

**Oregon Health Policy Board Testimony
October 11, 2011**

Commissioner Janet Carlson, President, Association of Oregon Counties

I appreciate the opportunity to provide an update on the counties' role in the evolution of health care transformation.

While much of the conversation around Coordinated Care Organizations (CCOs) has centered on mental health, I am here today to discuss not only how health care transformation interfaces with the mental health system, but also how it interfaces with the public health system.

1. Education

AOC has reached out to commissioners in a number of ways over the past year to update them on HB 3650 goals and the progress of health care transformation. This outreach has included:

- AOC Summer Summit in August, where 70 commissioners participated with Dr. Goldberg, Mike Bonetto, Representative Tina Kotek, and Representative Jim Thompson during a panel discussion of health care transformation.
- A document entitled "5 Things Every Commissioner Needs to About CCOs," created and distributed by AOC, the Association of Oregon Community Mental Health Programs, and the Coalition of Local Health Officials.
- Monthly reports on the progress of the four state workgroups.

As a result, commissioners have responded to the call to action and have begun engaging with local stakeholders.

2. Local Efforts

- Mental Health directors, Mental Health Organization directors, and Public Health administrators have been engaging in local conversations across the state with their county commissioners and other health system partners.
- County commissioners have participated in local meetings with hospitals, independent physicians associations, dentists, and other health care providers. Getting everyone to the table has been challenging in some cases, but a great deal of positive work is moving forward.

3. Why counties need to have a role in Coordinated Care Organizations

It is important to reflect on the counties' role in the development of Coordinated Care Organizations. According to Oregon law (ORS 430.630(11) and ORS 431.375), county commissioners serve as the public health and mental health authorities in the state of Oregon. What that means is counties are assigned responsibility for:

- ***Assuring the health and well being of our constituents*** - Every Oregonian is guaranteed the right, in statute, for basic public health services and access to needed behavioral and mental health services. County commissioners as the local public and mental health authorities are required to assure activities that preserve health and prevent disease, and to create a blueprint for mental health services that are directed by and responsive to the mental health needs of individuals in the community;