

2021 Concerns by Subcommittee for Voice/Inclusion of Oregonians with Lived Experience in the Mental Health System

Two Flawed State Senate Bills Being Considered by State Sen. Prozanski's Work Group on Mental Health

Senate Bill (SB) 187, Defines “danger to self or others.”

We are concerned about the attempt to define “danger” in this bill. SB187 is an unnecessary and ill-informed attempt to legislate support for individuals experiencing mental health challenges, whether the support is helpful or not. The concepts central to SB187 are “dangerousness” and requiring individuals to accept existing services.

- SB187 uses unscientific definitions of dangerousness and harm;
- SB187 ignores the ineffectiveness of forcing individuals to accept services;
- SB187 does not account for what existing services are actually available;
- SB187 makes it easier for citizens to lose their civil rights and liberties;
- Typical pharmaceutical treatments can have significant, even fatal, risks.

A reputable landmark study by the McArthur Foundation found that there is virtually no factual basis for most metrics designed to assess this type of “danger”:

<https://macarthur.virginia.edu/risk.html>

Senate Bill (SB) 189, Trial visit expansion.

We are concerned about the increase in coercion of mental health consumers in outpatient situations in Oregon. This bill mandates more outpatient care, though leaves the terms of this care undefined.

We are concerned about requiring certain types of mental health care without providing basic needs for consumers. SB189 attempts to prioritize certain services within an under-resourced system. This bill ignores the lack of community services necessary at a time of crisis, and the lack of accessible services in general. Requiring that trial visits must include outpatient care means treating every patient the same with a “cookie cutter approach.” It does not make sense to require outpatient care if, for example, housing assistance is not available. While finding housing may be listed as a “goal” for the consumer in the bill, the bill does not provide those services as such.

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