



April 16, 2025

Re: Testimony in Support of CLHO Budget Request

Dear Co-Chairs Representative Sanchez and Senator Leiber, and Members of the Joint Committee on Ways and Means,

On behalf of the Oregon Center for Children and Youth with Special Health Needs (OCCYSHN), **we are writing in strong support of the [Coalition of Local Health Officials' \(CLHO's\) budget request for Babies First! and CaCoon nurse home visiting programs](#)**. These essential programs have been operating at the local public health agencies in most Oregon counties for over 30 years and together serve thousands of families each year. The requested funding of \$6.2 million per biennium will cover the Medicaid match requirement, helping ensure the sustainability of these programs and allowing counties to provide essential support and services to Oregon families in need.

OCCYSHN is Oregon's Title V public health agency for children and youth with special health care needs (CYSHCN) – children, adolescents and young adults with, or at risk for, physical, emotional, developmental, or behavioral conditions. Approximately 1 in 5 young Oregonians has a special health care need. CYSHCN require more health and related services than other children, yet only around 1/3 of Oregon families report getting necessary, effective care coordination when they need it (1). Absent or inadequate care coordination inordinately burdens families and can lead to poorer health outcomes and costly duplication of services (2). CaCoon is one of our signature programs, and it is the only public health home visiting program in the state that specifically serves this vulnerable population. Each year, CaCoon works to address the care coordination needs for nearly 900 Oregon CYSHCN and their families by connecting them to health care and community supports and ensuring that the child's health team works together more effectively.

In addition to OCCYSHN's CaCoon program, the Family and Child Health Section of the Oregon Health Authority has three other high-quality nurse home visiting programs that each serve different populations: Babies First!, Nurse Family Partnership (NFP), and Family Connects Oregon (FCO).

**Babies First! and CaCoon Nurse Home Visiting Programs are unique in that they:**

- **Serve our most vulnerable children and families through more life stages.** CaCoon is the only nurse home visiting program that serves CYSHCN specifically, supporting children and youth up to age 21 and their families. Babies First! serves both pregnant individuals and families of children up to age five. By contrast, NFP focuses on parents with their first pregnancies until the child reaches age 2, while FCO provides 1-3 visits to families of all newborns.
- **Have the most established track records in Oregon.** Babies First! and CaCoon have each been providing nurse home visiting services in our state for over 30 years.

OCCYSHN

Oregon Center for Children and  
Youth with Special Health Needs

t 503 494-8303  
t 877 307-7070  
f 503 494-2755  
e occyshn@ohsu.edu  
w www.occyshn.org

Mail code CDRC  
707 SW Gaines St  
Portland, OR 97239



- **Have the greatest population reach.** Babies First! and CaCoon each operate in more than 25 counties across Oregon. NFP and FCO each currently serve nine counties.

County budget shortfalls threaten the sustainability of these programs and limit the ability to hire enough staff to serve all eligible families. Currently fewer than 20% of potentially eligible families in our state can access home visiting services (3). **While the state provides Medicaid matching funds for NFP and FCO, Babies First! and CaCoon currently receive no state matching funds**, relying instead on already strained local public health budgets. The state providing these matching funds for Babies First! and CaCoon would help stabilize these essential programs, increase the number of families these programs can serve in participating counties, and allow us to partner with more counties.

**OCCYSHN strongly supports CLHO's request for \$6.2 million per biennium to cover the state Medicaid matching funds for CaCoon and Babies First!**. We are asking for your support to level the playing field for all nurse home visiting programs, allowing families to access the program best suited to their unique needs and ensuring more families in Oregon receive the care and services they deserve.

Sincerely,

Kimberly Tice, R.N.  
Care Coordination Specialist and Policy Analyst  
Oregon Center for Children and Youth with Special Health Needs (OCCYSHN)

Benjamin Hoffman, M.D.  
Director  
Oregon Center for Children and Youth with Special Health Needs (OCCYSHN)

References:

- (1) Oregon's Children & Youth with Special Health Care Needs: An Overview. 2022. Oregon Center for Children and Youth with Special Health needs. [https://www.ohsu.edu/sites/default/files/2022-08/CYSHCN%20Overview%20v10\\_FINAL\\_8.31.22.pdf](https://www.ohsu.edu/sites/default/files/2022-08/CYSHCN%20Overview%20v10_FINAL_8.31.22.pdf). Accessed March 26, 2025.
- (2) National Care Coordination Standards for Children and Youth with Special Health Care Needs. <https://nashp.org/national-care-coordination-standards-for-children-and-youth-with-special-health-care-needs/>. Accessed March 26, 2025.
- (3) Brown, R., Green, B., Joseph, R., Lambarth, C., and Miyamoto, K. (alphabetical order). Oregon's Early Childhood Home Visiting System Landscape: Insights, Opportunities, and Recommendations for Action, Center for Coordinating Oregon Home Visiting Systems (CCOHVS), Portland State University, 2024.

**OCCYSHN**  
Oregon Center for Children and  
Youth with Special Health Needs

t 503 494-8303  
t 877 307-7070  
f 503 494-2755  
e [occyshn@ohsu.edu](mailto:occyshn@ohsu.edu)  
w [www.occyshn.org](http://www.occyshn.org)

Mail code CDRC  
707 SW Gaines St  
Portland, OR 97239