



Testimony Narrative

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SB 48: Amendment for Pain Management Continuing Education

Presenter: Dr. Jim Rickards, Chief Medical Officer, Oregon Health Authority and Denise Taray, Pain Management Commission Coordinator, Oregon Health Authority

Chair Greenlick and members of the committee: I am Dr. Jim Rickards, Chief Medical Officer for the Oregon Health Authority.

I am here today to brief you on an amendment to SB 48A that OHA is working on with Legislative Counsel, so that if and when it comes before you, you'll be familiar. In short, it adds certain health care professionals to the one-time pain management continuing education requirement.

As you know, public health, behavioral health, health systems, academic institutions, policy makers, and law enforcement officials in Oregon are working together statewide and at the local level to reduce the risks associated with the use of opioid medications. Those efforts in particular are concerned with reducing abuse, addictions and unintentional overdose deaths. The Oregon Pain Management Commission's role in these efforts is to ensure that all professionals responsible for assessing the needs of an individual with acute or chronic pain should have the information and confidence to treat safely and effectively. Existing statute requires 10 types of health care professionals to complete the Pain Management Commission's online module on pain management. Those providers are:

- Physician
- Physician assistant
- Nurse
- Nurse practitioner
- Psychologist
- Chiropractic physician
- Naturopathic physician
- Acupuncturist
- Pharmacist
- Dentist
- Physical therapist
- Occupational therapist

Effective management of an individual's severe and chronic pain may involve more than one health care provider. All professionals should share the basic pain education and speak a common pain language. While interdisciplinary pain management often begins with and is coordinated by the primary care provider, all providers should be able to recognize complex pain so they can address the whole person's complex needs as they relate to that pain. To ensure that all professionals involved in pain management receive ongoing education, the

Oregon Pain Management Commission recommends that ORS 431.590 be amended to add these eight types of professionals to the pain education requirement:

- Expanded practice dental hygienist
- Optometrist
- Clinical social worker
- Professional counselor
- Marriage and family therapist
- Massage therapist
- Speech-language pathologist
- Certified Alcohol and Addictions Counselor

Optometrists are included because SB 152, passed by the Legislature in 2015, extended to optometrists the ability to prescribe opioid pain relievers for eye pain.

In summary, the Commission is asking the Legislature to expand the one-time pain education requirement to include the additional types of health care professionals who are being asked to treat patients with complex pain as we reduce opioid prescribing and use in Oregon.