

Providence Health & Services
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March 4, 2015

The Honorable Monnes Anderson
Chair, Senate Committee on Health Care
State Capitol
Salem, Oregon 97301

RE: Senate Bill 608, Expansion of palliative care

Dear Senator Monnes Anderson and members of the committee:

Providence Health & Services is constantly striving to improve care for patients with advanced disease and chronic illness, the expansion of palliative care services is a cornerstone of this work. We hope you will join us in support of Senate Bill 608 and the expansion of palliative care services across Oregon through increased public awareness.

At Providence our palliative care experts help patients and family members struggling to manage illness at all stages. These patients often have complex needs that require an individualized approach to care management which may include: managing physical symptoms like pain, nausea or appetite; addressing changing needs by updating care plans or identifying patient wishes; providing guidance regarding available treatment and counseling options; and facilitating access to community resources, support groups and patient education.

One of the most important parts of delivering quality palliative care is ensuring these services are integrated across the continuum of care. For this reason, Providence has been working with the American Cancer Association on strengthening the bill language to encourage coordination across a patients care team, including their primary care provider.

Promoting a larger, coordinated public dialogue around palliative care in Oregon is crucial to improving the quality of life for patients in Oregon; we hope you'll join in support. Thank you for the opportunity to comment on this important bill.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Doug Koekkoek".

Doug Koekkoek, M.D.
Chief Executive, Providence Medical Group and Clinical Services
Providence Health & Services - Oregon