



House Bill 2235 Workgroup Charter

HB 2235 Workgroup Oregon Health Authority

HB 2235 Workgroup
Workgroup Charter – Approved [MONTH DAY, YEAR]

Overview

Objective: The House Bill (HB) 2235 Workgroup is chartered to study the major barriers to workforce recruitment and retention in the publicly financed behavioral health system in this state and produce recommendations for improvement.

Problem statement:

Oregon remains near the very bottom in the United States for access to behavioral health services. One contributing factor to that rating is the high turnover of certified and licensed professionals in the state's community behavioral health services system. Low pay, administrative burden, high volume, and high acuity needs of clients are major factors in providers leaving the field. Many providers who leave community-based behavioral health practices go into private practice where the providers serve clients with lower acuity needs, clients with commercial insurance, and receive higher pay and can better control their caseloads.

Purpose: The HB 2235 Workgroup will bring together representatives from the behavioral health workforce to address the major barriers of behavioral health workforce recruitment and retention as outlined in HB 2235. These members will represent various specific roles within the behavioral health care workforce, represent providers of culturally specific services; additionally, the workgroup will represent the geographic, racial, ethnic, and gender diversity of Oregon. Ultimately, the HB 2235 Workgroup will provide initial formal recommendations to OHA which are to be reported to Oregon legislators.

Authority: The HB 2235 Workgroup is established by the State of Oregon and as directed in House Bill 2235. The HB 2235 Workgroup will be supported by OHA. This charter defines the objectives, responsibilities, and scope of activities of the HB 2235 Workgroup. The HB 2235 Workgroup will provide advice and make recommendations through a consensus-based process and will capture minority voices to inform this work. This group is not tasked with implementation, creating technical solutions, or identifying funding streams. However, the workgroup will be asked to consider the resources needed to implement the recommendations.

OHA Panel

Executive Sponsor:

- Christa Jones

HB 2235 Steering Committee:

- Lea Forsman
- Nirmala Dhar
- Sahand Kianfar
- Evelyn Salinas
- Caryn Stockwell
- Craig Mosbaek
- Neelam Gupta
- Sara Grusing
- Marc Overbeck
- Beau Rappaport
- Bret Golden

Key Staff:

- Jen Eisele (lead)
- Tim Nesbitt (facilitator)
- Vitalis Ogbeama (facilitator)

Supporting Staff:

- Kelli Taylor
- Daniel Page

Membership:

According to HB 2235, membership must include:

- One nonmanagement peer mentor who is in active practice.
- One nonmanagement clinical social worker who is in active practice.
- One nonmanagement certified alcohol and drug counselor who is in active practice.
- One nonmanagement qualified mental health associate who is in active practice.
- One nonmanagement qualified mental health professional who is in active practice.
- Two members who carry caseloads and supervise other employees who are working to achieve hours for certification or licensure as a behavioral health provider.
- Directors or the directors' designees from:
 - Four community mental health programs; and
 - Four behavioral health providers that are not community mental health programs.
- One representative of an association of behavioral health provider employees.

- One representative of an association of behavioral health provider organizations.
- At least one representative or designee of a mental health consumer organization.
- At least one representative or designee of a substance use disorder consumer organization; and
- Two representatives of coordinated care organizations.

The membership of the work group convened must include representatives of at least four providers of culturally specific services and, to the extent practicable, represent the geographic, racial, ethnic and gender diversity of this state.

Members will be selected based on their availability and willingness to attend HB 2235 Workgroup sessions, lived experience and subject matter expertise, and in a manner to ensure diversity of perspective and representation of the state. Members representing intersecting identities and Oregon's priority populations will be given a preference.

Language access and accessibility is a priority for the state and as such, interpretation, and access to materials in plain language and alternative formats will be provided as needed. Community and medical assistance program members will be offered compensation for their time.

Scope

The HB 2235 Workgroup scope is to study the major barriers of recruitment and retention of the behavioral health workforce. The workgroup will provide advice and recommendations to support Oregon in reducing the major barriers to workforce recruitment and retention in Oregon's publicly financed behavioral health system.

This workgroup will develop recommendations to:

- Improve the recruitment of the behavioral health workforce.
- Improve the retention of the behavioral health workforce.
- Reduce administrative burdens on the behavioral health workforce.
- Increase the reimbursement paid to behavioral health providers and increase the pay for the behavioral health workforce.
- Reduce the workload of the behavioral health workforce, including caseload guidelines or ratios and consider national and local studies of existing program staffing.
- Reduce burnout within the behavioral health workforce.
- Diversify the behavioral health workforce.

While making these recommendations the workgroup will consider:

- The number and types of workers needed to meet the community's demand for behavioral health treatment and services.
- The impact of the recommendations on:
 - Consumers' access to behavioral health services.
 - Providers' administrative burdens.
 - The delivery of team-based care.

- The ability to transition to value-based payment methodologies; and
- The resources needed to implement the recommendations.

The workgroup will provide initial recommendations to OHA by December 6, 2024, and will provide final recommendations to OHA by November 7, 2025.

As mentioned above, due to the short timelines and limited resources, state staff will be responsible for developing draft recommendations, strategies and/or plans for the HB 2235 Workgroup to review and comment on. Workgroup members may also sponsor and present topics/presentations when coordinated with OHA and when placed on the meeting agenda. These initial drafts will be based on prior community input received through various state-sponsored community engagement activities to leverage existing community input. Advice and recommendations from the HB 2235 Workgroup will then be used to make recommendations to support Oregon in reducing the major barriers to workforce recruitment and retention in Oregon's publicly financed behavioral health system.

Meetings

The HB 2235 Workgroup is anticipated to launch in January 2024 and extend through December of 2025. The HB 2235 Workgroup will meet for one-hundred twenty minutes (with one 10-minute break) twice a month from January 2024 to June 2025 and then monthly from July 2025 – November 2025.

The scheduling of meetings will occur consistently each month on the first Thursday of the month and the 3rd Thursday of the month at **1:00pm**. The decision to change the meeting times initially set by the group and OHA will be changed using the process detailed in the "Decision Making Process" section of this Charter. RSVP to meetings is required.

December 2023 – Appoint Members, launch and onboard workgroup, finalize charter.

January 2024 – Convene HB2235 Workgroup

February 2024 to October 2024 – Review existing behavioral health workforce data, view presentations, hear public comment, discourse on needs/gaps, and prepare draft initial recommendations.

November 2024 – Complete initial recommendations

December 2024 – OHA to draft initial recommendations report.

January 2025 – OHA will complete initial report and report will be presented to Oregon legislators no later than January 15, 2025.

February 2025 to September 2025 – Continue to review behavioral health workforce data, hear public comment, view presentations, discourse on workforce needs/ gaps, and prepare draft final recommendations.

October 2025 – Complete final recommendations

November 2025 – OHA to draft final recommendations report.

December 2025 – OHA will complete final recommendations report and report will be presented to Oregon legislators no later than December 15, 2025. Final meeting to be held to collect feedback and express appreciations.

Check-ins:

The workgroup may participate in scheduled “check-ins” during regular meetings to identify progress of recommendations or take inventory of barriers to completing work.

Absence:

If a member cannot attend a meeting, they can provide input via email or by talking with an OHA staff person. Members can send proxies to participate in meetings on their behalf to assist in maintaining quorum. Members should consider an individual’s expertise and intentions when selecting a proxy. **Proxies cannot participate in decision making/voting.**

Quorum:

A quorum is the minimum number of members that must participate for the workgroup to be representative enough of membership to make decisions. A public workgroup cannot meet without meeting a quorum. Generally, a quorum is considered met when a “majority” (over half) of the members are present. **For this workgroup to reach quorum there will need to be 11 workgroup members.**

Decision-Making Process

The HB 2235 Workgroup agrees to make any decisions through a consensus-based decision-making process whenever possible. To encourage consensus, topics requiring decisions will be presented and discussed. Decisions must be made only when a quorum is present.

Decisions will be voted on by roll call where each member will vote yes/for, no/against, or abstain.

Members

The following individuals will serve as HB 2235 Workgroup members:

Belindy Bonser

- Committee Position - Member
- Committee Role – Non-management Peer Mentor
- Work Title – SSVF Health Care Navigator
- Organization Affiliation – Columbia Care
- Location – Medford

Clark Hazel

- Committee Position - Member
- Committee Role – Non-management Clinical Social Worker
- Work Title – Mental Health Therapist
- Organization Affiliation – Health Allies Counseling
- Location – Portland

Michael Spencer

- Committee Position - Member
- Committee Role – Non-management Certified Alcohol and Drug Counselor
- Work Title – Clinical Supervisor
- Organization Affiliation – Volunteers of America of Oregon
- Location – Portland

Sarah Conyers

- Committee Position – Member
- Committee Role – Non-management Qualified Mental Health Associate
- Work Title – Residential Counselor QMHA
- Organization Affiliation – Clatsop Behavioral Healthcare
- Location – Clatsop County

Brenda Blake

- Committee Position - Member
- Committee Role – Non-management Qualified Mental Health Professional
- Work Title – Mental Health Specialist
- Organization Affiliation – Marion County Health and Human Services
- Location – Salem

Diane Bocking

- Committee Position - Member
- Committee Role – Clinical Supervisor
- Work Title – Chief Operations Officer
- Organization Affiliation – OYEN Emotional Wellness Center
- Location – Woodburn

Tony Lai

- Committee Position - Member
- Committee Role – Clinical Supervisor
- Work Title – Advanced Behavioral Health Clinician
- Organization Affiliation – Yamhill County Family and Youth Programs
- Location – McMinnville

Shyra Merila

- Committee Position – Member
- Committee Role – Community Mental Health Program Director
- Work Title – Deputy Director
- Organization Affiliation – Clatsop Behavioral Healthcare
- Location– Clatsop County

Jenn Inman

- Committee Position - Member
- Committee Role – Community Mental Health Program Director
- Work Title – Jackson County Mental Health Division Manager
- Organization Affiliation – Jackson County Health and Human Services
- Location – Jackson County

Chantay Jett

- Committee Position - Member
- Committee Role – Community Mental Health Program Director
- Work Title – Executive Director
- Organization Affiliation – Wallowa Valley Center for Wellness
- Location – Wallowa County

David Geels

- Committee Position - Member
- Committee Role – Community Mental Health Program Director
- Work Title – Director of Behavioral Health
- Organization Affiliation – Coos Health and Wellness
- Location – Coos County

Kelli Bosak

- Committee Position - Member
- Committee Role – Non-CMHP Director
- Work Title – Co-Director of Integrated Behavioral Health
- Organization Affiliation – North Bend Medical Center
- Location – North Bend

Lorie DeCarvalho

- Committee Position - Member
- Committee Role – Non-CMHP Director
- Work Title – VP for Behavioral Health Services
- Organization Affiliation – Aviva Health
- Location – Roseburg

Melinda Del Rio

- Committee Position - Member
- Committee Role – Non-CMHP Director
- Work Title – Clinical Director
- Organization Affiliation – Mind Solutions LLC
- Location – Portland

Lucia Mendoza-Meraz

- Committee Position - Member
- Committee Role – Non-CMHP Director
- Work Title – Executive Director
- Organization Affiliation – Fortaleza Atravez Barreras
- Location – Salem

Anthony Cordaro, Jr.

- Committee Position - Member
- Committee Role – Representative: Association of Behavioral Health Employees
- Work Title – Child & Adolescent Psychiatrist
- Organization Affiliation – Northwest Permanente
- Location – Clackamas

Diane Benavides Wille

- Committee Position - Member
- Committee Role – Representative: Association of Behavioral Health Provider Organizations
- Work Title – VP of Equity, Inclusion and Workforce Development
- Organization Affiliation – LifeWorks NW
- Location – Beaverton

Chris Bouneff

- Committee Position - Member
- Committee Role – Representative: Mental Health Consumer Organization
- Work Title – Executive Director
- Organization Affiliation – NAMI Oregon
- Location – Portland

Jose Garcia

- Committee Position - Member
- Committee Role – Representative: Substance Use Disorder Consumer Organization
- Work Title - Director
- Organization Affiliation - Juntos
- Location – Portland

Cheryl Cohen

- Committee Position – Member
- Committee Role – Representative: Coordinated Care Organization
- Work Title – Provider Workforce Development Program Manager
- Organization Affiliation – PacificSource Health Plans
- Location – Portland

Quryynn Hale

- Committee Position - Member
- Committee Role – Representative: Coordinated Care Organization
- Work Title – Behavioral Health Program Manager Children Youth and Families
- Organization Affiliation – CareOregon
- Location – Portland

The National Governors Association’s Next Generation of the Healthcare Workforce Policy Academy

OHA has been selected to participate in this academy from February to October 2024 to design, implement and strengthen Oregon’s strategy on recruiting and retaining the next generation of the healthcare workforce. OHA applied for this academy to receive technical assistance and strategic planning support for the HB 2235 workgroup. As part of the academy, OHA was asked to create a Policy Academy Team comprised of a representative from the Governor’s Office, OHA staff and community leaders and community-based providers. OHA reserved two of the six Policy Academy Team spots for HB 2235 workgroup members. Two workgroup members will be nominated and voted on by the workgroup to participate in the academy.

Guiding Principles

The following principles and definitions will guide the work of the HB 2235 Workgroup

- Oregon’s strategic goal to end health inequities by 2030.
- Oregon’s health equity definition: Oregon will have established a health system that creates health equity when all people can reach their full health potential and well-being and are not disadvantaged by their race, ethnicity, language, disability, age, gender, gender identity, sexual orientation, social class, intersections among these communities or identities, or other socially determined circumstances. Achieving health equity requires the ongoing collaboration of all regions and sectors of the state, including tribal governments to address: the equitable distribution or redistribution of resources and power; and recognizing, reconciling, and rectifying historical and contemporary injustices.
- Using existing community input as a starting point – the community has already told us much and we should use that information.

- Centering those most impacted – seeing lived experience and community wisdom as valid and valued sources of data

Group Commitments

Each member of the HB 2235 Workgroup agrees to the following commitments:

1. Prioritize attending HB 2235 Workgroup meetings.
2. Review meeting materials ahead of time and come prepared to participate.
3. Take the time we need to make sure everyone has the information they need to participate and understand the material.
4. Continually support and remain focused on the OHA core values of health equity, service excellence, integrity, leadership, partnership, innovation, and transparency. In this, we will best be able to achieve the outcomes of this group.
5. Maintain professional workplace behavior. It is the policy of Oregon state government that mutual respect between all individuals is integral to the efficient conduct of business. Such behaviors include:
 - a. Building positive relationships with others.
 - b. Communicating in a respectful manner.
 - c. Holding oneself accountable.
 - d. Maintaining a space which is free from discrimination, harassment, or erosion of employee morale.
6. Encourage diversity of opinion on all topics. Each member commits to the diversity of person and opinion, even when they may clash with one another. Every person's opinion matters. Hence, each suggestion is taken seriously and noted to be referred to later.
7. Keep other team members informed. Communication is vital to the success of the work. Communication leads to building up of trust between committee members and partners. No one should work in silos.
8. Be clear and concise. This will save time as well as promote better understanding among team members.
9. Keep acronyms and unnecessary jargon to a minimum.
10. Practice active listening skills. These include respectful questioning, paraphrasing, as well as summarizing to bring out ideas.
11. Refrain from any private or professional activity that would create a conflict between personal interests and the interests of the State of Oregon.

12. Maintain commitment to this work. Be accountable and responsible for the team and to the team. Alert members of absences and illnesses with as much notice as possible.
13. Be honest as well as open. Honesty is vital in the assurance of committee success.
14. Keep side conversations in the chat to a minimum – remember all meeting materials and discussion are a part of public record.

Background

For more information on the work of this committee, see [Oregon House Bill 2235](#)