



**Public Health**  
Prevent. Promote. Protect.  
**Panhandle Health District**

## **Panhandle Health District**

*Healthy People in Healthy Communities*

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### **NEWS RELEASE**

#### **Health District Home Health Services to Close** Panhandle Health District – August 25, 2022

Panhandle Health District (PHD) is phasing out its home healthcare services program. The district has stopped accepting new home health patients. PHD will work closely with their patients, providers and other Home Health agencies until their transition of care is complete.

“This was an incredibly difficult decision for the health district to make,” said Don Duffy, PHD District Director. “Unfortunately, due to staffing shortages, especially among medical workers, we can no longer continue the program. The other 40 plus programs at PHD remain active and growing.”

PHD’s Home Health program was completing around 100 patient visits each week among their eight person staff and averaging five new admits per week. Often the home health team would be traveling to far reaches of the district’s jurisdiction, even hiking in when clients have been snowed in, and traveling to areas with no cell service, no power, and sometimes no running water.

“We have kept the program running for as long as we could due to the dedication and compassion of our staff,” said Duffy. “We’ve had staffing shortages and underfunding of the program, all while taking on some of the most challenging and remote patient care situations in our district.”

For over 55 years, PHD’s Home Health program has provided individualized care in the comfort of north Idahoan’s homes. The goal of home health is to help patients who have recently completed a surgery or operation or recovering from wounds or other medical challenges but no longer need to be hospitalized, manage their health at home. Home healthcare can often be less expensive and more convenient than staying in a hospital.

All PHD home health clients and physicians have been notified of the imminent closure of the program and care plans have been implemented.

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**Panhandle Health District** provides over 40 different public health programs to families, individuals and organizations in northern Idaho. From food and drinking water safety to health education and disease control, public health services are critical to ensure our community is a safe and healthy place to live, work and play.

The PHD team is made up of nurses, nutritionists, environmental health specialists, health educators and many other dedicated professionals with a common goal to deliver vital public health services.

Panhandle Health District is one of seven health districts in the state of Idaho.