

Testimony of Yamhill County Commissioner and AOC President Mary Stern

Ways & Means Human Services Subcommittee, February 21, 2013

AOC and the Legislature are team mates in Statewide Transformations and in sharing the responsibilities for providing so many services to Oregonians.

Shared Services

Public health in Oregon is truly a shared services system between federal, state and county governments. Together we provide resources to meet the needs and expectations of the public. The federal government provides funding along with the state through the Oregon Health Authority's Public Health Division. The Local Public Health Divisions in the counties provide direct prevention interventions to residents and visitors, and clinical services to vulnerable populations.

County Commissioners around the state value public health so much that even in these distressed times at least 31 of the 36 counties invested over \$100M in the last biennium

- In Yamhill County, during fiscal years 11-13 we contributed \$1.1 million in local funds for core public health services like immunizations, communicable disease prevention, and nursing services aimed to protect and promote the public's health.
- With the \$1.1M in local funds, we leveraged another nearly \$1M (944,000) in federal funds that was only possible with local investment.
- For example, in maternity case management services alone, we contributed a total of \$306,000 in county general funds which leveraged \$810,000 in federal funds.

Through this federal/state/county partnership, crucial public health services improve health for many Oregonians. Any reduction in state general funds could lead to less use of county general funds, which in turn results in fewer federal dollars leveraged. This presents a double, or in some cases triple, whammy to local health departments.

Public Health and CCOs (Coordinated Care Organizations)

Yamhill County is a founding member of the newly formed Yamhill CCO. There is a need for creative financing for innovation between CCOs and Public Health. AOC supports the Governor's proposed Health System Transformation Fund that would use \$15M of state general fund to encourage collaboration and innovation between CCOs and local public health.

AOC also supports using a portion of the tobacco master settlement agreement to fund local public health tobacco cessation programs.

Public health needs to be part of the solution for improved health outcomes in every CCO service area across the state.

- In the Yamhill CCO, public health representatives hold leadership positions on the CCO Board, Community Advisory Council and Clinical Advisory Panel. (Commissioner Kathy George is on the executive leadership team and our Director of Human Services is the CCO Board Chair. Plus our Public Health Officer and Nursing Programs Manager are on the Clinical Advisory Panel, and our Community Health Manager is on the Community Advisory Council.
- Yamhill CCO is making early investments in community health worker development and better integration of public and behavioral health into primary care settings.
 - For example, our public health department has recently stationed a nurse home visitor into the largest pediatric clinic in the county to ensure efficient coordination of care with high risk patients.

Community Based Public Health

While CCOs and Medicaid expansion increase the emphasis on the Medicaid population, there is still a strong need for a governmental public health: Public health is population based work; it's for the whole community, not just one certain population. Coordination between CCOs, Early Learning Hubs and nonprofit agencies is crucial and local public health is the ideal entity to handle this coordination:

- Locally, Yamhill County Public Health is engaged in the development of a comprehensive approach to improving readiness-to-learn benchmarks through the Early Childhood Coordinating Council.
- Our Early Childhood Coordinating Council is a coalition of leaders from education, prekindergarten services, social and health services and business and community leaders.
- As part of this coalition, Public Health is preparing itself to respond to any legislation that will allow local communities to organize themselves for better health and learning outcomes for our most at risk populations.

I know you face difficult financial decisions. I offer the assistance of the Association of Oregon Counties and am happy to answer any questions.