



ORHA Supports HB 2508 – Telemedicine Pay Parity

The Oregon Rural Health Association is a nonprofit membership organization that promotes high quality, accessible and financially sustainable health care network to serve rural Oregon. **We wish to convey our full support for telemedicine pay parity and HB 2508.**

Telemedicine Improves Access and Saves Money

For rural Oregonians, telemedicine presents an enormous opportunity to improve access to care and overall health. For many, telemedicine relieves the burden of travel from a patient's home to a provider's office to receive primary care or behavioral health services. Without pay parity, many rural clinics will be unable to continue providing such care after the pandemic resides. Robust research tells us that increased access to preventive services such as these do not just improve outcomes, it saves money down the line in the form of better managed chronic conditions and decreased emergency room visits.

Telemedicine Improves Care

In many rural communities, there is simply not enough patient volume to justify full time sub-specialists. For someone with a complicated heart diagnosis, this could mean driving hours each way to meet with a clinician in the metro area. Often times, telemedicine allows that patient to be served in their home or community.

Telemedicine can also provide great benefits to someone nearing the end of their life. can help improve patients' comfort and help coordinate the multiple sub-specialist care that is often required for very sick patients. By allowing palliative care specialists to serve patients in their homes, we can avoid the un-needed stress and suffering of poorly coordinated care, both for the patient and their family.

HB 2508 will allow rural Oregonians to continue receiving these important services in the format that serves them best, whether that is through video or phone. It also will allow providers and payers the flexibility to include telemedicine in alternative payment methodologies. **Please join us in supporting HB 2508.**