



MEMORANDUM

TO: Satpal Sidhu, County Executive
FROM: Erika Lautenbach, Director
RE: PeaceHealth – Community Connect Electronic Health Record Access & Use Agreement
DATE: October 27, 2022

Attached is a contract between Whatcom County and PeaceHealth for your review and signature.

▪ **Background and Purpose**

Community access to electronic health records (EHRs) extends technology to improve the continuity of care for a patient-centered approach to care and services with community healthcare partners. This contract extends access to PeaceHealth’s Community Connect EHR technology system, EPIC, to the Health Department at an 81% subsidized rate compared to purchasing access directly through a vendor.

The Health Department’s Communicable Disease & Epidemiology (CDE) Division maintains a small clinic to support disease control in Whatcom County residents. This includes treatment of both active (infectious) and high-risk latent Tuberculosis, sexually transmitted infections, hepatitis, and immunization access for adults and children who do not have access through a provider. For the CDE Division, access to and use of EPIC will help Health Department providers and public health nurses better manage care for patients.

The Health Department’s Ground-Level Response and Coordinated Engagement (GRACE) Program focuses on high utilizers of health care services who are often engaged in multiple health organizations. For the GRACE Program, access to and use of EPIC will improve the continuity of care through communication of a patient’s clinical picture.

This amendment updates the language in Section 3.1 of the original agreement to indicate that licensed medical providers will comply with applicable identification standards, necessary to provide system access to authorized users.

There was an oversight by the Health Department and the term of the contract and expiration date indicated in the County’s Contract Information Sheet is incorrect in the original contract; total funding described in the paragraph below and the Contract Information Sheet to follow in this amendment, have been updated to reflect the correct term and expiration date.

▪ **Funding Amount and Source**

Funding for this contract in 2022 may not exceed \$29,060 (\$24,026 one-time implementation + \$839/month from July-Dec). Thereafter, funding may not exceed \$10,068 annually (\$839/month). Funding is provided by the Behavioral Health Program GRACE fund and general funds. These funds are included in the 2022 and will be included in subsequent budgets. Council approval is required as funding for the entire term of this contract will exceed \$40,000.

Please contact Malora Christensen, Response Systems Manager at 360-778-6131 (MChriste@co.whatcom.wa.us), or Kathleen Roy, Finance & Administrative Services Manager at 360-778-6007 (KRoy@co.whatcom.wa.us), if you have any questions or concerns regarding this request.

