

March 11, 2019

Oregon Senate
Committee on Health Care
90 Court Street NE
Salem, OR 97301

RE: Oregon Senate Bill (HB) 136: Removes 10-day supply limitation of prescriptions issued by certified registered nurse anesthetists.

Dear Chair Monnes Anderson and Members of the Committee:

I am the Chief Administrative Officer (CAO) at Peace Harbor Medical Center (PHMC) in Florence Oregon. PHMC is designated as a Critical Access Hospital (CAH) located on the Oregon coast. PHMC provides service to over 10,000 people in Western Lane County and areas on Lincoln and Douglas County. Like many CAHs, the anesthesia department at PHMC is a Certified Registered Nurse Anesthetist (CRNA)-only practice. The CRNAs at PHMC are credentialed to provide a broad range of services, with care provided from newborns to the elderly. Therefore, it is expected that the CRNA are able to function to the fullest extent of their education and training. All of the CRNAs employed at PHMC have prescription privileges which are regulated by the Oregon State Board of Nursing.

The CRNAs at PHMC have been instrumental in adjusting their practice to meet today's standards. The anesthesia department provides an opioid-free surgical anesthetic. The anesthesia department also spearheaded a collaboration with the Agency for Healthcare Research and Quality (AHRQ) Safety Program for Improved Preoperative Surgical Care and Recovery (ISCR). This patient safety initiative involves a multidiscipline approach to improve clinical outcomes and reduce hospital length-of-stay. PHMC would benefit from having a Nonsurgical Pain Management (NSPM-c) CRNA on staff so that chronic pain services are provided to residents within the coastal community.

People familiar to Oregon know that Florence is a retirement destination. This provides unique opportunities and challenges. In a complex system that is healthcare, it is a relief to have an anesthesia department that is in the forefront of their practice. I ask that you please consider expanding the prescription authority for CRNAs so that they can practice to their fullest extent of education and training.

Sincerely,



Jason Hawkins
CAO Peace Harbor Medical Center
Florence, Oregon