

Oregon's 2022-2027 1115 Medicaid Demonstration Waiver: A Pathway to Health Equity

Oregon has an opportunity to use its upcoming 2022-2027 1115 Medicaid Demonstration Waiver application as a pathway to create more equity in health care. OHA has received input from all corners of the state - from people in positions of power to people who have been marginalized by structural racism and oppression – asking OHA to use this waiver application to push for a more equitable health care system. As such, OHA is proposing four key policy areas in which we believe we can create new systems of power and health, and reverse the legacy of health inequities. Our hypotheses and the policy proposals that flow from them are contained in four policy concept papers.

The overarching goal of the waiver is to advance health equity by:

Ensuring access to coverage for all people in Oregon



Creating an equity-centered system of health



Encouraging smart, flexible spending



Reinvesting government savings across systems



Without **equitable access to coverage**, people cannot stay healthy or access the care they need—this truth was driven home by the experiences during COVID-19. We know that people of color and historically oppressed communities have higher rates of uninsurance. Our waiver application would seek to reverse inequitable access with strategies to extend coverage to every child and adult in Oregon we can cover, and stabilize that coverage for members. [Read more](#)

Even when people do have coverage, their experience of the health care system varies widely based on their race, ethnicity, gender, gender identity, sexual orientation, and all other social factors that make up who they are. By focusing our attention on policies that change this reality and ensure that our health care system provides an equitable and person-centered experience to every individual, we can begin to create an **equity-centered system of health care**. This requires coordination and collaboration with systems outside of health care. [Read more](#)

Our system can do more to encourage our partners to invest in the community-based approaches to address social determinants of health that drive health inequity. We intend to push for **further flexibility in spending** on upstream drivers of health while creating expectations that the spending must make meaningful improvements in individuals' health. This would also include redistributing funds and decision-making power around community investments to the community itself. [Read more](#)

Oregon has generated large savings from its approach to Medicaid when compared to other states' methods. Our CCO model is innovative and cost-effective. Rather than let those savings accrue to the federal and state government, we intend to ask to **reinvest government savings in communities** to address larger or statewide problems that no single community can fix on its own. With a focus on equity, we believe we can use this funding to address larger scale barriers to health and health equity. [Read more](#)

Feedback

OHA has based these policy concepts on extensive public feedback over the past several years. We rely on stakeholders and the public to inform the policies that we propose to continue to improve our state's Medicaid system in ways that improve the health and lives of people in Oregon. We welcome feedback on the policy approaches outlined above and in the concept papers. You may contact us with input at any time via email 1115WaiverRenewal@dhsosha.state.or.us or by attending a public meeting to provide comments. A calendar of public meetings is available on our webpage Oregon.gov/1115WaiverRenewal.