

Submitter: Sarah von Colditz

On Behalf Of:

Committee: House Committee On Behavioral Health and Health Care

Measure: HB2455

I am in full support of this bill and ask for you to do the same. I have been lucky with having two formal training sessions by both a CCO and Medicare around documentation and audits. I am an outlier in our field. I should not be an outlier as this should be normal standard practice. My experience is proof that this bill can become standard practice in our field.

Our workforce is currently struggling to keep clinicians in the field who will accept insurance, and are seeing a higher than normal burnout rate in our field due to the challenges our world has faced the last few years. I know of 5 clinicians who just this year have stopped taking insurance due to fear of clawbacks, low reimbursement rates and lack of transparency for audits and documentation standards for insurance companies. If something does not change, our mental health workforce in Oregon will continue to dwindle at a faster rate and our residents will ultimately be the ones to suffer.

Over the last year I have received 7 different clawbacks from insurance companies totalling about \$8,000. All but one were 2+ years old and all were due to insurance companies billing errors. Of those 7, only 1 is still a current client. All others did not return calls and were unable to pay a bill for services that were 2+ years ago.

I equate current practice to this: You decide to get a new job, so you ask some colleagues who have worked there what it's like. They share their information and you get hired. Once hired, it is up to you meet with other colleagues regularly to find information to make sure you meet the minimum standards of your job. Fast forward to 2.5 years down the road, when your boss pulls you into their office and lets you know that unfortunately you did not do your job correctly and therefore they want a huge portion of your paycheck back. You never received any formal training or handouts and were told it was on you to figure how to do your job yourself. This would not pass in a regular working environment, and the fact that it is a regular practice for therapists who accept insurance with masters degrees is appalling.

In order to ensure that we can keep a mental health workforce in Oregon and support our residents, I ask you to please strongly consider passing this bill.