

FEB 20, 2015

Department of Veterans Affairs
Southern Oregon Rehabilitation Center & Clinics (SORCC)
White City, Oregon 97503

BINKER, MICHELLE L.L.
CHIEF OF STAFF
REP. CARL WILSON, OR HOUSE DISTRICT 03
900 COURT STREET NE RM H390
SALEM, OR 97301

Dear CHIEF BINKER

RE: HB2247

In support of recognizing pharmacists in the Oregon Rural Medical Practitioners Credit, I would like to provide a testimonial to the committee. My name is Theodore Simmons, I currently serve as the Home-Based Primary Care Clinical Pharmacist at the VA Outpatient Clinic in Klamath Falls, OR. I care for veterans with complex medical conditions, which limit their ability to travel to care appointments. I serve as a licensed independent practitioner providing direct care to patients as part of a multidisciplinary team. My clinical scope of practice, as appointed by the Credentialing & Privileging Board of the Medical Staff at my facility, includes: initiating orders for drug therapies and diagnostic tests; developing, ordering, and adjusting individualized patient dosing regimens with the consent of responsible physicians; take and record patient's medication history; take, record, and interpret patient's pertinent physical findings relevant to monitoring drug therapy; and work independently under a clinical pharmacy scope of practice.

My background includes a doctor of pharmacy degree from the University of Charleston (Charleston, WV); a post-graduate year one pharmacy residency at St. Mary's Medical Center (Huntington, WV); and a board certification as a pharmacotherapy specialist. I have held positions in rural and urban locations, previously having spent >2 years as a clinical pharmacist at the Portland VA Medical Center. It was my choice to leave Portland to serve Veterans in Southern Oregon. I do believe that with my background, qualifications and with the opportunities in my profession, I could choose a variety of locations to practice pharmacy.

Rural communities face unique barriers to care, including lack of public transportation, lack of specialty care, and a smaller number of community providers. Patients in rural settings should receive the same level of care and access to services as their urban counterparts. This simply is not going to be realized if there is no incentive for quality providers to come to, and stay in, the rural setting.

If you have any questions or concerns please contact me at (541)273-6206 ext 1745.

Sincerely,

Theodore E. Simmons, Pharm.D., BCPS
Klamath Falls CBOC
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Klamath Falls, OR 97601