



Memorandum

To: Rep. Holvey, Chair, House Committee on Rules
Rep. Smith Warner, Vice-Chair, House Committee on Rules
Rep. Drazan, Vice-Chair, House Committee on Rules
Members of the House Committee on Rules

From: Danielle Sobel, MPH, Policy and Governmental Affairs Senior Director
Marty Carty, Policy Senior Manager

Date: February 21, 2020

Re: Support for House Bill 4016A with the –A9 Amendment

The Oregon Primary Care Association (OPCA) and Oregon's 32 community health centers, respectfully request your support for HB 4016A with the –A9 Amendment.

OPCA is a non-profit organization, with a mission to support Oregon's 32 community health centers, also known as federally qualified health centers, in leading the transformation of primary care to achieve health equity for all. Community health centers deliver integrated primary, oral and behavioral health care services, to over 433,000 Oregonians annually. Community health centers are providers within the CCO networks, providing care to Oregon's underserved populations, including one in four Oregon Health Plan members.

Every Oregonian should have access to health care and specifically life-saving medication necessary to greatly reduce the risk of HIV infection for those individuals who may have been exposed to HIV. We know that increasing access to care is one of the single most effective ways to ensure that individuals receive the preventative and supportive health and medical care they need to thrive.

One of the key areas of focus for the National HIV/AIDS Strategy for 2020 in the United States calls for full access to comprehensive HIV treatment services. While we were disappointed to see Pre-Exposure Prophylaxis or (PrEP) removed from this concept, we are glad to see this step forward in increasing access to health care. Despite advances and advocacy for PrEP and Post-Exposure Prophylaxis (PEP) we've seen alarming rates of prescribing disparity based on gender and race. Health disparities exist at every step along the continuum of HIV testing-to-care with gaps in each step contributing to and perpetuating health disparities. In underserved communities we know that barriers to care may include transportation, access to insurance and being able to afford care.

Pharmacists are among some of the most accessible providers in communities across our state and are well positioned to improve patient understanding, promote medication adherence, provide key risk reduction counseling, and enhance PEP efficacy. The pharmacy is a great entry point, especially for those patients who experience significant barriers.

Health centers provide essential integrated primary care and pharmacy services in their communities. In underserved areas across Oregon, we know that health center pharmacists reduce stigma associated with medications that promote harm reduction for patients suffering from substance use disorder and for those seeking family planning options. HB 4016A with the –A9 amendment will improve access to PEP and further reduce stigma, especially for minority patients and those in rural areas.

This bill is a critical first step toward ensuring all Oregonians have access to all health care services. OPCA and health centers recognize that a system that has "no wrong door" increases access to health care services and decreases health-related disparities. We hope that you will join us in support of HB 4016A with the –A9 amendment.