

HB 2020: Streamlining process for local organizations- Credentialing Reciprocity

Mental health and chemical dependency treatment providers – for children and adults – must go through multiple authorization processes to operate in different Coordinated Care Organization, or CCO, regions. **Multiple authorizations. Multiple credentialing processes.** This is mostly an unnecessary use of time, and costly to the providers who are trying to manage essential programs that we rely on, but on a shoestring budget. And it uses up CCO resources as well.

I first learned about this – going through multiple credentialing processes – from one of the long-standing, well-respected organizations in my community.

Picture organizations serving youth and adults -- like Homestead Youth Services in Pendleton, Tillamook Family Counseling, Northwest Human Services in Salem, Ontrack in Medford, and Lifeworks, Columbia Care, and DePaul. They are already licensed by the State of Oregon, and certified by the Oregon Health Authority as a behavioral health provider. An additional layer of credentialing happens at the CCO level – in any CCO region where that provider will have clients. We're not talking about being annoyed by filling out a lengthy form or sending in a report. A credentialing review takes 2-3 days, involving several people. It's a burden for providers in **any** community across the state who happen to be working in more than one CCO region.

This bill establishes “credential reciprocity” so that once a program providerⁱ is vetted and found to be qualified by one CCO, they will then be recognized as qualified for providing service and billing with other CCO's. Oregon Health Authority will work with an advisory committee to adopt the rules for credentialing standards, to ensure that no matter which CCO did the credentialing, it meets the agreed, shared needs for CCO's.

The objective of this bill is to **reduce the number of duplicative administrative processes**. It establishes a more streamlined credentialing process to avoid wasting time on unnecessary administrative work. That will allow providers to focus more time and resources on serving their clients and helping communities.

ⁱ [This bill does *not* apply to medical professionals. Discussions about streamlining licensing and credentialing for individual medical health care providers are happening in other venues.]