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## AGENDA COVER MEMO

AGENDA DATE: October 14, 2003

TO: Board of County Commissioners

DEPARTMENT: Health & Human Services

PRESENTED BY: Rob Rockstroh



AGENDA TITLE: IN THE MATTER OF PROCLAIMING THE WEEK OF OCTOBER 13 - 19, 2003 AS PRENATAL CARE WEEK IN LANE COUNTY

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### I. MOTION

TO PROCLAIM THE WEEK OF OCTOBER 13 - 19, 2003 AS PRENATAL CARE WEEK IN LANE COUNTY

### II. ISSUE OR PROBLEM

Increased access to early prenatal care leads to improved health outcomes for pregnant women and their newborns. The declaration of a prenatal care week in Lane County creates an opportunity to promote early prenatal care, access to that care, and a better understanding of the health benefits of early prenatal care.

### III. DISCUSSION

#### A. Background / Analysis

In a previous board meeting, Commissioner Green requested that a prenatal care proclamation be developed and that the board recognize a week as prenatal care week in Lane County.

Early and comprehensive prenatal care is vital to the health and well-being of both mother and infant. Early prenatal care helps prevent low birth weight, a predictor of newborn health. Prenatal care identifies risk factors such as the use of alcohol, tobacco, or other drugs, domestic violence, and diabetes or heart conditions. Studies indicate that for every \$1 spent on first trimester care, up to \$3 is saved in preventable infant and child health problems.

The statewide benchmark goal for the percentage of women receiving early prenatal care is 90 percent. Both state and county rates have remained well below that goal, and Lane County's rate has remained below that of the state

as a whole. Early 2003 data indicates that Lane County again lags behind the state in early prenatal care. Statistics for January to June show that only 74.4 percent of Lane County's pregnant women had first trimester prenatal care as compared to 81.3 percent for the state.

Improving access to care is the most effective means of increasing the percentage of women who receive first trimester prenatal care. Women who do not obtain early prenatal care often have no health insurance, do not know that low cost services are available, and find the system for accessing care both overwhelming and confusing. The Oregon MothersCare program was developed to improve access to prenatal care throughout Oregon by streamlining the system for obtaining care, removing barriers, and by directly assisting individual women to access the prenatal care that they need. In 2002, the Lane County MothersCare program provided assistance for over 650 low income women by helping with applications for Oregon Health Plan coverage, by referral to prenatal providers, and by providing information on prenatal health and healthy behaviors. At the same time, Lane County MothersCare continued to communicate and collaborate with local providers and other community partners to improve access to prenatal care in Lane County. Lane County MothersCare is a program within Public Health Services in the Lane County Department of Health and Human Services.

**B. Alternatives / Options**

1. To recognize and support Prenatal Care Week in Lane County.
2. Not to recognize and support Prenatal Care Week in Lane County.

**C. Recommendation**

To recognize and support Prenatal Care Week in Lane County.

**D. Timing / Implementation**

Upon Board action, October 13-19, 2003 will be declared Prenatal Care Week in Lane County.

**IV. ATTACHMENTS**

Board Order

**THE BOARD OF COUNTY COMMISSIONERS, LANE COUNTY, OREGON**

**RESOLUTION:**    ) IN THE MATTER OF PROCLAIMING THE WEEK OF OCTOBER  
                      ) 13-19, 2003 AS PRENATAL CARE WEEK IN LANE COUNTY

WHEREAS, the mission of Lane County Health and Human Services is to promote and protect the health and well-being of individuals, families, and our communities; and

WHEREAS, early and comprehensive prenatal care is important for the health of both mother and infant; and

WHEREAS, regular prenatal care identifies potential risks and problems, therefore leading to effective preventative care; and

WHEREAS, the Oregon benchmark goal for early prenatal care is 90 percent and state and county early prenatal care rates have remained well below that goal; and

WHEREAS, 2003 data indicates that only 74.4 percent of Lane County's pregnant women have had first trimester prenatal care as compared to 81.3 percent for the state; and

WHEREAS, pregnant women who do not receive early prenatal care often have difficulty accessing care; and

WHEREAS, improving access to care is the most effective means of increasing the percent of women who receive first trimester prenatal care; and

WHEREAS, Lane County supports early prenatal care, access to that care, and a better understanding of the health benefits of early prenatal care for pregnant women, infants, and the community at large.

NOW THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED that the Lane County Board of County Commissioners hereby proclaim October 13-19, 2003 as Prenatal Care Week, and encourage residents to acknowledge the importance of early prenatal care to the health of our community.

DATED this \_\_\_\_\_ day of October 2003.

APPROVED AS TO FORM  
date 9/22/03 lane county  
Shardlow  
OFFICE OF LEGAL COUNSEL

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Peter Sorenson, Chair  
Lane County Board of Commissioners