

February 17, 2022

Senate Human Services, Mental Health & Recovery Committee

RE: Support of HB 4150

Chair Gelser Blouin, Vice Chair Robinson and Members of the Committee,

We submit this testimony in support of HB 4150 which requires the Health Information Technology Oversight Council (HITOC) to convene stakeholders to explore options to accelerate, support and improve secure, statewide community information exchange (CIE).

Over the last few years, health care and community-based organizations (CBOs) have partnered to develop and launch a system for CIE known as “Connect Oregon” (built on the Unite Us technology). To date, Connect Oregon has been voluntarily adopted by five major health systems, 12 of the 15 Medicaid CCOs, hundreds of community-based organizations (CBOs), and 211info.

Connect Oregon is live in 19 Oregon counties, and throughout 2022, will extend into all 36 Oregon counties. Thousands of individuals and families have been served on the network and new CBOs are joining every day.

Connect Oregon already meets the requirements as laid out in HB 4150:

- A network of health care providers, human or social services providers and community-based organizations
- Shared resource directory (in partnership with 211info)
- Closed loop referrals
- Social needs screening and reporting capabilities

We have included testimonials from our network partners on the following pages. Connect Oregon partners welcome the goals of HB 4150 and the work of the HITOC CIE Workgroup to advance CIE in Oregon.

Sincerely,

Tom Holt  
OHLC lobbyist

## Testimonials from Connect Oregon/Unite Us users

“As I was serving a client, he shared his concerns over his diabetic care and how he feared he would not be able to pay for his medication because of his COVID isolation. I remembered that a couple of days prior in the Partner Spotlight Zoom I attended, I had learned about the Borland Free Clinic . I shared the information with him and **he was just so thankful** for it and especially about the fact that they were very Latino/Hispanic friendly.”

– Maria Morales, YWCA Program Staff

“At Mosaic Medical a dietician sent a referral to see about getting their patient baking pans to roast vegetables. They referred the patient to Furnish Hope via Connect Oregon and Furnish Hope promptly called the patient, going through a checklist of every item they had available to see if the patient might need it. The patient has lived in their home for quite a few years and didn't have hardly any furniture, has never owned a dresser, or a coffee table had two knives to cook with and a pan. After an easy assessment process, Furnish Hope is delivering a truckload of furniture to the patient in early January. **The patient was in tears** and said they couldn't believe anyone would do that for them!”

– Lindsey Stalling, Mosaic Medical



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“A family all tested positive for COVID-19 while their father was on a long-haul truck job. He was unable to return home because he was the sole provider for the family and they could not risk exposing him to COVID-19. **We were able to refer this family for wrap-around support through Unite Us**, and we were also able to temporarily house the father in a free shelter with food provided until the family was through their isolation period.”

– Isabel Dreyfus, Human Services Coordinator, Clackamas County Public Health Department

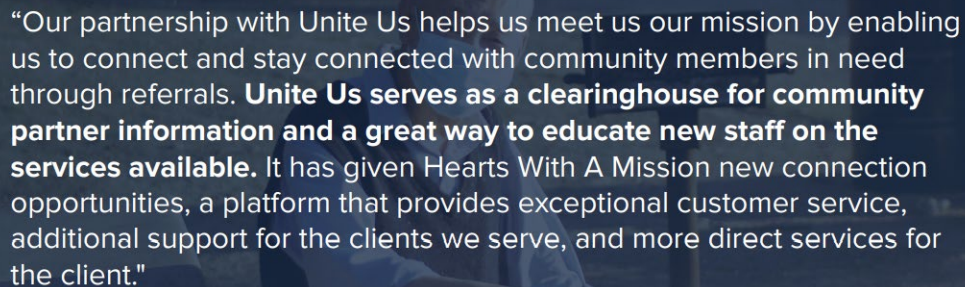
## Testimonials from Connect Oregon/Unite Us users

"During one of my first experiences with Connect Oregon, I was working with a member who was part of a large family. This member was the sole provider for the family but lost his job due to layoffs around COVID 19. **I decided to try out Connect Oregon and was able to get this family the support they needed and watched it happen in real time.** I was able to secure food, clothing, utilities, and rent assistance for them and all in 2 days! When I followed up with the family a week later to check in they were so happy and thankful that they cried happy tears."

– Member Support Specialist, PacificSource



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"Our partnership with Unite Us helps us meet our mission by enabling us to connect and stay connected with community members in need through referrals. **Unite Us serves as a clearinghouse for community partner information and a great way to educate new staff on the services available.** It has given Hearts With A Mission new connection opportunities, a platform that provides exceptional customer service, additional support for the clients we serve, and more direct services for the client."

– Ashley Blakely, Development Director at Hearts With A Mission

"Every time we get a referral in Unite Us and are able to connect people who need nutritional support with meals is a success. Early on, we got a referral from Kaiser for a patient discharged from the hospital with COVID-19. Her husband, who also contracted COVID-19, died unexpectedly. When we delivered her meals, we called to tell her they were on her porch and checked in weekly. Once she was able to get back to cooking for herself, **she told us she felt like it saved her life** to have people checking in on her on a regular basis. This is the miracle of service. To serve our community best, **we need partners like Unite Us** to show us the people in need."

– Jody Grant, Program Manager at Meals on Wheels People, a nonprofit based in Portland, Oregon



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