



**Emma Todd is a physician assistant at Columbia Memorial Hospital and a regular contributor to the 'Hands on Health' podcast.**

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15-minute "Hands on Health" podcast episodes will be released every Tuesday morning. Podcast episodes can be accessed by searching "Hands on Health @ CMH" on Apple Podcasts, Spotify, Anchor.fm, YouTube and columbiamemorial.org.

### **Health on the coast**

Struve said that the North Coast's rural communities face some health-related barriers that urban populations do not. For instance, rural areas often have less reliable access to public transportation and fewer bike paths, which can make it harder to get regular physical exercise and access healthy food.

Coastal community members often have the misperception that only big cities have quality medical care, Struve said.

"That's just really not true," she said. "We are so fortunate here, because we have such a robust medical community in our area. I mean, we've got three hospitals within the stone's throw of each other and all kinds of independent providers."

The podcast will feature interviews with local medical practitioners, region-specific health guidance and answers to common health questions.

Struve hopes the podcast can reassure listeners that they can take control of their health.

"I think the key message is really, it's OK. You're OK. We can set some goals, you can have support and you can get on track toward a healthier you," she said.

### **Trial and error**

Producing the podcast with limited resources during a pandemic has been a challenge sometimes, Struve said. Struve intended to record interviews in-person but she instead has recorded interviews virtually because COVID restrictions, she said.

One of Struve's favorite parts of hosting the podcast has been getting to know her guests during the interviews.

"I think there's a point in most of the conversations when the person that I'm chatting with has started to relax, and then it becomes personal," she said. "These are people who went into a caring profession because they wanted to do something for other people. It's great to begin to hear that — when they have moved beyond the clinical expertise to the human behind the care that they provide."

Struve hopes that, as the podcast grows, she will produce episodes that directly respond to community needs and interests.

"The great thing about a podcast is (that) I can sit down with someone and we can have a 15 minute conversation. Give me an hour and a half, two hours, and it's out there, if we have some emerging thing to talk about," she said.

### **Community contributions**

Struve views the first few episodes as a jumping-off point.

"(This podcast) is not going to look the same way in six months as it does now," she said.

Struve has recorded several more episodes that will be released in coming months. At least 20 more episode topics will also be produced, she said.

In the future, Struve also wants to provide a hotline where listeners can call to share their ideas for podcast topics or potential guests.

"I'm glad to chat with people if they are interested in coming to share their story about something that impacts the health of folks in coastal Oregon or Washington. Get a hold of me, let's talk," she said.

Podcast ideas can be emailed to Struve at [cmhcommunity@columbiamemorial.org](mailto:cmhcommunity@columbiamemorial.org).

Both Struve and Todd hope the podcast will be a health resource that is responsive to the interest and needs of North Coast residents.

"The idea is not only to help people understand what's available locally, but really to talk about the questions people have," Struve said. "If we have a way to bring those questions to the experts, hopefully we can help people start to feel more in control of their own health."

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