



CHILDREN'S HEALTH *alliance*

DATE: March 23, 2023

TO: Co-chair Senator Winsvey Campos
Co-chair Representative Andrea Valderrama
Joint Committee on Ways and Means
Subcommittee on Human Services

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SUBJECT: Add OHA's POP 442 to SB 5525 to include funding for a Child Health Policy Team and Child Health Complexity Data

Co-chairs Senator Campos and Representative Valderrama and members of the joint subcommittee, the 170+ pediatrician members of the Children's Health Alliance support adding OHA's POP 442 to SB 5525 to include funding for a Child Health Policy Team and continued collection and dissemination of Child Health Complexity Data in the budget, which can ensure that the unique, important needs of children, especially children with medical and social complexity, are met. Children's Health Alliance pediatricians care for approximately 190,000 children and their families in the Portland metro area and Salem and are committed to improving the health of all Oregon's children.

The Oregon Health Authority has demonstrated its investment in children and the important role of addressing the needs of children and families as critical to health equity through Oregon's most recent 1115(a) Medicaid waiver. Oregon has specifically focused on children and youth, recognizing that because children and families of color experience inequitable environments which are linked to poor outcomes, they must focus on children, youth and families to meet the state's health equity goal and bend the health care cost curve.¹ The waiver, and its investment in children's health coverage has the opportunity to play a pivotal role in addressing children at the most critical time of development and in stabilizing the environment in which they grow by supporting families and caregivers.¹

OHA has requested POP 442 to establish as system policy- and data-focused Children's Health team charged with identifying and addressing health inequities in childhood and adolescence, especially those exacerbated by system inefficiencies and barriers. Having an explicit team dedicated to this work, along with dedicated funding to support the



innovative child health complexity data is critical to Oregon meeting the goals outlined in the Medicaid waiver by providing coordinated care organizations and providers across the state critical data to make equitable, meaningful and targeted decisions to support this vulnerable population. POP 442 is critical to include in the budget to support Oregon's outlined priorities.

Providing quality health care for children is foundational to their lifelong health and wellbeing. Childhood experiences are one of the most predictive elements of health outcomes, and inequities experienced in childhood have multi-generational impacts. This childhood health team will make sure that the vulnerable needs of children and adolescents remain at the forefront across OHA efforts, which is critical for OHA to achieve its health equity goals, and to capitalize on the priorities of child health identified in Oregon's transformational Medicaid waiver.

The Children's Health Alliance appreciates the opportunity to provide testimony on the inclusion of OHA's POP 442 to include funding for a Child Health Policy Team and Child Health Complexity Data in SB 5525 and urges your support and recognition of the importance of the investment in children's health.

¹ Oregon Health Authority. Issue Brief: Children's Health and Oregon's 1115 Waiver

Growth Target Recommendations Report.