples provided below.

- "This program made it possible to get certified...in Spanish - something I couldn't access before. **Now I can support neighbors directly, and they feel more comfortable coming to me because we share the same language and culture.**" - Community Health Worker
- "**Participating in the training has been life changing. It allows me to stay in my tribal community while gaining skills to serve as a health provider.** The curriculum...makes me proud and grounded." - Community Health Aide/Provider trainee
- "I was able to shadow dentists, gain hands-on skills, and now I'm preparing for hygiene school**. The camp opened my eyes to the dental field and gave me the confidence to pursue a career I never thought possible.**" - Dental Assistant program alumni
- "Before I joined, I felt like I wasn't going to get anywhere in life. **Since becoming a Youth Support Peer Specialist, I feel accomplished, independent and confident. Now, I want to mentor others and make a change in this world for the better.**" - Youth Peer Support Specialist
- "The privilege to provide health care to an underserved rural population comes with a lot of responsibilities, **but it has been so rewarding to be able to serve the coastal population and help provide them access to care.**" - Physician in Rural Residency Program
- "**Being paid to complete training, and having those services paid for, has greatly benefitted my ability to gain expertise in various fields** and expand my knowledge on subjects that are important within our profession." - Master's level behavioral health clinician

Health Policy and Analytics
HOWTO Grant Program
800 NE Oregon Street, Suite 772
Portland, OR 97232
HOWTO.Grant.Program@odhsoha.oregon.gov
https://www.oregon.gov/oha/HPA/HP-PCO/Pages/howto-grant-program.aspx