



Comments on House Bill 3090
From Chris Bouneff, Executive Director, NAMI Oregon
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House Committee on Health Care

NAMI Oregon wishes to express its support for the Dash-1 amendments for House Bill 3090, which would require hospitals to develop policies for responding to patients and families in emergency rooms who present with behavioral health crises.

HB 3090 is designed to prompt emergency rooms across Oregon to provide a more uniform and predictable response to patients who need emergency care for behavioral health. Too often, an emergency room response is inadequate for people in crisis or for people who just experienced a crisis, as the individuals and families who comprise NAMI's membership can attest.

Their personal stories that they will express during public testimony captures the frustration and confusion we experience more effectively than anything NAMI can express here. Stories of loved ones who just attempted self harm being returned home in a matter of hours without the individual or family having any inkling what to do next or how to help a loved one stay safe. And stories of individuals and families in which a patient needs an intensive intervention short of hospital inpatient, but they are sent home with no discharge plan or next steps.

HB 3090 is modeled after legislation in 2015 that led to uniform policies around discharge planning and patient/family engagement from psychiatric inpatient hospital care. Following that legislation, the Oregon Association of Hospitals and Health Systems collaborated with NAMI Oregon and others to produce implementation guidelines that hospitals could adopt. NAMI Oregon has also used the final product in working with individuals and families to more successfully interact with hospital staff as they work toward discharge of an individual in inpatient care.

NAMI hopes that HB 3090 leads to a similar result. The legislation doesn't dictate what policies hospitals should adopt. We do not want to be in a position to legislate specific treatments. Rather, the bill directs hospitals to adopt policies that lead to a more predictable intervention in emergency rooms — one that patients and families and/or patient support networks also may utilize.

NAMI Oregon hopes that the Oregon Association of Hospitals and Health Systems will be willing to collaborate closely again in drafting a similar implementation guide in HB 3090 is approved.

NAMI Oregon is pleased to endorse HB 3090, and we respectfully request your support. Thank you for this opportunity to provide testimony.