



May 8, 2013

Health Share of Oregon Comments on SB 725

Members of the House Committee on Health Care:

Coordinated care organizations (CCOs) contract with the State to provide high quality, high value, coordinated care to Oregon Health Plan (OHP) members. Health Share of Oregon is the state's largest CCO, serving approximately 165,000 members in the Tri-County area. Health Share was created through collaboration of 11 founding member organizations and many stakeholder partners that serve OHP members. Health Share is organized as a private non-profit corporation.

Thank you for the opportunity to comment on SB 725, which would extend the term of CCO contracts with the Oregon Health Authority (OHA) and limit the number of times the contracts can be amended during a 12-month period. Amendments that will be introduced today will require CCOs to publicize certain information about CCO governance and make community advisory council meetings public. Health Share does not have an opinion about the underlying legislation and, as a result, did not comment on this bill in the Senate. These comments are directed toward the proposed amendments.

Health Share commends Representative Mitch Greenlick for crafting amendments that will encourage all CCOs to promote transparency and public input, as Health Share has done from its inception. We believe that a CCO cannot truly respond to the needs of its particular community without two-way communication between the CCO and its community.

CCO Community Advisory Councils are the best venues for sharing information about CCOs with the public and also gathering input from community members. Health Share's Community Advisory Council is comprised of true community members, from OHP consumers to representatives of home care workers to mental health advocates and representatives of community services organizations. The Council meets every month in an open forum where community members and the media are welcome. Community members are invited to participate in a public comment period during the first thirty minutes of every meeting. Health Share announces each Council meeting with a press release, in addition to email notification. The Chair of Health Share's Council is an OHP member, a consumer advocate, and a Director on Health Share's governance board. These are processes that Health Share has undertaken voluntarily.

The Council has advised the Board of Directors throughout the development of the Health Share. In fact, the Council formed and began meeting before the Board of Directors was fully seated. The Council also reviewed Health Share's transformation plan during its public meetings throughout the transformation plan development process, taking public comment into account along the way. The Council was created as the appropriate forum for public input. The amendments introduced today formalize that arrangement by requiring CCO community advisory councils to accept public comment.

As a non-profit corporation, much of Health Share's business information is already in the public sphere. Health Share has filed with the Internal Revenue Service (IRS) for tax exempt status. When the IRS grants formal tax exempt status to Health Share, the CCO will be required to disclose a significant amount of financial information to the public in the form of tax returns on IRS Form 990, and Health Share's application for tax exempt status must also be made available upon request. In addition to publicly available financial information, state law requires that CCOs' community needs assessments and transformation plans be conducted and developed through public processes, as Health Share has done by involving its Council. Today's amendments will require all CCOs to share information about CCO activities with the public.

Health Share has had a wonderful experience with the public nature of its Council, and we are enthused that other CCOs will now have the opportunity to engage with their communities in a similar way. Most importantly, each CCO will have flexibility and local control over the specific way in which they interact with their communities. For these reasons, we urge your vote in favor of SB 725.

Respectfully submitted by Susan Kirchoff, Chief Operating Officer

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