

FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS (FAQs) ABOUT THE WORK OF THE TASK FORCE ON UNIVERSAL HEALTH CARE

DRAFT DRAFT DRAFT March 5, 2022 DRAFT DRAFT DRAFT

To help Oregonians understand our complex task, we created this Frequently Asked Questions (FAQ) list to help you understand our work and respond to it.

We hope to keep updating this based on questions, feedback, and future decisions by the Task Force, so please keep checking back for the latest edition.

You may submit questions and comments to us [[here](#)].

1. What is the SB 770 Joint Task Force on Universal Health Care and what is your goal?

In 2019, the Oregon Legislature enacted Senate Bill 770 to establish the Joint Task Force on Universal Health Care. Our Task Force is responsible for the design of a statewide single payer health care system offering equitable, affordable, comprehensive, high quality, publicly funded health care to all Oregonians.

Our Task Force includes 13 voting members appointed by the Governor and confirmed by the Oregon Senate. Legislators from both chambers (why it is called “Joint”) and representatives of government agencies serve as non-voting members. The 13 voting members represent multiple geographic, ethnic, professional, and cultural perspectives.

Originally our recommendations to the legislature were due June 2021. However, the COVID pandemic delayed our work, though the Task Force has been meeting monthly for two years except when the legislature is in session. The 2021 Legislative Assembly extended our report due date to September 2022.

In June 2021, we presented an Interim Status report on our work. That report is available [[here](#)].

2 Will I be eligible for the proposed Health Plan?

All Oregon residents will be eligible. We plan to eliminate eligibility waiting periods, income limits, and means testing.

Visitors to Oregon would have access to health care services but will be responsible for costs incurred. Necessary care will be provided.

3 What will be my enrollment process to be covered.?

The Universal Health Plan will create a simple enrollment process that works quickly and minimizes time and expense for patients. Enrollment in many if not most cases will be possible using existing state data on resident status. Enrollment will be possible at health care venues. To maintain federal funding for some Oregonians' health care, certain information will need to be collected from you, and the Universal Health Plan will be directed to do so in as simple a way as possible.

4 What will my benefits be?

Benefits would be those currently available to state employees. In addition, our plan would provide more primary, preventive, and behavioral health care benefits.

Long-term care benefits would not change. Medicaid eligible patients would be eligible for long term care services beyond skilled care. Everyone else would receive skilled care benefits as is currently provided by the plan that state employees have.

5 What if I want benefits that might not be covered by our plan?

Oregonians would be free to purchase insurance or pay out of pocket for any benefits not included in our plan.

6 Will I have to pay anything at the time I see a health care provider?

We plan to eliminate any payment at time of service such as copays and deductibles.

7 Who will pay for my family's health care?

The Universal Health Plan will pool current spending by government programs into a single health care fund. Additionally, we will replace all current family, individual, and employer spending on health insurance and health care services with a yet to be determined tax and fees structure that is based on ability to pay. We expect what Oregonians will pay under these new taxes will be less than most employers, families, and individuals currently pay in premiums and out of pocket payments.

8 Will my health care costs go up?

The Task Force is working to establish a plan that will reduce the cost of health care for most Oregonians. Further information will be available as the financial analysis is finalized.

9 Will I be restricted in my choice of providers?

Our plan will allow any Oregonian to see any licensed or certified health care provider who is able to see them. All licensed and certified health care providers providing covered services would be providers in the Universal Health Plan.

The new state entity managing the Universal Health Plan, acting through regional organizations, will work to have an adequate pool of providers to provide needed services.

10 I've heard that in countries with universal health care there can be long waits for some health care services. Why won't that happen here if we adopt a universal, Single Payer system?

Our current health care system has delays due to pre-authorization requirements and our complicated ever changing insurance system. The Task Force expects the Universal Health Plan will reduce waiting times by being less complicated for payments to providers and a commitment to universal health care access throughout the state of Oregon.

11 What will be the relationship between the Single Payer and Oregon tribes?

The Universal Health Plan will have a government-to-government relationship with the tribes. Oregon members of the tribes will have the choice to enroll in the Plan and tribal health care providers will be providers in the plan delivery system.

12 How can I contribute my opinions to the Task Force?

All meetings of the task force and its committees and work groups are public and most meetings have time on the agenda for public comment and accept written comments. You may view our past meetings [*here and here (there are two separate pages on www.oregonlegislature.gov)*] and receive notices of future meetings [*here*]. You may request time during public input sections of our meetings [*here*].

We plan specific outreach to the public in upcoming months. This outreach includes:

- Multiple virtual roundtable discussions from January to March with 8-10 participants selected with diversity in mind
- Five virtual community discussions from April 2022 to August with Oregonians throughout the state
- Multiple forums with the business community and health care industry from April 2022 to August/through July?

13 Are Task Force members available for presentations?

Yes. We encourage you to invite us into your community or organization. You may request a presentation regarding our work [[here](#)].

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