
RESOLUTION 2026-03

**A Resolution of Grant County Board of Health Supporting
Mental Health as a Core Public Health Priority**

WHEREAS, the Grant County Health District (GCHD) recognizes mental health as an essential component of overall health and as fundamental to the well-being of individuals, families, and communities; and

WHEREAS, mental health conditions are leading contributors to disability, reduced workforce participation, and preventable healthcare utilization, with rural residents experiencing **higher rates of suicide, substance-related mortality, and unmet behavioral health needs**, as documented by Washington State Department of Health and CDC surveillance data; and

WHEREAS, surveillance data show persistent gaps in timely mental health access in rural counties, including provider shortages, long wait times, and geographic barriers disproportionately impacting rural and low-income residents, agricultural workers, older adults, and youth; and

WHEREAS, mental health outcomes are closely linked to social, economic, and environmental factors - such as housing stability, employment, education, emergency response capacity, and access to primary care - placing mental health within local public health responsibilities and local government decision-making; and

WHEREAS, evidence from the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC), the Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration (SAMHSA), and peer-reviewed public health literature shows that **early identification, coordinated care, and integration of mental health into healthcare systems, emergency response planning, and community programs** improve outcomes, resilience, and lowers healthcare system costs; and

WHEREAS, the 2023-2024 Grant County Community Health Assessment (CHA) and 2025-2030 Grant County Community Health Improvement Plan (CHIP) identify behavioral health as a top local priority, demonstrating the value of proactive, data-driven approaches grounded in community input and best practices can identify emerging mental health trends early, reduce disparities, and supporting informed decision-making **without the need to declare a public health emergency, while still enabling timely, coordinated, and effective local action**; and

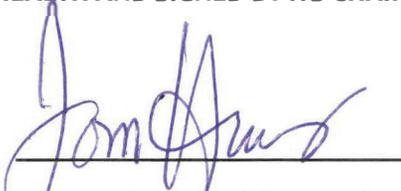
WHEREAS the healthcare system, local governments, and public health system play critical roles in promoting mental health well-being through prevention, early intervention, surveillance, education, policy development, and community partnerships; and

WHEREAS, GCHD acknowledges that reducing stigma and improving access to culturally responsive, trauma-informed, and evidence-based mental health services strengthens community resilience and advances health equity; and

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED that the Grant County Board of Health:

Encourages the intentional integration of mental health considerations into healthcare delivery, community programming, emergency response functions, and local government policies, and decision-making; **supports the routine use of local and state data**, community input, and evidence-based best practices to identify mental health trends, reduce disparities, and guide local healthcare and governmental actions; and **affirms its commitment to collaborative, proactive approaches** that strengthen community well-being while respecting local context and stakeholder engagement.

PASSED BY THE GRANT COUNTY BOARD OF HEALTH AND SIGNED BY ITS CHAIR ON THIS 11TH DAY OF FEBRUARY 2026.



Tom Harris, Chair of the Board

ATTEST:



Theresa Adkinson, Administrator
