

I am a practicing geriatrician and the Medical Director for Senior Health for Providence in the state of Oregon. I am in support of SB 1539 as there is a shortage of geriatric psychiatrists in our state and in our nation, and our primary care providers desperately need more access to psychiatric expertise for their elder patients. Depression, anxiety and dementia with behaviors that need to be managed are three common challenging conditions that primary care faces. Usually medical training for primary care in internal medicine and family practice does not provide enough guidance in these areas. They need the expertise of their colleagues in geriatric psychiatry and access by phone is better than no access at all.

SB 1539 would improve access to mental health care, especially for patients in rural Oregon and underserved communities.

Thank you for supporting this legislation so older adult Oregonians will have access to better care.

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Creating healthier communities, together

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