



Oregon

Tina Kotek, Governor

Board of Nursing
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February 11, 2025

Dear Chair Patterson, Vice Chair Hayden, and members of the committee,

My name is Rachel Prusak. I have been a nurse for 25 years, a nurse practitioner for 15 of those years, and currently the Executive Director of the Oregon State Board of Nursing. The Board receives updates from the Oregon Wellness Program (OWP) on how nurses receive their services. The most recent update from OWP on Jan 31st, 2025, showed that since June 2022, 447 nurses have received 2,441 hours of counseling. The number of nurses accessing the program has grown as awareness of its availability has expanded. Access to OWP services signifies that nurses are seen, and help is available. The OWP services are an enduring piece of the health policy puzzle that strives to address endemic healthcare provider burnout.

The recent report revealed that participants with extended engagement in the program report notable improvements in their professional satisfaction, personal well-being, and ability to deliver high-quality care to Oregonians. Unfortunately, the increased demand for OWP services comes at a time of financial stagnation for the program. Understandably, board licensee fees such as those provided by the OSBN are limited. As stated at the hearing, in 2024, the OWP reduced program benefits mid-year from a renewable annual benefit of (8) sessions to (3) sessions.

Weaknesses in our modern healthcare systems were amplified during the pandemic, and these fissures continue. As the legislature continues searching for ways to fix healthcare systematically, the OWP provides a proven, meaningful reprieve for nurses who are struggling. The value that OWP services provide for OSBN licensee clients is quite evident, as evidenced by their recent report, which I have uploaded for your view.

Sincerely,

Rachel Prusak, MSN, APRN, FNP-C
Executive Director OSBN

Mission: The Oregon State Board of Nursing is committed to protecting the public through regulatory excellence and promoting the wellness of our nursing professionals.

Vision: A safe and healthy Oregon promoted through a healthy and diverse nursing workforce.