



ASSOCIATION OF OREGON COMMUNITY MENTAL HEALTH PROGRAMS
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Testimony in support of HB 2023A – Requirements for Hospital policies for discharge planning involving patients hospitalized for mental health treatment

May 18, 2015

Dear Chair Monnes Anderson and Members of the Senate Health Care Committee,

On behalf of the members of the Association of Oregon Community Mental Health Programs (AOCMHP), I would like to express strong support for HB 2023A. Community Mental Health Programs coordinate and manage post hospital care for adults and children who have been hospitalized for mental health treatment, particularly for those who are in the publicly funded mental health system.

We are also invested in preventing suicides and suicide attempts through prevention and early intervention programs in the community and through close coordination with individuals at risk and their families. Although we strive as a system to intervene earlier than in the emergency department or at hospital discharge, for those who do need acute care services, it is extremely important to ensure streamlined, warm handoff services from the hospital to the care coordinator. These services are not always covered by commercial insurance carriers, which represents a significant disparity between publicly funded and privately funded mental health care. The remedy for universal access and coverage, though, is beyond the scope of this bill.

In a future iteration of discharge planning policy, we would like to see care coordination provided to individuals who only use emergency department services and are not admitted to the hospital.

Thank you for the opportunity to provide testimony in support of HB 2023A.

Sincerely,

Cherryl L. Ramirez

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