



March 25, 2013

Representative Mitch Greenlick, Chair  
Representative Alisa Keny-Guyer, Vice-Chair  
Representative Jim Thompson, Vice-Chair  
House Health Care Committee  
Oregon Legislative Assembly

Re: HB 3407

Dear Chair Greenlick, Vice-Chairs Keny-Guyer and Thompson, and Members of the Committee:

It is a terrible reality that persons with mental health and co-occurring physical health problems die as much 38 years earlier than the general population( DHS, 2008).

We at Mental health America of Oregon advocate for our peers to have effective and culturally appropriate healthcare. We are very invested in there being a robust and broad Peer Wellness Specialist workforce, although it is more accurate to refer to Peer Wellness Specialists as “complimentary health workers, rather than “traditional”, since they have been developed relatively recently ( 2008, Benton County, Oregon)

Traditional Health Workers (Community Health Workers, Peer Wellness Specialists, Personal Health Navigators, and Doulas) are a valued and essential component of Oregon’s Health Care Transformation. We/I believe that these complementary workers are crucial for the success of healthcare transformation as they support the Triple Aim of better care, better health outcomes, and lowered costs.

We/I support the principle that Traditional Health Workers should inform and shape policy regarding their own profession. We believe that a diverse workforce is essential to ensuring a healthy Oregon for all.

Please vote YES on HB 3407 and support our work to have meaningful participation from Traditional Health Workers in creating policy for their own profession.

Thank you for your consideration,

Meghan Caughey  
Director  
Board of Directors