

Submitter: Mark Hatfield
On Behalf Of:
Committee: House Committee On Behavioral Health and Health Care
Measure, Appointment or Topic: HB3134

March 24, 2025

To: Oregon State Legislature
RE: Support of HB 3134

I am writing to express my strong support for HB 3134. I understand the purpose behind prior authorizations. But while intended to control healthcare costs, it promotes an unnecessary burden to physical therapists, their staff, and their patients. By removing prior authorization for the first 16 visits of a new episode of care would be a fair proposal to both manage overutilization and also allow a continuance of treatment that patients need for progressing through an appropriate physical therapy plan of care.

I am a co-owner and physical therapist of a private outpatient orthopedic clinic for the last 17 years. And, am frustrated by the amount of time our physical therapists and front office spend fighting to justify authorization for a reasonable number of visits for our patients. Moreover, this administrative burden often creates unnecessary barriers that result in delays of treatment, which can negatively impact patient outcomes. Physical therapy is a vital service that helps individuals recover from injuries, manage chronic conditions, and improve their overall quality of life. Denying or postponing care due to administrative hurdles can exacerbate health issues, resulting in more intensive and costly interventions down the line.

It is also worth noting that prior authorization criteria often lack alignment with evidence-based clinical guidelines. By loosening these prior authorization requirements, Oregon can ensure that patients receive care based on their unique medical needs rather than arbitrary administrative protocols.

This bill would ensure that patients receive the care they need without undue delay, reduce administrative burden on providers, and ultimately reduce long term healthcare costs. I urge you to also support this change and work towards a healthcare system that puts patients first.

Sincerely,

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