

HATFIELD RESIDENT FELLOWSHIP PROJECT BRIEF

Oregon Health Authority Provider Engagement Plan

Project Dates: November/2023 – July/2024

PROJECT GOAL

To determine the reasons for, and barriers that prevent, providers actively participating in the Medicaid network with the Oregon Health Authority. This includes provider network adequacy, retention, recruitment, and communication strategies that are and are not working.

TAKE-AWAYS

The Oregon Health Authority suffers most from a lack of dialogue with providers. Providers, defined as anyone from front desk staff to doctors to mental health clinicians, do not have a venue to receive information from and give information to the OHA. Improving the channels of communication will go a long way toward improving provider engagement.

- Many providers, and even employees within the OHA, are unaware of rule changes and rate improvements. Intra-and-inter organization communication is poor.
- Rural areas are especially affected by the lack of provider network adequacy, and steps are in place to address this issue.
- Providers complain that administrative burden is high and almost acts like an additional tax to participate in the Medicaid network.
- Providers don't receive adequate training in billing and other important duties that are integral to participating in state health plans.

CHALLENGES

The most looming challenges to addressing the issues in provider engagement are related to a lack of institutional structure and positions to provide training for providers. The OHA is currently not equipped for this, and will need to create new positions, allocate funding, and hire personnel.

STRATEGY

Starting in November of 2023, and continuing until July of 2024, the strategy for my fellowship task is still evolving. To this point, the steps to achieve improved provider engagement include:

- Regular meetings with administration and leadership at the OHA to understand organizational structure and identify needs.
- Interviews with managers and units within the OHA that either interact with providers or have an impact on provider engagement.
- Developing a landscape analysis of current trends in the USA regarding state approaches to provider engagement.
- Combine complaints, suggestions, and aspirational goals of the OHA, external organizations, and key individuals into a cohesive report.
- Provide recommendations for the OHA and develop a plan and strategy with administration to improve provider engagement.

RESULTS

Proposed results at this early stage in the project currently include a landscape analysis, a report and presentation of findings, and the development of a strategy to address provider engagement in the state of Oregon.