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Peer Spokane in Partnership with Spokane Public Library Receives \$400,000 Funding from Better Health Together Community Linkages

(Spokane, Wash) - Better Health Together Community Linkages has announced its approval of the proposal by Peer Spokane and Spokane Public Library to establish a program that will place Peer Services Specialists at three Spokane Public Library locations. The \$400,000 in funding awarded will allow for at least two full-time Peer Service Specialists at the library for the next two years.

Social workers in libraries are a growing trend nationwide. Spokane Public Library has employed a social services manager, Bethiah Streeter since May 2022 Streeter leads a team of social work interns from Eastern Washington University and together they connect community members with social services resources. Through their work, Bethiah and her team have connected eighteen individuals with housing, established weekly Coffee & Conversation events that help people feel seen, heard, and connected within our community.

The alliance between Better Health Together, Peer Spokane, and Spokane Public Library will build capacity for the social services program at Spokane Public Library and connect more individuals to emotional support, healthcare, mental health services, and other resources. The Peer Spokane team will be based out of Central Library and expand services to Liberty Park Library and Shadle Park Library later in 2023.

Peer Spokane serves individuals with behavioral health needs, including mental health and/or substance use, and those experiencing homelessness. The organization provides onsite peer emotional support, referral to peer coaching, support groups, supportive employment, supported housing, and referral to community resources.

Better Health Together Community Linkages is a grant funding opportunity program offering a total of \$3,600,000. Better Health Together anticipates funding approximately nine projects at \$400,000 each but reserves the right to fund a larger number of smaller-budget projects, or a smaller number of larger projects.

"This funding and partnership will allow us to expand services to even more individuals in need," said Bethiah Streeter, Social Services Manager at Spokane Public Library. "We are grateful for the support of Better Health Together and excited to work with Peer Spokane to make a positive impact on the health outcomes of our community."



About Spokane Public Library

Spokane Public Library aims to inspire a thriving city through cultural and educational opportunities. An award-winning library that spans six branches and houses nearly half-a-million items, Spokane Public Library circulates nearly two million items and welcomes one million visitors annually. Customers can enjoy traditional library media and can also access digital downloads, databases, historical collections, art exhibits and interesting free programming. For general information about the library, please visit spokanelibrary.org or call 509-444-5300.

About Peer Spokane

Peer Washington cultivates powerful, healthy lives by providing peer emotional support and development services to those impacted by addiction, mental health and/or HIV/AIDS. www.peerspokane.org

About Better Health Together

Better Health Together tackles health inequities throughout eastern Washington. We believe everyone deserves a fair shot at being healthy. To make this happen, we work with more than 100 organizations across seven counties to promote practical solutions that meet the needs of the people and communities we serve. BHT was founded on the principle that when we step back and let local community lead, we find the best and most sustainable solutions to some of our most complex problems. We advocate for policies centered on accountability, accessibility, and affordability. We disrupt the status quo by facilitating conversations and partnerships that level the playing field for community health throughout our region. www.betterhealthtogether.org