

LISA REYNOLDS, MD
STATE SENATOR
District 17



OREGON STATE SENATE

Testimony in Support of HB 3727: Telehealth

March 13th, 2025
House Committee on Behavioral Health and Health Care
3:00 P.M., Hearing Room C

Chair Nosse, Vice Chairs Nelson & Javadi, and Members of the House Committee on Behavioral Health and Health Care:

For the record, my name is Lisa Reynolds, and I serve as Senator for Oregon's 17th District. I also work as a pediatrician serving babies, children, adolescents in my district and beyond. I am here in support of HB 3727.

This week marks five years since the beginning of the COVID pandemic. There have been many news articles and reflections commemorating the anniversary of this terrible time. A million Americans died from COVID infection. What I remember in those early days and weeks was the fear of the unknown. The re-use of masks (our own, day after day) because of a PPE shortage, the clanging of pots and pans at hospital shift changes to honor our health care providers, the scientific achievement of the warp speed COVID vaccine development.

Our clinic pivoted to virtual visits. And wow! We loved these visits, as did our patients. It turns out, you can assess quite a bit in a video visit - certainly more than we realized before we made the switch. When we had to see someone in person, we'd run down to the parking lot, gowned, gloved and masked, to do an exam or collect a strep swab or, later, a covid swab on a child strapped into their car seat. I'm proud of how we were able to provide good care to our patients with the safety limitations necessary to protect ourselves and to protect patients who would otherwise be exposed in our waiting room.

Since then, virtual visits provide a great option. I've had parents meet their child at school and then hold a virtual visit in the car, though not while driving. One adolescent patient did try that once, literally driving during a visit to discuss a medication he was taking. I directed him to safely pull over before we resumed our visit. In any case, telehealth visits are less disruptive for the patient and parent alike.

Another cool feature of virtual visits is that I can continue caring for patients, some I've known since they were born, when they go off to college! This is especially meaningful for mental health check-ins or medication adjustments. But WAIT! I can't host a visit with a college student that I've literally known since birth if they decide to go to college out of state. So, even though I know this patient very well, and I can efficiently and effectively address their issue, I am not able to provide care to that established patient while they are temporarily in a different state.

Enter HB 3727, which simply and elegantly allows what has previously been prohibited. This bill improves and streamlines patient care by allowing a telehealth visit between a provider and their established patient when their patient is temporarily out of state - as on vacation or at college.

This bill improves patient care and lowers health care costs. I urge an aye vote!

Sincerely,

Lisa Reynolds

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