



Health Policy and Analytics)  
Oregon Health Policy and Research

Kate Brown, Governor

Oregon  
Health  
Authority

500 Summer Street  
Salem, OR 97306

September 27, 2017

Mr. David Simnitt, Interim Medicaid Director, Oregon Health Authority  
Mr. Jeremy Vandehey, Director, Health Policy and Analytics, Oregon Health Authority  
Via email

Dear Mr. Simnitt and Mr. Vandehey:

On behalf of Oregon's Medicaid Advisory Committee (MAC), we write today to lend our support and an urgent request to federal legislators for their action to preserve the multiple "safety net" programs relied upon by Oregon's most vulnerable populations. Specifically, we urge our members of congress to act quickly to support adequate, sustainable funding levels for the Children's Health Insurance Program (CHIP); Community Health Centers; Medicaid Disproportionate Share Hospital payments; Maternal, Infant and Early Childhood Home Visiting Programs; and the National Health Service Corps. If not addressed before September 30, 2017, these programs will see significant funding cuts beginning October 1, 2017, or would run out of federal funding entirely in the near future.

As members of Oregon's MAC, we appreciate our role in advising OHA leadership on Medicaid policy and planning through consumer and community lenses. We are proud that Oregon's Medicaid program is a national model for integrated and coordinated health care that produces better health, better care, and lower costs.

Stable funding for the programs listed above is crucial to providing vulnerable Oregonians with access to Oregon's health care system. It is also critical for Oregon's innovative efforts to improve the efficacy of health care services by working together with patients and communities to address factors in patients' lives that impact their health - such as nutrition, educational opportunities, job training, and a safe place to call home.

Oregon relies on CHIP to enable nearly 100,000 children to access vital health care services. Oregon's 32 Community Health Centers serve over 420,000 Oregonians in more than 200 clinic sites throughout the state. Underserved communities, especially in rural parts of Oregon, rely on the people that work in Community Health Centers and through the National Health Services Corps. We urge you to make sure that these front line providers have the resources necessary to continue this important work in our communities.

Quick action is also necessary to ensure that Oregon families receive steady, consistent services. Without a funding decision by September 30, our state may be forced to redirect important taxpayer resources toward contingency planning and program restructuring.

Additionally, Oregon may need to notify members of potential impacts to programs on which they rely, causing confusion and concern. Similarly, without action before the September 30 deadline, Community Health Centers will be forced to put plans into place for clinic closures, staff furloughs and cuts to services, resulting in a loss of access for patients.

We respectfully urge Oregon's congressional delegation to prioritize immediately extending funding for these critical programs by the September 30 deadline this week.

Sincerely,



**Laura Etherton**  
Co-Chair of Medicaid Advisory Committee



**Jeremiah Rigsby**  
Co-Chair of Medicaid Advisory Committee

#### **Medicaid Advisory Committee Members**

Laura Etherton – Co-Chair, Policy Director, Oregon Primary Care Association  
Jeremiah Rigsby – Co-Chair, Director, Public Policy & Regulatory Affairs, CareOregon  
Tamara Bakewell - Project Coordinator for Oregon Center for Children and Youth with Special Health Needs (OCCYSHN)  
Glendora Claybrooks, NCMA, MHA, GCPM – OHP member; CAC Member, Health Share  
Regina Dehen, ND, MAcOM - Chief Medical Officer and Dean of Clinics for the National University of Natural Medicine  
Robert DiPrete – former MAC Director, retired Deputy Administrator, OHP  
Alyssa Franzen, DMD – dental provider; Dental Director, Care Oregon  
Miguel Angel Herrada – Health Equity and Diversity Strategist for Pacific Source, Central Oregon region  
Marcia Hille – Executive Director, Sequoia Mental Health Services  
Maria Rodriguez, MD, MPH – OB/GYN OHSU  
Ross Ryan – OHP member, consumer advocate  
Anna Lansky, MPA – Assistant Director, Division of Developmental Disability Services, DHS, Ex-Officio Member  
David Simnitt – Interim Medicaid Director, OHA, Ex-Officio Member