



About the OHPC

The Commission identifies and analyzes significant health care issues affecting the state and makes policy recommendations to the Governor, the Oregon State Legislature and the state Office for Oregon Health Policy and Research (OHPR). Additionally, the Commission partners with health care experts and stakeholders around the state to develop projects focused on improving Oregonians' health status and access to effective and efficient health care services.

OHPC Mission

The OHPC seeks to develop and promote public policy to improve the health of all Oregonians by:

- ensuring access to essential health care and support services,
- improving health care quality and outcomes,
- controlling costs,
- encouraging healthy lifestyles.

For more information about the OHPC, please contact Gretchen Morley or Jessica van Diepen at (503) 378-2422 or visit us online at <http://egov.oregon.gov/DAS/OHPPR>.

Office for Oregon Health Policy and Research
255 Capitol St NE,
5th Floor, Salem, Oregon

Coming Together

Gaining Momentum for Reform in 2006

In the upcoming year, the Commission will dedicate its monthly meetings to building consensus for incremental and large-scale health reform proposals. The Governor's recent request for concrete health care affordability recommendations brings fresh urgency to this process. Our report to the Governor will draw on a variety of perspectives, integrating previous and current reform work.

Please join us on March 30th at 1:00 p.m. in the State Library, Room 102, as the OHPC continues to work toward a road map for an affordable health care system. Agenda items include:

- Dr. Frank Baumeister, a member on the federal Citizens' Health Care Working Group, which is currently receiving public input on reform from people across the country.
- An update from Oregon's Medicaid Advisory Committee on their work to expand kids' health coverage and from the Health Services Commission on rethinking the prioritized list of health services covered under the Oregon Health Plan.
- A work session on the Commission's 2006 health care reform work plan.

Successful February OHPC Reform Discussion

On February 16th, the OHPC kicked off its work to develop a road map to reform by convening representatives from ten health organizations and initiatives to explore how the energy for reform can be better coordinated and supported. The OHPC thanks the participants and audience of the OHPC forum for their participation. We also thank the Northwest Health Foundation (NWHF) for partnering with the Commission by sponsoring the room and refreshments.

The forum brief is now available on our website, along with project summaries of each initiative. OHPC and NWHF staff are continuing to meet with representatives from the various groups to develop some key areas of coordination and will provide frequent updates through this newsletter and other venues.

What's New

Welcome Oregon's New Health Information Technology Coordinator

Dr. Jody Pettit was recently selected by the Office for Oregon Health Policy and Research (OHPR) to serve as the state's Health Information Technology Coordinator. Dr. Pettit will lead state efforts to encourage coordination in public and private sector activities **fostering electronic health records (EHR) and health information exchange**. The state coordinator role was recommended to the OHPC and OHPR by the Commission's EHR & Data Connectivity Subcommittee.

Meetings Calendar:

March 30
OHPC Meeting

April 4
Joint Workgroup Meeting –
Childhood Obesity Study

April 10
Quality & Transparency
Workgroup

April 18
Delivery System Models
Workgroup

Resources:

In the News
"Lawmakers bone up on health care", Michelle Cole, *The Oregonian*, February 27, 2006

Literature
"State of the States" January 2006 Report, State Coverage Initiatives, Academy Health

Commissioners & Staff:

Kerry Barnett, Chair
The Regence Group

Jonathan Ater, Vice-Chair
AterWynne, LLP
Attorneys at Law

Vanetta Abdellatif
Multnomah County Health
Department

Geoff Brown
Watson Wyatt Worldwide

Alice Dale
SEIU

Rep. Billy Dalto

Sen. Richard Devlin

Vickie Gates
Consultant

Rep. Mitch Greenlick

Jim Lussier
St. Charles Medical Center

Sen. Ben Westlund

Richard Wopat, MD
Samaritan Health Services

Commission Staff:

Gretchen Morley, Director

Jessica van Diepen,
Assistant

Nora Leibowitz,
Policy Analyst

Work in Progress

Improving Health Care Quality & Transparency

Together with the Office for Oregon Health Policy and Research, the Commission's Quality and Transparency Workgroup published Oregon's first publicly reported hospital quality information for use by health care providers in July 2005 (www.oregon.gov/DAS/OHPPR/HQ). The workgroup is co-chaired by OHPC commissioners Vickie Gates and Jonathan Ater. Its 2006 work plan will likely include:

- Convening payors and providers to support quality initiatives in ambulatory care
- Partnering with hospitals to launch a surgical quality improvement project
- Refining, updating, and adding to the hospital quality information, including a consumer friendly product
- Reaching out to the health care purchasers, consumers, and other parties to encourage the use of available quality information for decision making

**Next Meeting: April 10, 2-4 p.m., State Office Building, Room 120A
800 Oregon St, Portland**

Agenda: Current Quality Improvement Efforts in the Ambulatory Setting, continued. *How can the Q&T workgroup build on current efforts?*

Supporting Community-Created Health Care Solutions

Localities around the state are working to align resources and form partnerships to improve access to health care for their communities. The Commission's Local Delivery System Models Workgroup, chaired by commissioners Vanetta Abdellatif and Dr. Rick Wopat, released a [report](#) in January highlighting community-created health care access projects in Oregon and how these efforts can inform statewide health policy.

**Next Meeting: April 18, 1-3 p.m., State Office Building, Room 120C
800 NE Oregon St, Portland**

Agenda: Discussion of next steps in 2006

State of the Health of Oregon Resource

Together with State Public Health Officer Susan Allan and the Northwest Health Foundation, the Commission aims to create a dynamic resource for identifying, prioritizing, and addressing health and health care issues of concern to our citizens and to their elected officials. This project seeks to synthesize and build on past and current survey and other research efforts.

Status: Project managers Dr. Ann Thomas & Molly Emmons, DHS, David Rebanal, NWHF, Jessica van Diepen, OHPC & doctoral intern Chris Palmedo, PSU are refining the project framework and cataloguing current data and reports.

Strategic Framework for Combating Childhood Obesity

The Commission is partnering with the Department of Human Services and other experts to develop a comprehensive plan for addressing childhood obesity in Oregon. This study will be presented to the Legislature and the Governor to be used as a resource for decision making on the best ways to reduce childhood obesity in the state during the 2007 legislative session.

Status: The Research & Science Workgroup will meet jointly with the Practitioner/Policy Workgroup on April 4 at 2:00 p.m., State Office Building Room 120 to review current research. The workgroup roster and materials can be viewed on our [website](#).