



## **Summary of OHPC Activities**

The Oregon Health Policy Commission was created during the 2003 session of the State Legislature with the broad charter to develop and oversee health policy planning in Oregon. The Commission was established to serve as a resource and an instrument for those who want to improve the health care system. The Commission is comprised of 10 members with a breadth of health policy experience, as well as four non-voting legislative members. Since its inception, Commission activities have included:

*Developing a plan to improve health policy in Oregon.* The Commission convened experts from around the state to develop a vision and recommendations for improving Oregonians' health and health care. The Commission focused on four policy areas:

- Improving access to needed health care services;
- Improving the quality of health care outcomes;
- Controlling the cost of health care; and,
- Encouraging healthy lifestyles.

The Commission's recommendations were presented to the Legislature in September 2004. The full presentation may be accessed on the Commission's webpage at [http://egov.oregon.gov/DAS/OHPPR/HPC/docs//pres04/91304\\_presentation.pdf](http://egov.oregon.gov/DAS/OHPPR/HPC/docs//pres04/91304_presentation.pdf). The Commission sponsored 11 legislative bills based on these recommendations. Going forward, the Commission will continue to engage the Legislature and the state's health care stakeholders in discussions to drive a long-term vision for the state's health care system.

*Soliciting input from Oregonians.* In September 2004, the Commission held ten community forums across the state in order to engage Oregonians in a dialogue on the state's health care problems and potential solutions. The participants in these forums voiced concerns that reflected three broad themes:

- Changes in Oregon's demographics, particularly the aging of the population;
- Challenges to the health system's current methods of reimbursing for care which has the effect of determining access, cost shifting, and quality; and,
- Challenges to the health delivery system relating to health care coverage, access to providers, and care coordination.

The Commission intends to continue to engage the public when possible in conversations such as these to ensure that all short- and long-term planning reflects the concerns and ideas of the state's residents.

*Supporting electronic health records and improving health information exchange.* A subcommittee of the Commission has developed recommendations to further the development of electronic health records (EHR) and improve connectivity of health information. The goal of this work is to ensure that:

- Oregonians' health record information is available to them and their healthcare provider anytime and anywhere it is needed; and,
- Oregonians' health records are confidential and secure at all times.

The recommendations of the subcommittee will be used to further discussion with state legislators, providers, and other stakeholders to reach consensus. The report is located at: [http://egov.oregon.gov/DAS/OHPPR/HPC/docs/EHR\\_LegReport\\_March05.pdf](http://egov.oregon.gov/DAS/OHPPR/HPC/docs/EHR_LegReport_March05.pdf).

*Moving forward.* The Commission is currently distilling the research and recommendations from the last year's work on access, quality, cost, and health status into three new workgroups. The charge of these workgroups is to develop and execute clear work plans in the areas of:

- Improving health care quality and transparency in the state;
- Expanding access to needed health care services and improving integration within local health care delivery systems; and,
- Elevating and integrating the numerous health status and prevention efforts already underway in the state into a cohesive campaign to improve the health of Oregonians.

As with all the activities of the Commission, the goal is to involve experts and stakeholders from around the state as much as possible to foster collaboration and consensus and minimize duplication.