



OREGON PSYCHIATRIC
PHYSICIANS ASSOCIATION

Date: February 7, 2023

To: The Honorable Deb Patterson, Chair
The Honorable, Cedric Hayden Vice-Chair
Members of the Senate Health Care Committee

From: Maureen C. Nash, MD
Oregon Psychiatric Physicians Association

RE: Position statement on SB 796 Oregon Memory Net

Chair Patterson, Vice Chair Hayden and members of the Senate Health Care Committee:

The Oregon Psychiatric Physicians Association (OPPA), a district branch of the American Psychiatric Association, was established in 1966. OPPA serves as the organization for medical doctors (psychiatrists) in Oregon working together to ensure humane care and effective treatment for persons with mental illness, including substance use disorders, and compassion for their families.

OPPA supports SB 796 which would create a network of clinics to aid in diagnosis of dementia, support of families and care plan development. There is a shortage of neurologists, psychiatrists and other clinicians with specialized knowledge and skill in dementia care and geriatrics nationally(1). This is also true in Oregon, most especially in rural areas.

Access to an accurate diagnosis will allow for support for patients and families as well as care planning for the future. We support this additional assistance with diagnosis and encourage the coordination of this service with the Older Adult Behavioral Health Specialists (OABHS) program that already exists in each county. The OABHS program was developed to help bridge the communication gaps between local DHS APD offices and OHA resources in order to better serve all Oregonians. The OABHS have knowledge of local resources to support behavioral health needs of citizens including those with dementia.

OPPA respectfully requests the committee to support this bill.

IHS Markit Ltd. The Complexities of Physician Supply and Demand: Projections From 2019 to 2034. Washington, DC: AAMC; 2021.

Oregon Psychiatric Physicians Association

PO Box 21571, Keizer OR 97307

info@oregonpsychiatric.org

www.oregonpsychiatric.org