



## **Statement in Support of Senate Bill 144 A**

Oregon Psychological Association (OPA) urges Oregon Lawmakers to support SB 144 A.

Telemedicine is an important emerging mode of service delivery that gives healthcare providers an essential tool to treat traditionally underserved clients, often in remote areas where healthcare access has historically been limited. Because telehealth is a relatively new area, guidelines, standards of care and regulatory rules need continuous development and revision to remain relevant.

SB 144 A was developed by the Telemedicine Reimbursement Expansion Workgroup, a multidisciplinary workgroup that included stakeholders involving providers, health systems and payors. OPA had representation on this workgroup. Members of the workgroup sought consensus about the need for the proposed changes.

SB 144 A introduces vital clarifying language that:

- Defines what telehealth services are, how they are to be delivered and by whom. Further defines expectations regarding adherence to professional, state and federal standards.
- Removes restrictive originating site definitions that limited how patients and providers could access or provide care. Expands coverage to both rural and urban settings.
- Mandates that insurance payors cover telehealth as a modality for service delivery according to existing contracts with providers. Establishes a timeline for implementing this coverage.

Please join OPA in supporting this worthy bill.