



February 10, 2021

Chair Patterson, Vice Chair Knopp, & Members of the Senate Healthcare Committee,

My name is Michael Olson, and I am a Regional Administrator with Praxis Health, Oregon's largest independent network of primary care providers. Praxis serves the healthcare needs of over 100,000 Oregonians, with 32 local community clinics located in 10 counties across our state.

We are pleased to support SB697, which would remove a significant barrier to continuing to provide telehealth services to our communities that we have been afforded the opportunity to provide by virtue of OHA emergency rules.

At Praxis, we are finding that telehealth:

- Maintains quality when used to meet appropriate medical necessity
- Improves access to timely care
- Improves integration of specialty care
- Creates patient centered care delivery

The integration of pay equity for telehealth by emergency rule was the catalyst that spurred Praxis to invest in telehealth to improve patient access to care. Since March 2020, we have provided over 50,000 telehealth visits. It is important to note that we do not believe telehealth replaces the need for in-office visits. Additionally, we are finding that Telehealth has not had a notable effect on our operational and care delivery costs, as the need for staff, space, infrastructure, and technology are continuing factors.

We support SB697 as pay parity is important for an organization like Praxis Health to continue to be able to offer telehealth as an option for our patients across Oregon. Thank you for your time and continued commitment to the access, quality, and equity of care for our communities.

Very Truly Yours,

Michael F. Olson

Michael Olson, MHA, DPT
Government Affairs Director
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