



Oregon

Tina Kotek, Governor

Office of Developmental Disabilities Services

500 Summer St NE

Salem, OR 97301



OREGON DEPARTMENT OF
Human Services

To: Chair Gelser Blouin, Vice-Chair Linthicum, and Members of the Senate Human Services Committee

From: Justin Withem, Legislative Coordinator, Office of Developmental Disabilities Services (ODDS), Oregon Department of Human Services

Subject: Follow-up responses from Sept. 30, 2025, agency presentation on SACU

Date: October 6, 2025

Dear Chair Gelser Blouin, Vice-Chair Linthicum, and Members of the Committee:

At your hearing on September 30, 2025, during Oregon Department of Human Services' presentation on Stabilization and Crisis Unit (SACU) Transformation Planning: Collaboration, Values and Timelines, there were several questions that required follow up. Senator Gelser Blouin asked for clarity around the 7:1 ratio in SACU homes, addressing current delays in access to medical and mental health services, and how many individuals are in SACU's care under ORS 427 civil commitment protections. Senator Reynolds asked about the current average length of stay in facilities and whether we are meeting the needs of Oregonians with our current SACU service model.

Please see the requested information below:

Average Length of Stay in SACU Facilities

- The average length of stay for adult residents in behavioral homes is 6.7 years.
- Children stay for an average of 8 to 9 months.
- Adults' average stay in medical homes is approximately 25.9 years. (These are homes that primarily host individuals who lived at Fairview Training Center and would be challenging to serve in less intensive settings.)

7:1 Ratio Explanation

The 7:1 ratio represents an approximation of the total number of direct support staff

employed statewide relative to the total number of individuals served in SACU settings. There are, on average, seven total staff positions assigned to a home (not to each resident) at any given time, ensuring full shift coverage for all individuals supported in that setting. However, these are both just average figures.

Most SACU homes operate with seven Direct Support Crisis Specialists allocated to cover all shifts for the entire home, regardless of how many individuals live there. Staffing levels may fluctuate depending on the number of individuals residing in the home and their individual support needs. Homes with higher medical or behavioral support needs may receive additional staff or adjusted ratios to maintain safety and person-centered care.

Current Delays in Accessing Care in SACU Homes

SACU and ODDS are in communication with Oregon Health Authority (OHA) to get mental health services into SACU homes and hope to have updates on this soon. Medical services in SACU homes currently face different challenges. Individuals in care have Oregon Health Plan and are enrolled in the Coordinated Care Organization (CCO) for the area in which they reside. SACU is obligated to use the providers that are contracted with the CCO but their services are often unavailable to new patients, or providers will turn individuals away once they find out about their diagnoses. This is beyond SACU's control and needs to involve OHA and the CCOs, and we are working with OHA on how to improve access. In cases where there is availability, the average wait for a psychiatric health provider is over six months. Currently, CCOs direct the agency to utilize emergency room and urgent care services to get medications filled until a provider can be obtained. SACU generally sets up medical and psychiatric services even though it is a case management function of the County Developmental Disability Program. These services would not be available otherwise.

Individuals in SACU's Care Under ORS 427 Commitment Protections

Of the 81 current SACU residents, 7 individuals are in care under ORS 427 commitment protections.

Is the Current Model Meeting Oregon's Needs?

No, SACU always maintains a waiting list. While the exact number can fluctuate, the list has been as high as ~30 people waiting for services. Typically, there are approximately 15 individuals waiting for a spot at any given time.

For further information, please contact Justin Withem, ODHS Office of Developmental Disabilities Services Legislative Coordinator, at Justin.Withem2@odhs.oregon.gov.