



**Oregon Support Services Association (OSSA) Testimony**  
**Margaret Theisen, Chief Executive Officer, Full Access**  
**Senate Committee on Human Services and Early Childhood**  
**Invited Testimony on eXPRS Implementation**  
**February 10, 2015, 3:00 pm, HR B**

My name is Margaret Theisen, CEO for Full Access, a Support Services Brokerage serving 875 individuals in Crook, Deschutes, Jefferson, Lake and Lane Counties. We have just completed the largest payroll for Personal Support Workers in the eXPRS system to date. Prior to early December all Brokerages and Community Developmental Disability Programs were slated to begin using eXPRS January 1, but a roll out option was provided and we chose to go forward nonetheless. As the largest brokerage in Oregon we are interested in addressing critical issues quickly and thoroughly, so felt it useful to launch as soon as possible.

**Implementation/Technical Problems**

- At this time our intellectual and developmental disabilities case management system is taking existing plans with flexible services previously authorized by clients, and recreating them in eXPRS as the Plan of Care (POC). This is not a matter of simple data entry; instead we are recreating these plans under a wholly new set of service names, service codes, service limitations, and standards for provider qualifications. There is no flexibility with provider qualifications, expenditure guidelines, or eXPRS constraints. Policy decisions to support the field in utilizing the system have not been swift or thorough.
- I previously worked at a high tech firm that builds bar code scanners so have good knowledge about building quality into a product as opposed to fixing it after the fact through work around measures. We are essentially testing eXPRS at the customer delivery level with live data—data that causes people to get paid or not for their work.

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Bugs in the eXPRS system are being identified by the hundreds, logged by the field, communicated to State staff, re-communicated, and brought to resolution to the best of our ability with our State partners. We had 30 payments last week that required work around measures to ensure provider payments. Full Access identified a list of 64 additional problem areas yesterday that are stopping Plan Of Care entry at all. 25% of them are related to a single design or policy problem, which we have flagged now 3 times.

- Depending on internet speed and how many users are logged onto eXPRS at a given time, it can take anywhere from 10 seconds to over 2 minutes to navigate from screen to screen in order to enter data. For this most recent payroll at our agency we logged 276 labor hours and processed over 2000 time sheets. We brought in 8 temp workers in addition to 6 full time staff, running shifts from 7:00am to 10:00pm some days to complete the work. Temps must be pre-authorized by DHS to enter eXPRS data. We needed to provide names and email addresses for temps several days in advance of them working, not an easy accomplishment, and when they did not get authorized, we used work around measures. The Department clearly does not have adequate resources to deal with such quick turnaround demands in the payment system.
- Payroll now requires a massive increase in work force only twice each month. For Brokerages and most CDDPs, there simply is no existing infrastructure to reallocate for this work.
- This is all happening amidst two years of systems change implementing the Community First Choice (K plan). The year 2014 saw the release of three times as many policy transmittals to the developmental disabilities field alone from 2012. We also experienced two extensive sets of revisions to the Oregon Administrative Rules.
- This all serves to draw us away from the actual work we do for our customers, which is the compelling reason we need to have this discussion.

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- Brokerages have been in eXPRS since July 2009 as a provider of case management, a very distinct function from the provider payment system, and there have been significant issues and discussions since then. Despite this history, there is now insufficient tech support within and offered by DHS to manage this roll-in. This is not for lack of tireless work by the State staff and those of us in the field. We really need to be more mindful of the negative impact to human capital, our most important resource, in these efforts.

### Our Asks

- resources for the additional work in the field
- additional resources for DHS IT and Technical Assistance staff and
- commitment to swift policy decisions necessary to guide field implementation

Oregon's services for people with intellectual and developmental disabilities were at one time a national model envied for our values, cost effectiveness, creativity, and ability to meet the needs of the people we support. Not perfect, but progressive and pioneering. Our goal is to work with DHS and all partners to recapture that position.

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