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Courtney Warner Crowell OHA External Relations 971-712-6503 courtney.w.crowell@state.or.us

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OHA and Portland State release report that highlights \$240 million in savings from patient-centered primary care homes

The Oregon Health Authority released a groundbreaking study today from Portland State University researchers that highlights the overall savings to the Oregon health care system through the Patient-Centered Primary Care Home (PCPCH) Program.

The report shows that the estimated total savings to the Oregon health care system due to the PCPCH program implementation was \$240 million between 2012 and 2014, and continued growth of the program will increase the level of savings in future years. A PCPCH is a health care clinic that has been recognized for its commitment to patient-centered care.

“Oregon’s health transformation efforts are making huge strides toward improving the health of Oregonians and controlling health care costs,” said Lynne Saxton, OHA Director. “The report released today demonstrates that a focus on integrated primary care can significantly save dollars for the state and provide the best health care possible to all Oregonians.”

In the [Implementation of Oregon’s PCPCH Program: Exemplary Practice and Program Findings](#) report, PSU researchers used robust analysis of all-payer data to determine that for every \$1 increase in primary care expenditures for this comprehensive model of care, there is an average \$13 in savings to the health care system.

The report also demonstrates that clinics mature in this model of care: the longer a clinic is certified a PCPCH, the greater the cost savings per patient. For a PCPCH that has been in operation for three years, the total cost of care per member, per month is lowered by \$28. This is double the overall average savings of \$14 per member, per month for a PCPCH in the first year of certification.

“Oregon’s PCPCH Program has been very successful in meeting the goals of cost-effective, systemwide care transformation embodied in the triple aim,” said Sherril Gelmon, professor in the OHSU-PSU School of Public Health. “Expanded support for these clinics, and a continuing emphasis on creating a supportive environment for implementation, should both sustain the progress made and invite further engagement from primary care clinics across Oregon.”

“In conducting this research, we found that as primary care expenditures increase, spending for specialty care, emergency department and inpatient care generally decrease,” said Neal Wallace, professor in the [OHSU-PSU School of Public Health](#). “This is consistent with the goals of the PCPCH model and demonstrate that a focus on primary care can reduce overall health care costs.”

The [PCPCH Program](#) is the foundation of Oregon’s coordinated care model. The report released today is the first study in the country to look so comprehensively at the impact of PCPCH programs on health care costs.

The findings demonstrate that the state's PCPCH Program has fostered progress toward the goals of improving health, creating better health and lowering costs. The evidence shows that PCPCH-designated clinics are providing care that results in greater effectiveness and efficiency within both the primary care system and the larger health care system.

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