



NPO Health Policy Committee Update

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By Diane Solomon, PhD, PMHNP-BC, CNM

Your Health Policy Committee has been hard at work on several important issues regarding your practice and policy:

For the upcoming 2020 short legislative session, we are prioritizing a bill that Rep. Rachel Prusak, NPO member, hopes to bring forward with (retired) RN Senator Laurie Monnes Anderson to facilitate NP preceptor tax credits. We hope to style this bill after a successful bill in Hawaii which offers up to \$5000 tax credit/year, with \$1000 per student per \geq four weeks of precepting.

Telehealth: Rep. Prusak is also looking at feasibility of introducing a bill that requires payment parity for Medicaid providers who offer telehealth (for physical care or psychiatric care).

We are continuing to assess need for legislation for NPs to sign Medical Marijuana (MMJ) cards. While the MMJ problem may be dismantled by the Oregon Health Authority soon, to date it has not been. Further, the OSBN is currently interpreting statute that NPs cannot discuss marijuana and/or MMJ as a treatment option, and this language needs to be reversed.

Additional items on our long-term agenda:

NPO discrimination initiative: The number of NPs working in primary care alongside physicians, doing equal work, across the state, for health organizations that salary NPs at approximately 40-60% of physician salaries—and/or discriminating against them in benefits, incentives, etc.—continues to grow. ONA/NPO's attorney plans to lodge a complaint with the Oregon Bureau of Labor and Industries as a first step addressing discrimination. If you or any NP you know has a discrimination issue to discuss confidentially, please email dnsolomon@comcast.net.

We also hope to eventually introduce an Omnibus bill to the Oregon legislature which will make all healthcare language in Oregon statute provider neutral—e.g., change “physician” to “provider” or “clinician” to prevent having to change statute language instance by instance in the future.

If you are interested in joining the NPO Health Policy Committee., please contact us. We welcome you!

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