



Statement for the Record

April 15, 2015

SB 231, PCPCH Bill

We are writing on behalf of the 100+ Children's Health Alliance pediatricians to express our sincere support for Senate Bill 231 and the proposed amendments. Children's Health Alliance pediatricians care for approximately 140,000 children in the Portland metro area and Salem, and are committed to improving the health of all Oregon's children.

Without reservation, we advocate for the provider stakeholder amendments in SB231 to be adopted and ultimately for SB231 to pass, ensuring better support for patient-centered primary care homes across Oregon.

Right now the legislature has a unique opportunity to ensure Oregonians have access to the best possible primary and preventive health care. As independent pediatricians we are now adopting innovative population health strategies and employing multi-disciplinary care teams to deliver comprehensive pediatric care. For example, we are hiring nurses to provide proactive, coordinated care for complex patients to keep them out of hospitals and emergency rooms. We are hiring psychologists and nutritionists to work with families to address all aspects of their health. We also stay open late on evenings and provide care on weekends so that families can avoid unnecessary trips to the emergency room.

We strive to provide the best care possible, and we know we can do even more. However, changing the way we deliver care for the 21st century requires substantial investment.

Oregon has recently received national attention for achieving significant reductions in expensive emergency room visits and hospitalizations. Insurance companies ultimately benefit from a strong primary and preventive care infrastructure, but there is currently no mechanism to ensure that primary care practices working hard to improve health outcomes are fairly compensated for their contributions. SB231 and the proposed amendments will begin to hold health plans accountable for making sure our health care dollars help us move away from only paying for "sick care" to paying for a team-based approach to wellness and prevention.

In fall 2013 the Oregon Health Authority convened insurance companies with a goal to develop voluntary and consensus-based strategies to support primary care practices that



CHILDREN'S HEALTH *alliance*

are investing to become patient-centered primary care homes. More than 14 insurance plans voluntarily agreed to implement broad payment support for innovative primary care practices, but to date no real progress has been made. The absence of meaningful innovation from insurance plans poses a threat to Oregon's health system transformation efforts, and ultimately for practices' financial viability.

Now is the time to ensure that Oregon's primary care infrastructure remains strong as practices invest in new and innovative ways to provide better care for patients and families. Across the Children's Health Alliance 100+ pediatrician members we advocate for SB231 and the provider stakeholder proposed amendments, which will help give Oregon's children access to the best possible health care.

Sincerely,

Jay Rosenbloom, MD, PhD
Medical Director, Children's Health Alliance
Pediatrician, Pediatric Associates of the Northwest

Deborah Rumsey
Executive Director, Children's Health Alliance