

Technical Fix to Improve Patient Access to NDs

SB 856

Naturopathic Physicians: Fixing Outdated Statutes to Improve Access to Care

The education and scope of practice of naturopathic doctors (NDs) has evolved over time such that NDs are now recognized as **primary care physicians**.

However, many statutes that refer to “physician” pre-date this modern scope

of practice, and have not evolved to reflect the procedures and services that naturopathic physicians now provide.

SB 856 looks at the myriad references in ORS which either define “physician” as only an MD or DO, or where the term “physician” is left undefined, and

updates those definitions to also include “naturopathic physician” to ensure that patients of NDs are receiving the same access to quality and timely care as patients of other primary care providers.

EXAMPLES OF STATUTES THAT SB 856 WOULD MODERNIZE

Adds NDs to list of providers protected from certain liabilities for providing health care services, use of automated defibrillators, providing emergency assistance.

Allows NDs to be a provider in a number of different capacities for correctional facilities.

Adds NDs to providers who can give birth control advice to any age, share medical info with parents, treat minors for chemical dependency.

Allows NDs to authorize administration of medicine to student in schools and authorize sick leave for school employees.

Clarifies that definition of “physician” includes NDs for purposes of being involved in care of and custody proceedings for protected persons.

Allows NDs to conduct medical exams and health assessments for purposes of special education services.

Adds NDs to list of providers who can sign off on Advance Directives and POLST forms, and informed consent provider services.

Adds NDs to list of providers who can give orders for home health agencies and hospice care.

Adds NDs to list of providers required to inform law enforcement relating to missing persons, non-accidental injuries, etc.

Clarifies that NDs can be a provider for mental health and addiction programs.

Adds NDs to list of providers for variety of services, reporting, signing off on care forms, child abuse medical assessments, etc for children in foster care, adoptive families, or who are wards of the state.

Adds NDs to variety of statutes that authorize a physician to sign off on various forms certifying a disability, reasonable housing accommodations, life insurance policies, medical statements, health certificates for food handlers, etc.

STAKEHOLDERS AND AGENCIES CONSULTED:

Oregon Medical Association
Oregon Health & Sciences University
Department of Human Services
Oregon Health Authority
Department of Business & Consumer Services
Oregon Right to Live
Planned Parenthood

Oregon Trial Lawyers Association
Legislative Judiciary Committee
Oregon Office of Rural Health
Oregon Board of Pharmacy
Compassionate Oregon
Oregon Nurses Association
Oregon Speech Language-Hearing Association

