



February 2, 2018

Chair Mitch Greenlick  
House Committee on Health Care

Re: Support of House Bill 4143

Prescription drug overdose is now the leading cause of accidental death in America. While this crisis extends nationwide, communities throughout Oregon have been deeply affected. Three Oregonians die every week on average from prescription opioid overdose, according to the Oregon Health Authority. With House Bill 4143, Governor Brown's Task Force on the Opioid Epidemic takes solid first steps toward solutions for curbing opioid abuse in Oregon, and Cambia Health Solutions is proud to support the legislative proposal.

Enforcing mandatory Prescription Drug Monitoring Program (PDMP) registration for all licensed prescribers strengthens our capabilities as a community to combat prescription drug abuse. PDMPs have demonstrable value in more quickly identifying individuals who are abusing drugs or addicted to prescriptions, as well as reducing "doctor shopping." PDMPs also play an important role in informing health agencies about abuse trends. These tools help initiate earlier interventions, and time can be critical to save lives.

Cambia also favors eliminating barriers to appropriate treatment. Our health plans require no prior authorization for medication assisted substance abuse treatment, and we applaud the Task Force for evaluating obstacles that might limit a patient's ability to receive help. The Peer Mentor Recovery Pilot Program is another admirable measure we hope to see expanded throughout Oregon.

There is still more to be done. Cambia's affiliated health plans have reduced the number of opioid prescriptions 22 percent since 2015, and we are on track to reach our goal of 25 percent by the end of 2018, fully two years ahead of schedule. We have supported our members through strong medication policies and alternative pain management pilot programs, and we continue to work toward solutions in our communities through awareness and education programs, particularly aimed at youth and addiction prevention.

It is critical to prevent new addictions, intervene quickly and efficiently when possible, and support people and their families in their time of need. This harrowing epidemic affects our families, our friends, our coworkers and our neighbors. As we work together to deploy resources aimed at combatting this devastating crisis, I urge the committee to vote in favor of HB 4143.

Thank you for the opportunity to weigh in on this important legislative proposal, and please do not hesitate to contact me if I can be of further assistance.

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Raki Pai", with a stylized flourish at the end.

Dr. Raki Pai  
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