



## 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 HB 4101

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On behalf of the Oregon Primary Care Association (OPCA), we write to voice our strong support of House Bill 4101 that will support coverage and reimbursement by Oregon Medicaid of health services delivered using telemedicine.

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 care, including primary, dental and behavioral health 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.

Oregon health centers have become increasingly aware of the difference telemedicine makes in improving the lives of their patients. Providers and care teams see first-hand how workforce shortages and barriers such as transportation impact access to health care for patients and their families. Telemedicine, or virtual care, provides many benefits, especially in a state with a vast rural population like Oregon, greatly improving access to primary, dental, and behavioral health care, as well as specialty services. In addition to improving access to care for Oregonians, virtual care services can also reduce transportation costs and missed appointments as well as eliminate unnecessary referrals and hospital visits.

Oregon's Medicaid statute should be updated to reflect innovations and advancements in technology and embrace the benefits this avenue of care will mean for patients in terms of access to health care. Commercially insured patients have already seen the benefits of increased access to primary care, specialists, behavioral health, and dentistry through virtual care services. As health centers integrate virtual care into workflows, rural populations that have historically experienced limited access to services will see an increase in provider availability and access to care. Telehealth is a critical component for improving equity and access in our health care delivery system.

Thank you for the opportunity to submit testimony in support of HB 4101. OPCA believes that expanding telehealth to the underserved Oregonians is the next step in transforming health care in Oregon, and we respectfully urge you to vote yes on this critical legislation because all Oregonians deserve equal access to telehealth.