

Essentia Health

Blandin Grant Provides Free Telehealth Training in Cass County Area

For Immediate Release

**Contact: Kimberly Shropshire, Essentia Health
Kimberly.Shropshire@essentiahealth.org**

Cass Lake, MN—October 12, 2015—Any Cass County area healthcare or human services students and professionals interested in exploring telehealth technologies are invited to attend one of two free workshops being held in Cass County on October 20 and October 30 from 9 a.m. to 4 p.m.. The workshop, entitled, “Learn How to Add Telehealth to Your Healthcare Setting” will cover topics including how telehealth is being used to improve health outcomes, as well as business bottom lines; tips for selecting telehealth equipment, best practices for implementation, and reimbursement guidelines. It includes a live demonstration, and attendees will leave with an action plan and draft budget.

Attendees may choose between one of the two workshops being offered in Cass County. The October 20 workshop will be held at Leech Lake Tribal College in Cass Lake; and the October 30 workshop will be held at Northern Lights Casino in Walker, Minnesota. Free lunch will be provided. Registration is required by emailing: **Kimberly.Shropshire@essentiahealth.org**

The workshop, eligible for 6.5 credit hours- Nursing Education CEUs, is taught by Maureen Ideker, RN BSN MBA. As the current Director of Telehealth at Essentia Health and former Director of Nursing at Tri-County Healthcare, Mrs. Ideker has become a leader and spokesperson for telehealth throughout the state of Minnesota, and was recently named the “2015 MN Rural Health Hero” by the MN Rural Health Association.

The workshop is made possible through a grant from the Blandin Foundation and in-kind support and donations from Essentia Health-St. Joseph’s Hospital Foundation, the Leech Lake Tribal College, and the Region Five Development Commission. The idea emerged as leaders throughout Region Five worked together to explore challenges facing the region such as an aging population, reduced access to healthcare,

transportation challenges, housing and environmental issues, and struggling local economies, and developed a “Resilient Region” plan (www.resilientregion.org). When it became apparent that broadband was a key infrastructure needed to address many of these issues, the group formed the Virtual Highway Connectivity Committee, which was selected to be a “Blandin Broadband Community” for 2015-2016, enabling the group to tap into several resources from the Blandin Foundation, including funding for projects such as the telehealth training.

Ideker encourages all health care providers--including home health agencies, long-term care facilities, specialty clinics and mental health providers--to take advantage of this opportunity, stating, “I’m looking forward to sharing the tools used to implement telehealth programs and helping others figure out how telehealth might fit into their business plans. This broadband technology application fits well with the Blandin Foundation’s goal of strengthening rural communities.”

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