

February 12, 2018

RE: Senate Bill 1549: End Suspension of Medicaid for Eligible Patients at Oregon State Hospital

To Whom It May Concern:

The Marion Polk Peer Coalition consists of several consumer-run organizations that provide peer services to individuals who have one or more mental health diagnoses. These organizations range from self help centers and support groups that provide individuals with an opportunity to interact with other people who have similar life experiences and avail themselves of places to go to receive support, education as well as shelter and socialization during the day.

For individuals discharging from Oregon State Hospital, the process of getting signed up again for Medicaid is often challenging and overwhelming. Many people have medical issues that need continued treatment, such as weekly blood tests for psychiatric medications and diabetes. There is also the need for medical supplies, not only for psychiatric medications but physical supplies for ongoing medical conditions.

Working in an environment that serves people coming out of the state hospital on a daily basis means that we see the daily ramifications that impact a person's quality of life and ability to get the necessary medical /psychiatric supplies and/or medications, follow-up care, and appointments for care.

The adjustment to life outside the protected environment of the state hospital is hard enough without having to figure out where and how to renew your health insurance. Without Medicaid coverage, there is no opportunity to access transportation resources that can help with getting to appointments either.

We support the amendment to ORS 411.439 which would also benefit Oregon financially by allowing the state hospital to collect on dually eligible Medicare/Medicaid individuals while they are in the hospital, saving General Fund dollars for much needed community services and supports.

Please vote Yes on Senate Bill 1549.

Respectfully submitted,

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