



Montana Department of LABOR & INDUSTRY

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE:

Wednesday, June 21, 2017

CONTACTS:

Jake Troyer, MTDLI, Communications Director
(406) 444-1674, JTroyer@mt.gov

JoAnn Hibl, Northeast Montana Health Services
(406) 653-6410, JHibl@nemhs.net

Rural Healthcare Facilities, Department of Labor & Industry Launch Innovative Nursing Apprenticeships

New training curriculum invests in Montana's rural healthcare industry to grow job opportunities

HELENA, Mont.-As Montanans seek new opportunities to improve their wages and improve their job skills in the healthcare industry, [Northeast Montana Health Services](#) (NEMHS) and Faith Lutheran Home have partnered with the [Montana Department of Labor & Industry](#) (MTDLI) to launch a new Licensed Practical Nurse apprenticeship in Wolf Point. This new program provides distance learning through MSU-Billings City College for apprentices to invest in the local communities serviced by Northeast Montana Health Services.

Working with the Montana Registered Apprenticeship program through the Montana Department of Labor & Industry, Faith Lutheran Home in Wolf Point will be the first organization to utilize this new nursing apprenticeship. The apprentice will complete the two semesters of the LPN program at MSU-Billings City College using distance learning. During their classroom learning, apprentices will work at Faith Lutheran Home as Certified Nursing Assistants. After completing the coursework, graduates will receive licensure from the Montana Board of Nursing.

“Montana’s rural communities are losing healthcare workers to retirement,” said Labor & Industry Commissioner Pam Bucy. “Through innovative apprenticeships such as this, rural Montanans can better determine their career pathway, whether that is coming straight from high school or college, or seeking a new occupation.”

For healthcare administrators like Jo Ann Hibl, Vice President of Senior and Long Term Care for Northeast Montana Health Services, these types of innovative training programs are the future to growing and expanding the healthcare workforce in rural Montana.

“The house I live in now is just down the street from where I grew up,” said Hibl. “Community nursing needs are different in places like Wolf Point. People have known each other their whole lives and need to trust the person treating them has the training and expertise to help them.”

“Continuity is valuable in Montana’s small towns,” continued Hibl. “By investing in our communities, retention is higher because people want to raise their families where they grew up. This new nursing program lets that happen for the apprentices.”

To learn more about the Licensed Practical Nursing program or any of the almost sixty occupations served through the Montana Registered Apprenticeship unit please call the Montana Department of Labor & Industry at (406) 444-4100 or visit apprenticeship.dli.mt.gov.

###