

Memorandum

To: Rep. Andrea Salinas, Chair, House Committee on Health Care
Rep. Rob Nosse, Vice-Chair, House Committee on Health Care
Rep. Cedric Hayden, Vice-Chair, House Committee on Health Care
Members of the House Committee on Health Care

From: Danielle Sobel, MPH, Policy and Governmental Affairs Senior Director
Marty Carty, Policy Senior Manager

Date: February 11, 2020

Re: Support for House Bill 4116

The Oregon Primary Care Association (OPCA) and Oregon's 32 community health centers, respectfully request your support for HB 4116.

OPCA is a non-profit organization, with a mission to support Oregon's 32 community health centers, also known as federally qualified health centers, in leading the transformation of primary care to achieve health equity for all. Community health centers deliver integrated primary, oral and behavioral health care services, to over 433,000 Oregonians annually. Community health centers are providers within the CCO networks, providing care to Oregon's underserved populations, including one in four Oregon Health Plan members.

Every Oregonian should have access to health care and specifically life-saving medication necessary to treat and greatly extend the lives of individuals living with HIV. We know that increasing access to care is one of the single most effective ways to ensure that individuals receive the preventative health and medical care they need to thrive.

One of the key areas of focus for the National HIV/AIDS Strategy for 2020 in the United States calls for full access to comprehensive PrEP services. Despite advances and advocacy for PrEP since approval for adults in 2012, we've seen alarming rates of prescribing disparity based on gender and race. In 2016, only 3.7% of all PrEP users were women and only 11.2% were black. In underserved communities we know that barriers to care may include transportation, access to insurance and being able to afford care. Pharmacists are among some of the most accessible providers in these communities and are well positioned to improve patient understanding, promote medication adherence, provide key risk reduction counseling, and enhance PrEP efficacy. The pharmacy is a great entry point, especially for those patients who experience significant barriers.

Health centers provide essential primary care and pharmacy services in their communities. In parts of rural Oregon, we know that health center pharmacies reduce stigma associated with medications that promote harm reduction for patients suffering from substance use disorder and family planning options. HB 4116, in the same manner, will improve access to PrEP and further reduce stigma, especially for minority patients and those in rural areas,

This bill is a critical step toward ensuring all Oregonians have access to all health care services. OPCA and health centers recognize that a system that has "no wrong door" increases access to health care services and decreases health-related disparities. We hope that you will join us in support of HB 4116.