



Changing healthcare to work for you.

February 3, 2020

Chair Monnes Anderson and Members of the Senate Health Care Committee,

AllCare CCO is one of the Coordinated Care Organizations serving Jackson, Josephine, Curry and Southern Douglas Counties here in Oregon. For 25 years, AllCare Health has provided quality healthcare in southern Oregon. We're 100% locally owned and operated, so we don't just work here, we live here, and are deeply invested in the well-being and economies of our communities. True to our mission, we support efforts to offer the highest quality care to our members and that is why we have joined the campaign to make dental therapists a licensed oral health care provider in Oregon. Dental therapists are primary oral health care providers that work as part of a dentist-led team. They have a narrow scope of practice, focusing on routine and preventive services. Recruited from the communities in which they serve, they are more likely to stay in their communities to provide continuity of care.

Too many Oregonians can't get the dental care they need to stay healthy. Senate Bill 1549 creates the licensed profession of dental therapy and can turn the tide on oral health disparities in our state. As primary dental care providers who provide preventive and routine care under the supervision of a dentist, dental therapists can expand access to care where it is most out of reach: in rural, low-income communities and communities of color. The high-quality care provided by dental therapists can help solve this shortage, increase access to culturally responsive, community-based care, and create good-paying jobs.

This healthcare delivery model has been used in many countries worldwide for over a century, and was introduced in the United States by Alaska Natives 15 years ago. Alaska has since seen both increased access and improved oral health in communities served by dental therapists. Since then, 11 other states have authorized dental therapy in some or all settings, including our own where dental therapists in a pilot project have been successfully delivering care to tribal communities. Given the access challenges that we face in rural areas we feel this new workforce model would assist us in supporting our members ensuring they get the care they need.

We urge you to support SB 1549.

Sincerely,
Laura McKeane, EFDA
Oral Health Integration Manager- AllCare CCO
541-471-4106 x8148 laura.mckeane@allcarehealth.com



An Oregon Benefit Company

1701 NE 7th St.
Grants Pass, OR 97526
Phone (541) 471-4106
Fax (541) 471-3784
Toll free (888) 460-0185
TTY 711
AllCareHealth.com