



TINA KOTEK  
GOVERNOR

January 2, 2024

Brenda Johnson, Chair  
Kirsten Isaacson, Vice Chair  
Oregon Health Policy Board

Dear Chair Johnson and Vice-Chair Isaacson,

Thank you for your dedication and leadership to this work during a time of change. The Oregon Health Policy Board serves as a stable venue for public engagement, policy development, and agency oversight. This stability will be particularly important as the Oregon Health Authority onboards new leadership and focuses on implementation of several new, transformative programs, including the Basic Health Program and the new 1115 Medicaid Waiver benefits.

Oregon continues to be a leader in health care transformation, and yet, we still face many consistent challenges with health care access, health disparities, and overall affordability. This is why my recommended budget at the start of the year aimed to maintain the coverage gains achieved during the last two years, expand health care coverage statewide, and increase access to services. We must recognize the need to stabilize the health system while we continue to pursue reforms that will serve Oregonians better and help Oregon families thrive.

I also want to acknowledge the Board is comprised of volunteers, many of whom work full-time in addition to providing significant time to the Board and the Board's various committees. Please continue to be mindful of how and where the Board can be of most influence by being specific in your strategies to move the Board's work forward.

As my staff have engaged with the Board's leadership over the past two months, the priority areas that I have identified for the Board will come as little surprise.

I direct the Board to prioritize the following areas:

- Continue to **advance health equity** toward the State's 2030 Goal to eliminate health inequities. The Board must support the agency in defining its strategies and progress toward this goal and lead with equity throughout the Board's broader work.
- Continue championing strategies to **reduce health care costs** and **increase affordability** for Oregonians. This work should include identifying risks and threats to existing efforts and programs, and the Board should work across state advisory committees in doing so.

Brenda Johnson and Kirsten Isaacson  
January 2, 2024  
Page 2

- Lead **public engagement** for the next Coordinated Care Organization (CCO) procurement with an eye toward member experience and access to care. My office will work closely with the agency and Board to establish expectations for the next CCO procurement.
- Continue the Board's **metrics alignment** work with a particular focus on upstream strategies to support the work of advancing the state's health equity goals.

Behavioral health is a significant focus of my administration. I encourage the Board to identify where, within the Board's workstreams, you can influence a more responsive and culturally reflective behavioral health system. This may include assessing how members access care through CCOs, without duplicating existing agency or initiative work.

My staff will continue to engage actively with the Board as we work together to make progress on these challenges. I look forward to our partnership on these critical issues.

Thank you for your dedication and leadership.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Tina Kotek". The signature is fluid and cursive, with the first name "Tina" and last name "Kotek" clearly distinguishable.

Governor Tina Kotek