



FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE – January 24, 2011

CONTACT:

[Kim Lamb](#), Executive Director, (503) 344-3742

FIRST TRIBAL CLINIC NOW ACTIVE ON THE STATE’S BROADBAND TELEHEALTH NETWORK

Siletz Community Health Clinic able to provide better access to health care via the Oregon Health Network

(Portland, Ore.) – The Oregon Health Network announced the addition of its first tribal clinic, Siletz Community Health Clinic, to its growing statewide broadband telehealth network. The clinic, part of the Confederated Tribes of Siletz Indians (CTSI), is one of 67 active provider sites being monitored 24/7/365 by OHN’s Network Operations Center (NOC).

“Tribes have been hoping for more help from Indian Health Services (IHS) so that tribal populations can have greater access to care, but IHS, state and local budgets face financial limitations,” says CTSI Health Director Judy Muschamp. “We would encourage other tribes to take advantage of this opportunity to get funding for the broadband infrastructure and the 85 percent support funding for up to five years.”

Siletz Community Health Clinic is one of 166 sites in Oregon participating in the Rural Health Care Pilot Program (RHCPP). Of those, 96 sites have received funding commitment from the Federal Communications Commission and 67 sites have 24-hour monitoring by the NOC. The rural tribal clinic received 85 percent of its installation costs covered through the program with the remaining 15 percent from OHN’s matching funds to launch or enhance their broadband infrastructure. Ongoing monthly recurring costs associated with broadband service are paid at 85 percent over the duration of the 5-year program that ends in May 2014. Siletz will pay the remaining 15 percent monthly.

Siletz Community Health Clinic now gains immediate access to the NOC and can connect to a statewide network of providers and health care education sites. The new 100 mbps connection is a tremendous upgrade from the old shared 1.5 mps connection and will expand and improve the clinic’s operations, service delivery and referral partnerships.

CTSI is a self-governance tribe with approximately 4,770 enrolled tribal members. One of the programs that CTSI funds and manages is the Siletz Tribal Health Care Program—the delivery of comprehensive health care to the Siletz Indian People and their dependants within their 11-county service area in western Oregon. Services are provided through a combination of direct care, contracts and referral to appropriate agencies. Patients are offered health and wellness, dental, laboratory, radiology, alcohol and drug treatment, mental health, optometry and more.

Oregon providers in rural and underserved areas encounter the challenge of limited availability of funding and information technology expertise. “A lack of quality broadband access, equipment and resources can be a significant barrier for both rural and urban providers,” [adds Lamb](#). “Technologies and applications on the forefront of medicine can be challenging to integrate and implement. It is



exciting that Siletz now joins a growing number of providers in Oregon who are providing access to care and emerging technology to provide better care for patients.”

The FCC awarded Oregon \$20.182 million and the state has pledged an additional \$3.8 million to be administered by OHN to build Oregon’s first telehealth broadband network. OHN’s vision is to provide the best access to health care, no matter where a patient lives or a provider works in Oregon.

Oregon Health Network’s \$20.182 million subsidy was the fifth largest award as part of the FCC’s Rural Health Care Pilot Program and provided for full deployment of the critical first phase of the infrastructure necessary to build the first statewide, broadband, telehealth network in the state. Through the RHCPP, [OHN](#) is working to bring on as many as 166 eligible hospitals, clinics, community colleges and government facilities onto its managed, high-speed, broadband network.

Nationally, \$417 million has been allocated within the FCC RHCPP to subsidize hundreds of hospitals, providers and clinics representing 42 states, three territories and more than 6,000 health providers.

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About the Oregon Health Network

Oregon Health Network (OHN) administers a \$20.2 million Federal Communications Commission subsidy and more than \$3.8 million in state funding to create Oregon’s first state-wide broadband telehealth network. OHN is a nonprofit, member organization connecting and serving physicians, allied providers, clinics, health organizations, educators, students, government agencies, and businesses who are critical to improving the quality, access and delivery of health care to Oregonians. OHN provides high-speed, high quality, broadband connectivity for electronic medical records, radiological images, videoconferencing, and distance education applications which will expand the use of telemedicine and telehealth education in Oregon. The network also connects providers to each other, reducing the cost of health care in rural communities by minimizing duplicate efforts and time, obtaining correct patient information, procedure codes and referrals, and much more. Thirty-five providers in Oregon are live on OHN’s broadband telehealth network with 24/7 monitoring by the Network Operations Center. Please visit our website for additional information at www.oregonhealthnet.org