



OFFICE OF THE DIRECTOR

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January 15, 2016

Dear Children's System Advisory Committee Executive Committee:

Thank you for your December 22, 2015, letter regarding concerns about communication between the Children's System Advisory Committee (CSAC) and the Oregon Health Authority (OHA).

I am aware that communication has been challenging at times with the departure of a strong Child and Family Behavioral Health (CFBH) unit manager and subsequent resignation of the interim manager, who had been appointed by OHA as the liaison to CSAC.

CSAC's advisory role within the child and family behavioral health system is critical and our leadership team is committed to enhancing ongoing communication with Oregon youth, families, providers and fellow youth-serving agencies. The voice of youth, families, providers, and allied agencies is necessary for us to do our work effectively. CFBH staff, OHA legislative liaison, and other OHA staff also are responsible for and committed to the accurate and timely exchange of information.

Steve Kuhn is interim CFBH manager and we are recruiting for a permanent manager, with demonstrated experience in children's behavioral health and a solid grounding in system of care principles, to effectively lead this health care specialty. We appreciate your interest in the recruitment process and will include you on the interview panel. Until we fill the permanent position, please direct all CSAC communication to Mr. Kuhn.

In addition to regular communication with the OHA legislative liaison, OHA leadership will brief CSAC and request input on major grants and critical policy changes. We hope to build on the investments that have been made in children's behavioral health and develop a comprehensive system of care for children, youth and young adults. Ongoing, effective input from CSAC is critical to our vision being fulfilled and I look forward to working with you in this important endeavor.

In regard to the substance abuse prevention team, including youth tobacco prevention and retailer enforcement, they were moved to the Public Health Division to better align these activities with the tobacco prevention and education programs, and other population health programs. We believe this alignment assures stronger prevention programs that are informed by public health's epidemiological and population health data infrastructure.

Additionally, the reorganization provided an opportunity to integrate substance use disorder treatment for youth and young adults into the CFBH unit. We will be recruiting for a position dedicated specifically to this effort. This was made possible by the anticipated increased marijuana tax revenues and the position authority provided by the 2015 Legislatively Adopted Budget.

Another change referenced in your letter relates to the mental health and substance abuse prevention and treatment block grant planning coordinator, Jackie Fabrick who now works in the Health Policy and Analytics Division. Although Ms. Fabrick works for a different division, in her planning role, she remains closely connected to the work in the Health Systems Division.

These structural changes made during the reorganization are intended to better align people and their functions with the division's mission, goals and objectives. This is another topic that I am happy to explore in further detail in future discussions with you.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in cursive script that reads "Lynne Saxton".

Lynne Saxton  
Director