



De Paul Treatment Centers
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Maree Wacker
Chief Executive Officer

April 3, 2015

Chair Sarah Gelser

Members of the Committee

Senate Human Services and Early Childhood Committee
Oregon Senate

Dear Chair Gelser and Members of the Committee,

I am writing to request that you **not move** with further action on SB 831 and 832.

De Paul Treatment Centers serve over 2,400 youth, adults and their families with substance abuse and co-occurring mental health treatment annually. We provide the full spectrum of care by offering medical detox, residential, day and outpatient treatment. We recently opened the first and only youth detox program in the state. Approximately 75 percent of our clients are members of the Oregon Health Plan.

We have several concerns related to the language in these bills that require CCOS to only contract with licensed mental health providers. Chief among our concerns is that our workforce is highly skilled and depends on the use of master's level clinicians who qualify under strict competency requirements and practice as Qualified Mental Health Professionals (QMHP). Requiring licensed staff will increase the costs of care due to higher wages and licensing costs with little, if no return on quality of care. Indeed, these bills do not achieve the triple aim of the Affordable Care Act.

Additionally, the scarcity of licensed clinicians will in effect put at risk the access OHP members will have for their mental health needs.

Finally, exceptional substance abuse and mental health care is dependent on a variety of individuals both licensed professionals and unlicensed providers serving the needs of clients. Unlicensed providers such as peer mentors and recovery specialists, QMHAs and QMHPs are **crucial** for successful outcomes.

Thank you for your consideration. I can be reached at (503) 535-1155 if you have questions.

Sincerely,

Maree Wacker