

September 18, 2025

Expanding Rural Access to Care Innovations through Research

Martha Snow, Senior Research Project Manager
Kylie Lanman, Eastern Oregon Practice Facilitator



Disclosure Statement

We do not have a relevant financial relationship with commercial interest whose products or services relate to the content of this educational presentation.

- *Company: Oregon Rural Practice-based Research Network/Oregon Health & Science University*
- *To ensure independent and balanced content, any conflicts of interest were resolved by making recommendations on evidence-based and structured review.*

Learning Objectives

After this session, attendees should be able to:

1. Know about the types of health care research activities that are active in their communities.
2. Understand how these activities can improve access to care.
3. Reach out to the Oregon Rural Practice-based Research Network if interested in participating in future research and training opportunities.



Agenda

- Our framework, history, and engagement in rural Oregon communities
- Our current research and its benefits for rural Oregonians
- How to get involved
- Q & A

Welcome to Oregon!

- 10th largest state, but 27th most populated
 - 36 counties
 - Majority are rural, 10 are frontier
- 4.2 Million people
 - 33% (>1.4 million) live in rural areas*
- Unique Medicaid model – Coordinated Care Organizations (CCOs)
 - 16 regional CCO networks of all types of health care providers (physical health care, addictions and mental health care)
 - Performance is measured with payment for outcomes
- Various Disparities
 - Income
 - Poverty
 - Education (lack high school diploma)
 - Unemployment



*Oregon Office of Rural Health, 2024: <https://www.ohsu.edu/oregon-office-of-rural-health/about-rural-and-frontier-data>;
<https://www.ruralhealthinfo.org/states/Oregon>

Oregon Rural Practice-based Research Network (ORPRN)

ORPRN's mission is to improve health for all Oregonians through community engaged research, education, and policy.

Research



Education



Health Policy





Our Approach

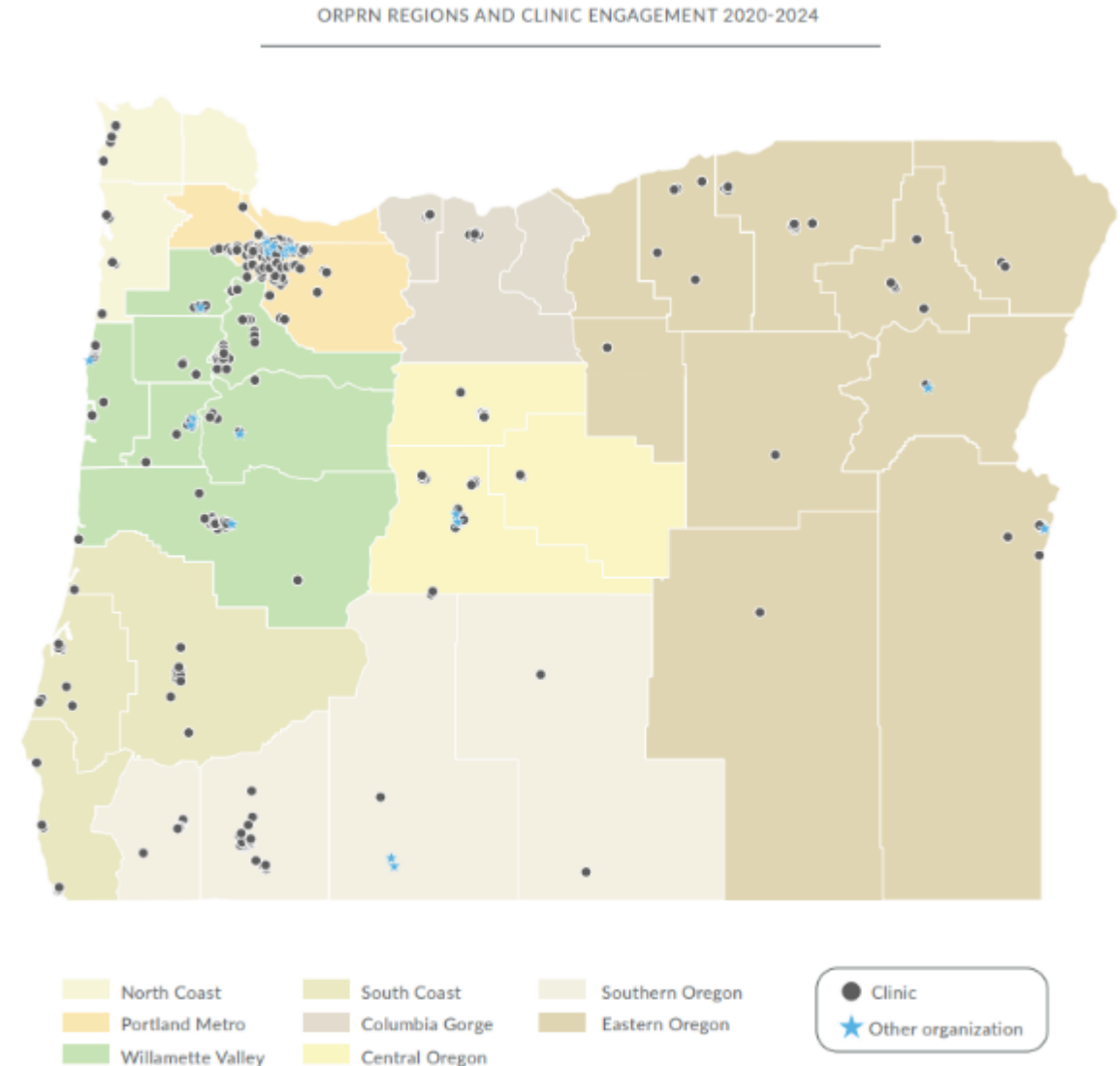
20+ years of experience working with partners in rural and low-resourced settings to identify and implement evidence-based solutions

- Listen to rural communities about their priorities and needs
- Improve access to care for rural and low-resourced patients
 - E.g., cancer screening through blood tests
- Reduce variations in care
- Improve provider retention in rural areas
- Ensure quality, safety and efficiency
- Rapidly disseminate best practices

Our Reach & Impact

Since 2019, we've worked with:

- Over **400** primary care clinics (50% rural or frontier)
- **All 16** of Oregon's Coordinated Care Organizations (CCOs)
- Over **5,200** unique learners in education programs
- Nearly **70,000** individual patients, including
 - Rural/frontier
 - American Indian
 - Hispanic/Latinx
 - Low income
 - Uninsured
 - People with disabilities



Regional Listening Sessions

- Dedicated time to getting to know and build relationships in the community
- Learn from community re: their needs and priorities
- Value strengths of rural communities
 - Focus on what rural communities offer, rather than what they don't have
 - Tight-knit communities to boost engagement (social services, health care, etc.)
 - Inter-agency collaboration



La Grande Listening Session, Spring 2025



What We Have Heard

Priority Health Areas

- Chronic diseases (e.g., diabetes, heart disease, back pain)
- Cancer treatments
- Age-related conditions (e.g., dementia and caregiver support)
- Mental and behavioral health (e.g., suicide, opioid/substance abuse)
- Maternity care
- Health Related Social Needs (e.g., food, transportation, insurance, and housing)

Education Program/Oregon ECHO Network

- Established 2017
- ≈10 staff
- Statewide utility for Project ECHO and provides education through an all teach all learn model to a variety of health care workers through a virtual platform
 - Didactic presentation followed by a deidentified patient or systems case discussion
- Collaboration with other CME programs
 - Oregon Geriatric Workforce Enhancement Program (GWEP)



“It’s probably hard for you to know the true impact it has on the ground for patients and providers as well. **People are getting better care, and their health is improving, because of this work.”**

– Participant, Adult Mental Health 1 ECHO, offered by the Oregon ECHO network (OEN).

Education Program/Oregon ECHO Network

Benefits of Participating:

- No cost to participate
- Attend sessions as you are able
- Free CME credits
- Ability to build community
- Learn best practices
- Gain tangible tools and new skills to put in place at the end of each session

www.oregonechonetwork.org

Fall 2025 Program Topics Include:

- Dementia in Long Term Care (NEW)
- Dermatology for non-Dermatologists (NEW)
- Substance Use Disorder in Hospital Care
- Geriatric Care for Interprofessional Trainees
- Palliative Care in Primary Care
- Adult Mental Health I
- Child Psychiatry
- Syphilis and HIV
- And more!

Health Policy Program



- Established 2017
- ≈8 staff (2 live in rural communities)
- Support policy and systems changes that advance **health care transformation** in Oregon.
 - **Outreach and engagement:** Uplift community perspective in developing and implementing health care policies and programs
 - **Education:** Translate health policies and programs into accessible information & action
 - **Technical assistance and expertise:** Conduct research, provide subject matter expertise and one-on-one coaching (practice facilitation) to promote evidence-based best practices and quality improvement
 - **Relationship building:** Help build trust and bridges among health care providers, health insurers, community-based organizations, and policy makers
 - **Capacity building:** Extend the capacity and reach of our partners' policy efforts

Health Policy Program

Advancing social health integration

- Supporting clinics and health systems in **integrating screening & referrals for health-related social needs** (e.g., housing, food, transportation).

Increasing access to behavioral health care

- Connecting counties, behavioral health providers, and law enforcement agencies in standing up **deflection programs**, pathways that connect people to treatment and recovery services instead of citing and arrest.
- Supporting grant management of the **EOCCO Medication for Opioid Use Disorder (MOUD) Treatment in Jails program** to prevent withdrawal, overdose, and recidivism

Research Program

- Established 2012
- ≈30 staff (8 live in rural communities)
- 15 OHSU faculty collaborators
- Community-based pragmatic clinical trials on lifespan topics
 - Newborn skincare
 - Kindergarten readiness
 - Prevention
 - Advance care planning
- Blend 1) Implementation Research and 2) Quality Improvement to address primary care topics
 - Substance use
 - Chronic pain
 - Immunizations
 - Dementia
 - Type 2 diabetes
 - Cancer screening



See ORPRN Active Projects Flyer
for full list of projects

Current Research in Rural Oregon

GRAIL PATHFINDER 2 Study

Funder: GRAIL, Inc

Lead Study Team: OHSU Knight Cancer Institute

Location: Columbia Gorge Region, Washington and Oregon

Primary Objective

- Evaluate the safety and performance of GRAIL's multi-cancer early detection (MCED) test in patients 50+ years old not actively being evaluated or treated for cancer.
 - Simple blood draw that tests for over 50 types of cancers

Benefits for the clinic and community

- Clinical access to cutting-edge multi-cancer early detection (MCED) cancer screening technology
- Minimally invasive blood draw for patients
- Easily accessible to patients at community events
- Study staff and materials available in English and Spanish
- Early detection of cancers



ORPRN Staff preparing blood draw,
One Community Health, Spring 2023

Current Research in Rural Oregon



Funder: National Institutes of Health, CARE for Health

Lead Study Team: NIDA Clinical Trials Network from New York University

Location: Enterprise, Oregon

Primary Objective

- Examine the efficacy of collaborative care, in comparison to usual care, for patients with polysubstance use for reducing **days of opioid, stimulant, and heavy alcohol use**

Benefits for the clinic and community

- Research funding for ~2 dedicated staff in clinic for substance use treatment
- Patients receive 6 months of nurse care manager led collaborative care intervention



Co-Care team site visit at Winding Waters clinics, Spring 2025

Current Research in Rural Oregon



Funder: National Institutes of Health, CARE for Health

Lead Study Team: University of Utah

Location: Columbia Gorge Region and Klamath Falls, Washington and Oregon



Klamath Health Partnership – Klamath Falls, OR

Primary Objective

- **Improve pain management** and reduce reliance on opioids for patients with chronic back pain in FQHCs
 - Non-pharmacologic management of pain

Benefits for the clinic and community

- Free Telehealth physical therapy for chronic low back pain
- Service is free and does NOT bill insurance.
- Treatment provided in English and Spanish
- Accommodates patient work schedules and transportation challenges
- Minimal impact on clinic staff and workflow
- Builds capacity of clinic workforce to deliver care through e-referrals process and telehealth care
- Increases availability of physical therapy services in rural communities

One Community Health – Hood River, OR



ORPRN staff at One Community Health, Spring 2025

Current Research in Rural Oregon



Funder: US Forest Service and Portland State University

Lead Study Team: Portland State University

Location: Klamath Falls and Enterprise, Oregon

Primary Objective

- Test the effect of nature-based prescriptions on **patient adherence to exercise, self-reported wellness, and sleep**

Benefits for the clinic and community

- Alternative means for clinic staff to encourage physical exercise for patients
- Potential patient health benefits include improved physical and mental health

Preliminary Results

- Nature group on average 1) slept one hour more, 2) exercised for 37 more minutes, 3) less likely to feel depressed on days with outdoors exercise than Control group



Nature Rx (nature prescription):
an intervention that increases time spent outside to improve current and future health outcomes.

A Nature Rx might include walking one mile per week on a forest trail or meditating in a park for 30 minutes once a day. In this brochure, we focus on Klamath Falls places for Nature Rx.

Treatment Group
Brochure –
Klamath Falls 19

Current Research in Rural Oregon



Funder: Patient-Centered Outcomes Research Institute

Lead Study Team: University of Iowa

Location: Statewide, Oregon

Primary Objective

- The **Self-Measured Blood Pressure (SMBP)** study will compare two ways of delivering SMBP to improve blood pressure in older adults living with multiple chronic diseases:
1) with pharmacist assistance vs 2) without pharmacist assistance.

Benefits for the clinic

- Receive \$5,000 per year
- Receive training and support in implementing SMBP strategies aligned with Target BP™
- Potential for pharmaceutical coordination and support including billable services guidance

Expectations for the clinic

- Share a list of eligible patients and help facilitate patient enrollment and data collection
- Work with 20 enrolled patients to deliver the randomized SMBP strategy
- Engage with patients for 12 months of SMBP intervention, followed by 12 months of follow up



Currently recruiting primary care clinics that:

- ✓ Provide care to adults aged ≥ 65 years
- ✓ Have providers who prescribe medications
- ✓ Agree to participate in SMBP training and study follow up

Advantages by Participating in Research



- Community representation and collaboration in the research process
- Compensation for participants and partner organizations
- Free EHR and quality improvement support to clinics
- Free training towards telehealth/technology
- Access to medical tests and services
- Engages local champions/researchers with non-traditional backgrounds
- Sharing of study findings to improve rural health

How To Get Involved

- Fill out the sign-up sheet
- Register for ORPRN's monthly email newsletter:
<https://www.ohsu.edu/oregon-rural-practice-based-research-network/contact-us>
- Contact your Eastern Oregon Practice Facilitator, Kylie Lanman:
lanman@ohsu.edu
- Visit our table in the lobby!

Questions? Thank you!

Martha Snow, MPH

Senior Research Project Manager
snowm@ohsu.edu

Kylie Lanman, CRHCP, BS

Practice Facilitator, Eastern Oregon Region
lanman@ohsu.edu

ORPRN is led by Dr. Melinda Davis, PhD, MCR

To learn more about ORPRN visit:

www.ohsu.edu/oregon-rural-practice-based-research-network