

Health insurer seeks feedback [The Register-Guard, Eugene, Ore.]

By Christian Wihtol, The Register-Guard, Eugene, Ore.
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Aug. 12--Trillium, the private company that manages the Oregon Health Plan -- Oregon's health insurance system for lower-income residents -- in Lane County wants to hear from the community on how it thinks Trillium's health care transformation work is going.

Trillium is holding a public meeting Tuesday at PeaceHealth Sacred Heart Medical Center, University District to talk about its efforts to improve health care delivery and listen to feedback from residents.

Trillium, a private, for-profit health insurance company owned by a group of Lane County doctors, is Lane County's state-designated coordinated care organization, or CCO. Trillium administers the state health insurance plan for the nearly 57,000 lower-income residents in Lane County who are plan members. That's about one out of every six Lane County residents.

The state provides funding to Trillium, which contracts with a range of Lane County medical and mental health organizations to provide services to Oregon Health Plan members. Trillium oversees spending of about \$210 million a year on plan members, Trillium spokeswoman Debi Farr said.

Under state and national health care transformation time lines, Trillium next year is supposed to increase the number of Lane County residents it covers by about 27,000 residents, at which point it will be providing health insurance to about one-quarter of the county's population.

Those 27,000 residents currently lack any insurance coverage.

Trillium has been running the Oregon Health Plan in Lane County for about a year, Farr noted.

Previously, a separate private company, LIPA, ran the physical health insurance component of the Oregon Health Plan in Lane County, and Lane

County government ran the mental health services component.

One of Trillium's missions in the past year has been to absorb those two arms, Farr said.

Having accomplished that, Trillium now is in the process of absorbing administration of Oregon Health Plan dental plans in Lane County, which until now have been run by four different entities.

Pulling all the programs in under the single roof of Trillium is aimed at improving efficiency, saving money and providing more comprehensive care to Oregon Health Plan clients.

One of the main goals of coordinated care organizations statewide is to stop ballooning costs of providing physical and mental health care to Oregon Health Plan clients.

CCOs are charged by the Legislature with creating innovative ways to improve health services for clients, while at the same time curbing unnecessary costs, such as excessive client use of emergency rooms and hospitalization.

As part of that push, Trillium will be working on client education and preventive care, Farr said.

"Prevention is very important," she said.

Attending Tuesday's meeting will be state Rep. Nancy Nathanson, D-Eugene, who will give an update on healthcare measures approved by the Legislature during its session earlier this year.

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