



May 10, 2021

Oregon State Legislature
Senate Committee on Health Care
900 Court St. NE
Salem, OR 97301

Dear Chairwoman Patterson and members of the Senate Committee on Health Care,

Signify Health supports HB 3036 A as we believe it will increase access and equity to much needed healthcare services in Oregon, particularly in rural areas. Signify Health is a leading provider of technology-enabled healthcare solutions for Medicare Advantage (MA) and Medicaid managed care organization (MCO) plans. We are the largest provider of in-home health evaluations (IHEs) in the country, visiting over 1.4 million MA and/or Medicaid members last year, including over 15,000 Oregonians in 2020 and over 69,000 since 2012.

In order to perform this important work, Signify Health contracts with highly skilled clinicians, including physicians, nurse practitioners and, where we are able, physician assistants (PAs). Our national mobile provider network enables us to deploy clinicians where they are needed most, including every zip code in Oregon. Clinicians spend an average of 60 minutes sitting face-to-face at the member's kitchen table to discuss current and past health conditions, perform diagnostic tests, inquire about social determinants of health and ultimately allow seniors more time with a highly skilled healthcare professional. On average, clinicians will see five members in a day and cover a 20- to 30-mile region. After the evaluation is performed, we encourage members to reconnect with their primary care doctor to discuss their personalized recommendations, and our data shows that 90% of members who complete a Signify Health IHE return to their PCP within one year.

As a result of COVID-19, in-home evaluations have been limited to ensure the health and safety of the member as well as our clinicians, but our mobile network has been returning to members' homes in the past few months. For many individuals, this was the first time they saw a clinician in a year. However, Signify Health has experienced several issues in recruiting enough physicians and nurse practitioners to perform this important work, and we are looking to recruit physician assistants. First, the COVID-19 pandemic has strained a provider workforce that was already facing shortages, and a recent [study](#) from the Association of American Medical Colleges projects a deficit of over 139,000 physicians by 2033.¹ In addition, the senior population continues to expand and [projections](#) show Medicare enrollment will increase by an average of 1.5 million beneficiaries per year from 2021 to 2029.² For these reasons, Signify Health is looking to expand our mobile network in Oregon to include physician assistants.

¹ Association of American Medical Colleges. "[The Complexities of Physician Supply and Demand: Projections from 2018 to 2033.](#)" June 2020.

² The Commonwealth Fund. "[Medicare Data Hub](#) presentation." October 2020.



PAs are proven and integral members of the healthcare system, and should be allowed to practice at the top of the scope. HB 3036 A will allow PAs to practice in a more collaborative environment and address obstacles that make PA practice difficult. For example, supervising physicians in Oregon are required to provide 8 hours of on-site supervision per month unless the PA receives an exception. For Signify Health, this requirement makes contracting with PAs challenging because the PA and supervisor would have to travel together to members' homes or find other ways to oversee the PA's work. Instead, HB 3036 A will allow the PA and the physician to detail the collaboration process, and empower them to determine the best system for their situation. As the pandemic has shown, clinicians can collaborate via telecommunication without decreasing quality. Signify Health's unique technology ensures the PA and the collaborating physician can connect virtually at all times and provide instant feedback. Finally, we believe HB 3036 A will increase healthcare access for seniors, particularly those in rural areas, and allow them to get reconnected to their primary care doctor.

Signify Health thanks you for your consideration of HB 3036 A, and we support its passage. We look forward to working with you so seniors can spend more happy, healthy days at home.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "M. Rothman, M.D.".

Marc Rothman, M.D.
Chief Medical Officer