



To: Oregon House Committee on Mental Health
Re: Support for HB 3123 passage

Dear Chair Sanchez and Members of the Committee,

Deschutes County Health Services is one of twelve Oregon community mental health programs participating in the Certified Community Behavioral Health Clinic (CCBHC) federal demonstration program administered by the Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration.

CCBHC Demonstration funding was continued by Congress through September 30, 2023. In order to continue this model program and draw down the significant 4:1 federal match over the three year extension, Oregon must provide a state general fund match in the 21-23 biennium.

The Deschutes County Board of County Commissioners strongly supports the passage of HB 3123 which will provide the state match and support CCBHCs to continue in Oregon. We believe the proposal represents an important investment that goes a long way toward maintaining key behavioral health infrastructure during a time when Oregonians will need these services more than ever.

CCBHCs represent a forward thinking, proactive and fiscally viable approach to addressing chronic shortfalls in mental health and addiction services. Individuals with serious and complex mental health and substance use disorders often struggle with co-occurring addiction and chronic physical health concerns, which significantly shorten lifespan and contribute to increased homelessness, incarceration and use of emergency department and hospital resources. CCBHCs target this population for improved treatment of both their primary behavioral health and secondary physical health concerns. Intended results are to improve outcomes and reduce costs by preventing individuals from needing higher levels of care or entering other more costly systems. The federal demonstration prospective payment model has enhanced revenue, allowing CCBHCs to finance the infrastructure needed to provide these comprehensive services.

Positive developments within the first two years of Deschutes' CCBHC project include:

- Increased workforce, especially use of peer delivered and case management services
- Increased access for un/under-insured individuals, such as veterans and older adults
- Adding primary care at each service location resulting in increased coordination of care
- Standard suicide risk assessment and universal safety planning for all clients to reduce suicide risk
- Reductions in Emergency Department utilization and homelessness for those served

- Statistically significant improvements in quality of life and effectiveness at dealing with problems
- Enhanced ability to respond to COVID emergency due to employment of peers and case managers, enhanced overall staffing, integration with primary care partners

Without this funding, Oregon will risk experiencing:

- Immediate workforce reduction in a behavioral health system already understaffed and undercompensated
- Dismantling of the first statewide attempt to initiate behavioral health homes in 2019
- Loss of significant gains in improving access, expanding service array, and preventing higher cost care
- Re-established wait lists for services, closed or eliminated services, i.e., people turned away from care, losing access to medication assisted and other addiction treatment

Please help maintain our CCBHCs' good progress as we await Congressional action in the fall.

Thank you for your consideration,

The Deschutes County Board of Commissioners



Tony DeBone
Chair



Phil Chang
Vice Chair



Patti Adair
Commissioner

CC: Senators Lynn Findley, Tim Knopp, and Dennis Linthicum
Representatives Daniel Bonham, Vikki Breese Iverson, Jason Kropf and Jack Zika