

Testimony

Senate Healthcare Committee

02.03.20

Chair Roblan, Vice Chair Boles, and members of the committee, thank you for the opportunity to testify on behalf of Senate Bill 1552 which supports the continuation of Certified Community Behavioral Health Clinics (CCBHCs). My name is Jeffrey Eisen, I am the Chief Medical and Health Integration Officer at Cascadia Behavioral Healthcare, which is designated as a CCBHC to serve children, families and adults across the Portland tri-county area.

While I am here from Cascadia, today I am representing CCBHCs statewide. We presented in front your committee less than two weeks ago, and therefore we have narrowed the focus of our testimony today. We wanted to refresh your memory of the value of CCBHCs, but we'll keep it brief out of respect of your time. The fact that it is just me up here is certainly not because of a lack of enthusiasm or support as you'll see on the record.

In my prior testimony, I spoke of some tremendous quality and cost outcomes attributable to the collaborative, integrated care approach that we have developed via CCBHC, including an 18% reduction in ED utilization and a 23% reduction in inpatient medical admissions among a set of 900 clients. Today, I'd like to share just a few personal success stories that have resulted from these efforts.

- A client with nearly 70 ED visits in the last year has only been in once in a three month span of late. Our behavioral health and primary care teams coordinated efforts and worked with other community stakeholders to fill gaps in care. This client faced many medical issues that went unresolved for some time, and these have since been addressed and resolved.
- A behavioral health client with a high utilization of services would often present as highly distressed, crying, and suicidal due to ongoing pain. Since the client engaged in a CCBHC sponsored pilot project for chronic pain, in addition to our collaborative chiropractic, primary care, nutrition services with a nurse, and mental health services, his symptoms are markedly improved. The client has not smoked in 27 days, walks for exercise, and is attempting to improve diet.
- A client in our Medication Assisted Treatment (MAT) Program for an Opioid Use Disorder, who was struggling with an addiction to heroin, was initially hesitant to attend both MAT and behavioral health services. With continued encouragement and coordination among our teams, he is thriving, now focused on his behavioral health therapy, attending 2 to 3 groups a week, and has tested negative for all substances for almost four months. Most of all, he is happy and proud of his progress.

We have been encouraged by the tremendous support for the CCBHC program by Oregon's Federal delegation. Oregon has been a leader in healthcare transformation. Our partners at the National Council for Behavioral Health that have been leading the advocacy efforts at the Federal level have told us that other states across the country are looking to Oregon to see how our state chooses to prioritize advancements in behavioral health services through the extension of this innovative model.

Also at the Federal level, there is solid bipartisan movement in the House and Senate to continue to support CCBHCs. As we know, this Federal support requires a percentage match by the state. This means that our state cannot receive approximately 62 million dollars in federal funding for mental health and addictions treatment without the support of 15 million dollars from the state. In total, upwards of 77 million dollars in mental health and addictions funding for Oregon is at stake here.

This is funding that has helped address many acute mental health and addictions crises that our state faces – namely, the lack of workforce to serve the great needs across our state, including provider shortages to address the Opioid Overdose Epidemic. And, we know that the care delivered by CCBHCs delivers real outcomes in the delivery of care and in the improvement of the lives of those we at Cascadia serve each day. I thank you for your time and consideration of this bill as well collectively work towards addressing the needs of our communities.