

House Committee on Health Care

February 11, 2020

RE: Testimony on HB 4101

Dear Chair Andrea Salinas, Vice Chair Nosse and Hayden, and Members of the Committee,

On behalf of OCHIN, I 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.

As a not for profit organization and technology and research collaborative founded 20 years ago in Oregon to support underserved communities throughout the state, we have become increasingly aware of the difference telemedicine makes in improving the lives of the Medicaid population. Telemedicine, or virtual care, provides many benefits, especially to a state with a vast rural population like Oregon, greatly improving access to primary care, as well as specialists already in vast short supply in these communities. Along with this ease of access, comes reductions in transportation costs and missed appointments as well as eliminating unnecessary referrals and hospital visits.

Virtual care integrated into provider workflows and daily schedules will be a key pillar to achieving the quadruple aim for the future, and passing HB 4101 allows for telehealth coverage for Medicaid patients. Oregon's Medicaid statute is behind the times and must be modernized to embrace the innovation of telehealth. Commercially insured patients have already seen the benefits of this, increasing access to primary care, specialists, behavioral health, and dentistry. The rural population has historically limited access to these services, making telehealth a critical piece for improving public health.

Thank you for the opportunity to submit testimony in support of HB 4101. OCHIN believes that expanding telehealth to the Medicaid population is the necessary next step of innovating health care in Oregon, and we respectfully urge you to vote yes on this critical legislation. Oregon Medicaid patients deserve equal access to telehealth, similar to their commercial counterparts.

Sincerely,



Jennifer Stoll
EVP, Government Relations and Public Affairs