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**Action May Be Needed: Public Health
Laboratory Billing Changes**

Please disseminate to appropriate staff in your organization.

October 9, 2014

Dear Oregon State Public Health Laboratory Client,

In late August, we notified our clients about upcoming changes to the Oregon State Public Health Laboratory's billing procedures. We have received a lot of thoughtful feedback from your organizations and thank you for your continued partnership. This is an update about the status of this project and provides answers to some commonly asked questions. Please continue to stay engaged with our e-mails for additional detail as the project proceeds.

Rationale and Purpose for Billing

The OSPHL is trying to bill for as much of the work that we do as we can. Currently, we are writing off many charges for our services because of our limited billing capacity. In addition, Federal support for our work has decreased over the years. By increasing our billing capacity, we are better securing the financial future of the public health lab to support essential public health functions. This means we will be more likely to continue to offering high quality service to help serve our clients and the public now and in the future. We do not plan to bill for services that are performed purely for community health purposes and are paid for by other funding sources.

Implementation Time Line

We have revised the general time line for training and implementation of the changes while we work with partners and clearly compile information about the changes for you. We plan to offer webinar-based trainings to implement these changes in November, including separate trainings for billing staff and laboratory or clinic staff.

What To Do Now

You work flow: Please continue any planning necessary in order to assure that you can provide Medicaid, Coordinated Care Organization, and/or private insurance information to the OSPHL on the test request form. This will include plan name, policy number, group number, and ICD-9 code.

- If you are already providing some of this information, we will begin entering the data and seeking reimbursement from payers as soon as we are able.
- We have heard that some organizations do not have insurance information for the clients they serve. If this is the case for your location, please watch future communications for additional guidance and information about this scenario.

- Some locations only send samples required by the Oregon disease reporting law. These billing notices do not apply to your locations.

Communications: We will continue to use e-mail as a primary means of communication during implementation. Please e-mail sarah.m.humphrey@state.or.us with contact information for any staff members who need to receive updates and training e-mails. If you have already sent this information, it has been added.

Patients Requesting Confidential Services

Several of our partners have expressed concerns about mail being sent to the homes of patients requesting confidential services. We will provide an option to accommodate this request. Detailed information will be provided during the webinar-based trainings we will offer.

Your continued partnership is important to the OSPHL. We are dedicated to ensuring that our laboratory and administrative services support your work. Our goal with this project is to assure more clear and streamlined billing procedures to enhance our work with you. We will continue to communicate additional information as we continue our planning.

Sarah Humphrey, the OSPHL Client Services Coordinator is the lead staff member on this project. You may contact her at 503-693-4100 or sarah.m.humphrey@state.or.us with questions.

Sincerely,



Michael Skeels, PhD, MPH
Director, OSPHL



Sarah Humphrey, BS, CHES
Client Services Coordinator, OSPHL