

## LEGISLATIVE UPDATE

Prepared for OAFP

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### **HB 2691 – Makes OPAL permanent**

Alit Jetmalani, MD, helped start OPAL-K at OHSU in 2014. The program has since been expanded to also serve adults. Oregon Psychiatric Access Line (OPAL) gives primary care providers immediate access to a psychiatrist for patient consultations. “The sophistication of primary care providers is really increasing,” Jetmalani told the Senate Health Committee. “We see it in the types of questions they ask.”

Since 2014, OPAL has provided 2,700 consultations to 1,600 primary care providers.

HB 2691 makes OPAL permanent by putting it in statute. OPAL was funded with \$900,000 in 2018 and is part of the OHA budget.

There was no opposition, so the Senate Health Committee approved the bill, sending it to the floor for debate.

### **HB 2563 – Newborn Screening Update**

This bill creates the Newborn Bloodspot Screening Advisory Board in the Oregon Health Authority. This Board would update newborn screening in Oregon, which currently tests for more than 40 genetic disorders. The program is entirely paid for by fees.

The Senate Health Committee heard testimony in support of the bill.

### **HB 2220 – Dentists providing immunizations**

HB 2220 would allow dentists, with some additional training, to provide immunizations, including flu shots, to patients.

Rep. Cedric Hayden (R-Cottage Grove) said, “These procedures are well within the scope of dentistry.” He went on to say, “As we move forward with integrated health homes, the younger generation of dentists who work in those health homes, are very interested in this.”

Illinois and Minnesota dentists have been able to provide immunizations since 2014.

Phil Marucha, DMD, Dean of the OHSU Dental School, said dentists can help patients get immunizations in a way that is safe and convenient. “When a patient is in the dentist’s office for their semi-annual checkup, it would be a perfect opportunity for them to get their flu shot.”

There was no opposition, so the Senate Health Committee unanimously approved the bill, sending it to the floor for debate.

### **SB 9 – Pharmacists prescribing insulin**

In emergency situations, trained pharmacists would be able to both prescribe and dispense insulin and supplies for diabetics.

Sen. Peter Courtney (D-Salem) told the House Health Committee stories about diabetics sharing insulin to get through the month, buying test strips on the black market

and borrowing equipment. "I'm not okay with these stories. I don't think anyone here is okay with these stories," he said.

Rep. Mitch Greenlick (D-Portland) asked why not allow pharmacists prescribe insulin in non-emergency situations? Sen. Dennis Linthicum (R-Klamath Falls) said insulin was sold over-the-counter 45 years ago when he became an insulin-dependent diabetic.

Jessica Adamson, Providence, said they don't normally support mandates but, "This is one that will save costs by avoiding unnecessary visits to the emergency department."

### **SB 136 – Nurse anesthetist Rx**

Attorney Julie Wise told the House Health Committee that in 2013 certified registered nurse anesthetists (CRNAs) were given prescriptive authority but it was limited to a 10-day supply. "The situation has changed and we've come back," she said. "What has changed is the role of CRNAs in pain management. When you are working with a chronic pain patient, you can't get that under control in 10 days." She said, "The 10-day limitation is causing CRNAs to turn away patients."

The bill would remove the 10-day supply limitation.

Anesthesiologists said they would like to see the bill narrowed so CRNAs prescriptive authority was limited and not include opioids.

### **HB 2510 – PANDAS/PANS Awareness Day**

Pediatric autoimmune neuropsychiatric disorders associated with streptococcal infections (PANDAS) cause symptoms such as rapid onset obsessive-compulsive disorders and tic disorders. Numerous parents testified with stories about their children who experienced symptoms and went undiagnosed, until they found a physician who was familiar with PANDAS/PANS, and were provided azithromycin. Children who received the antibiotic recovered quickly. Advocates of the bill say there is a lack of awareness of the illness in the medical community.

HB 2510 designates October 9<sup>th</sup> as PANDAS/PANS Awareness Day. The Senate Health Committee passed the bill unanimously. It now goes to the floor.

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