

March 24, 2025

House Committee on Behavioral Health and Health Care
Oregon State Legislature
900 Court Street NE
Salem, Oregon 97301

RE: Support for HB 3134, An Act to Streamline Prior Authorization for Health Care Providers

Dear Members of the Committee,

On behalf of our more than 100,000 member physical therapists, physical therapist assistants, and students of physical therapy, the American Physical Therapy Association (APTA) submits the following comments in support of Oregon HB 3134, legislation aimed at reducing unnecessary and burdensome prior authorization requirements for therapy services.

APTA advocates for patient access to medically necessary, evidence-based therapy services. Excessive prior authorization requirements create administrative obstacles that delay essential care, negatively impacting patient outcomes and increasing healthcare costs. By collaborating with utilization management companies, payers, and legislators APTA seeks to address these inefficiencies and ensure patients receive timely treatment.

HB 3134 is a crucial step in improving access to therapy services in Oregon. By removing prior authorization requirements for the first 16 visits of a new episode of care, this legislation ensures that patients can begin treatment without unnecessary delays. For individuals with chronic pain, the bill allows access to physical therapy for 90 days without prior authorization, providing a non-invasive, evidence based alternative to long term medication use.

Additionally, HB 3134 alleviates strain on an already overburdened healthcare workforce. Reducing excessive administrative demands helps mitigate therapist burnout and eases financial pressures on private practices, allowing providers to focus on patient care rather than navigating complex authorization procedures. By streamlining these processes, the bill supports a more efficient and sustainable healthcare system.

The bill also enhances transparency by requiring insurance companies to clearly communicate prior authorization requirements to beneficiaries, ensuring that patients and providers can make informed care decisions. Furthermore, insurers would be required to respond to prior authorization requests within 24 hours, preventing unnecessary delays that could negatively affect patient recovery and long term health outcomes.

APTA strongly supports HB 3134 as a necessary reform that prioritizes patient well-being, reduces administrative burdens, and improves the overall efficiency of therapy services. By ensuring that Oregonians can access timely and effective treatment, this legislation promotes a patient-centered approach to healthcare.

We urge you to support HB 3134 to enhance the quality, efficiency, and accessibility of therapy services in Oregon.

Thank you for your time and consideration. APTA welcomes the opportunity to provide additional information or discuss further how this legislation will benefit your constituents.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in blue ink that reads "Aaron Bishop". The signature is written in a cursive style with a prominent flourish at the end of the word "Bishop".

Aaron Bishop
Vice President, Public Affairs
American Physical Therapy Association