



Sacred Heart Medical Center – University District
770 E. 11th Ave.,
Eugene, OR 97401

February 14, 2023

Honorable Sen. Sollman and Rep. Evans
Joint Ways and Means Subcommittee on Public Safety
Oregon Capitol, Salem Oregon

RE: Support for HB 5505 and IMPACT Grants

Co-Chairs Sollman and Evans, Members of the Joint Ways and Means Subcommittee on Public Safety,

My name is Alicia Beymer and I am the Chief Administrative Officer at PeaceHealth, Sacred Heart University District and Cottage Grove Community Medical Center; it has been my honor to represent hospitals that provide acute mental health treatment as an appointed member of the IMPACTS Grant Committee. This program is doing the right work, at the right time, and demonstrating beneficial outcomes by prioritizing funding for individuals with mental health or substance abuse disorders who frequently interface with the criminal justice system, hospitals, and institutions.

Thank you for the privilege of being before you today, the possibilities are endless for this program. In my opinion, the IMPACTS program serves as a model for how to successfully reduce homelessness and increase access to mental health and addiction services by funding community-based grants that fill gaps in each unique community to meet the individual needs of those the program is designed to serve. The innovative community-based support systems made possible by IMPACTS grants and developed by eleven counties and five federally recognized tribes are demonstrating positive and life changing results. Through the strong work achieved by grantees and data gathered by the IMPACTS Grant staff, these programs are demonstrating that they are potentially foundational for the development of meaningful and sustainable programs focused on improving the health, safety, and quality of life for individuals with mental health or substance use disorders who are frequently engaged with the criminal justice system, hospitals, and institutions throughout the state.

For example, Sacred Heart University District Medical Center (UD) and the Lane County IMPACTS-funded Forensic Intensive Treatment Team (FITT) piloted a program to reduce non-medically emergent visits to the emergency department (ED) in Eugene. The pilot focused on three homeless individuals who met the IMPACTS requirements and collectively visited the UD ED a total of 679 times between May 2021 and May 2022.



Truly, it is our honor and privilege to serve patients who have a mental health or substance use disorder and may be unhoused at UD. Our caregivers and providers are passionate about serving this population. In looking deeper into what brings these patients to our ED so frequently our analysis showed that the primary need from the three patients was social services related: food, clothing, and a dry place to sleep. These are pivotal needs to better mental and physical health, but are not effectively delivered through the ED and, more importantly, can be provided more wholistically outside the ED setting. Through focused collaboration, intensive case management and wrap around services:

- The average number of ED visits from these three individuals dropped by 56%.
- In just four months, this engagement reduced the average time these individuals spent in the emergency department from 131 hours to 57 hours per month;
- From this, it is estimated that local healthcare providers saved approximately 74 hours per month – nearly 2.5 hours per day – to be available for other patients with emergent needs.
- Most importantly, services to improve their health, safety and well-being are being offered in a manner that best supports the individual needs of these patients. This includes Lane County reporting that the FITT was successful in securing housing for two of these individuals.
- Sacred Heart University District Medical Center has identified 30 additional individuals who average 12 or more monthly visits to the ED, may also meet the IMPACTS target population and can benefit from this type of intensive service.

Based on my experience as a member of the IMPACTS Grant Committee and the positive interactions we have seen in Eugene, our ask is that you pass HB 5505 and fully fund the IMPACTS Grant program in the 2023-25 budget. Expansion of these services provides essential resources to vulnerable members of our community and gives the team in our ED additional time to treat acute medical emergencies.

Thank you for giving me an opportunity to speak with you today about this important program. I am happy to follow up with your office on any follow up questions you have.

With gratitude,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Alicia Beymer". The signature is fluid and cursive, with a long horizontal line extending to the right.

Alicia Beymer | Chief Administrative Officer

PeaceHealth Sacred Heart Medical Center, University District and Cottage Grove Community Medical Center