



OREGON
PATIENT
SAFETY
COMMISSION

Affirmative Action Plan

2023-2025 Biennium





The Oregon Patient Safety Commission is a semi-independent state agency that supports healthcare facilities and providers in improving patient safety. We encourage broad information sharing, ongoing education, and open conversations to cultivate a more trusted healthcare system.

Learn more: oregonpatientsafety.org

Our Mission

To reduce the risk of serious adverse events occurring in Oregon's healthcare system and encourage a culture of patient safety.

BUILDING A CULTURE OF SAFER CARE—TOGETHER.



OREGON PATIENT
SAFETY COMMISSION

March 15, 2023

Juliet O. Valdez

Statewide Affirmative Action Manager Department of Administrative Services Office of Cultural Change

Dear Ms. Valdez,

At the Oregon Patient Safety Commission (OPSC), we are committed to equal opportunity and providing a workplace free of discrimination and harassment based on race, color, sex, marital status, sexual orientation, religion, national origin, age, mental or physical disability, or any reason prohibited by state or federal law. We are also committed to the right of any employee to work and advance on the basis of merit, ability, and potential.

We believe that all of us at OPSC are responsible for creating and contributing to an inclusive and professional work environment. To help ensure the effective implementation of our policy statements and the success of our 2023-2025 biennium goals, OPSC will work with our Client Agency Human Resources Business Partner and our Board of Directors to monitor implementation and ongoing effectiveness, adjusting as necessary.

We are dedicated to finding new ways to foster staff and board diversity and promote an inclusive and professional work environment.

Most sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Val Harmon', is written over a light blue horizontal line.

Valerie Harmon
Executive Director

Table of Contents

Agency Overview	1
Mission	1
Programs	1
Key Contacts.....	2
Organizational Chart	2
Affirmative Action Policy Statement.....	3
Diversity and Inclusion Statement	4
Affirmative Action Summary Statement.....	5
2021-2023 Affirmative Action Plan Progress	5
Goals OPSC Set and Met	5
2023-2025 Affirmative Action Plan	6
Strategy 1	6
Strategy 2	6
Strategy 3	7
Strategy 4	7

Agency Overview

The Oregon Legislature created the Oregon Patient Safety Commission (OPSC) in 2003 as an independent voice for patient safety. At that time, many people in our state and around the world saw an urgent need for greater collaboration and systemwide insights to address underlying challenges in healthcare that increase the risk of patient harm. OPSC grew out of recommendations from a workgroup representing medical providers, insurers, purchasers, and consumers. They believed that the work of improving patient safety never ends and should not have to be done in isolation.

“As I sought remedies that would support healthcare system improvements [and] result in quality outcomes for patients, I discovered that I was not alone. All the members of the group were part of this quest for a process and a culture of patient safety that would work for patients and the institutions charged with serving them.”

—Ellen C. Lowe, workgroup member

OPSC was created as a semi-independent state agency to advance, support, and encourage patient safety in Oregon, independent of any regulatory functions of state government.

Founding Principles

- Create a safe, non-punitive, and confidential haven for the collection and use of patient safety information for learning.
- Change the climate of patient safety in Oregon, while acknowledging that such change will require a long-term, sustained effort.
- Identify and share best practices.
- Fully represent patients and the patient’s experience in patient safety efforts.
- Encourage a “just culture” framework that balances individual accountability with a non-punitive, learning approach to achieve system improvements.

Mission

OPSC’s mission is to improve patient safety by reducing the risk of serious adverse events occurring in Oregon’s healthcare system and by encouraging a culture of patient safety. This mission was established in the agency’s founding legislation (ORS 442.820(2)) and remains vital. Supporting patient safety culture development is essential to making our healthcare system safer, and it drives everything we do.

Programs

OPSC fulfills its mission through the administration of two programs:

- **The Patient Safety Reporting Program** collects and analyzes information from healthcare facilities about serious patient harm or near misses. It shares the broader lessons learned to support facilities in refining their best practices and preventing future harm.
- **The Early Discussion and Resolution** process helps connect patients (or a family member) who experience harm and their healthcare provider so that they can speak candidly about the harm that occurred, work toward reconciliation, and contribute to safeguarding others from similar harm.

Key Contacts

Agency Director

Valerie Harmon, Executive Director
Oregon Patient Safety Commission
valerie.harmon@oregonpatientsafety.org

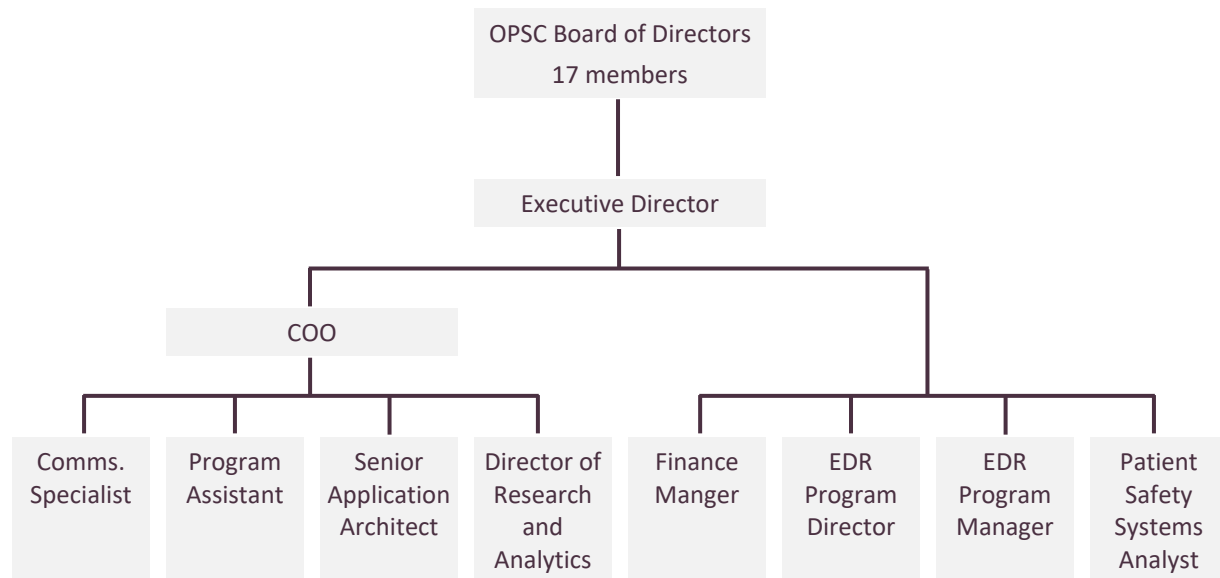
Governor's Advisor

Helen Hoang, Executive Appointments Advisor
Office of Governor Tina Kotek
helen.hoang@oregon.gov

Affirmative Action Representative

Sherry Lauer, Client Agency Human Resources Business Partner
Chief Human Resources Office
Department of Administrative Services
sherry.lauer@oregon.gov

Organizational Chart



Affirmative Action Policy Statement

The Oregon Patient Safety Commission (OPSC) is committed to providing equal employment opportunities without regard to race, color, religion, sex, national origin, age, disability, marital status, veteran status, sexual orientation, genetic information, or any other protected characteristic under applicable law. This policy relates to all phases of employment, including, but not limited to, recruiting, employment, placement, promotion, transfer, demotion, reduction of workforce and termination, rates of pay or other forms of compensation, selection for training, the use of all facilities, and participation in all organization-sponsored employee activities. Provisions in applicable laws providing for bona fide occupational qualifications, business necessity, or age limitations will be adhered to by the organization where appropriate.

As part of OPSC's equal employment opportunity policy, we will also take affirmative action as called for by applicable laws and executive orders to ensure that historically and structurally underserved groups, females, disabled veterans, recently separated veterans, other protected veterans, Armed Forces Service Medal veterans, and people with disabilities are introduced into our workforce whenever possible and considered for promotional opportunities if available.

Employees and applicants shall not be subjected to harassment, intimidation, or any type of retaliation because they have done any of the following:

- Filed a complaint.
- Assisted or participated in an investigation, compliance review, hearing or any other activity related to the administration of any federal, state, or local law requiring equal employment opportunity.
- Opposed any act or practice made unlawful by any federal, state, or local law requiring equal opportunity.
- Exercised any other legal right protected by federal, state, or local law requiring equal opportunity.

The above-mentioned policies shall be periodically brought to the attention of supervisors and shall be appropriately administered. It is the responsibility of each supervisor of the organization to ensure affirmative implementation of these policies to avoid any discrimination in employment. All employees are expected to recognize these policies and cooperate with their implementation. Violation of these policies may result in disciplinary action.

OPSC leadership will work with our HR Business partner to monitor the implementation of personnel procedures to guide our affirmative action plan. A notice explaining the organization's affirmative action policy will remain posted in OPSC's break room and will be available on OPSC's server where staff can access it at any time.

Diversity and Inclusion Statement

Our mission at the Oregon Patient Safety Commission's (OPSC) is to reduce the risk of serious adverse events occurring in Oregon's healthcare system and encourage a culture of patient safety. With a mandate to serve all Oregonians, we are committed to advancing diversity, equity, and inclusion through our work.

To do this, we:

- Administer our patient safety programs, designed to improve systems of care for all Oregon patients.
- Seek out other perspectives whenever possible and meet people where they are, without judgment, and with an eye toward equity and inclusion.
- Create opportunities to continue to increase the diversity of our staff, Board of Directors, and Task Force on Resolution of Adverse Healthcare Incidents.

Additionally, we will work to foster an inclusive and equitable workplace and Board and Task Force experience, as we value the meaningful tenure of our staff and the members of our Board and Task Force.

Affirmative Action Summary Statement

OPSC is committed to integrating affirmative action principles into our work, in accordance with Executive Order 22-11, in a meaningful way. OPSC contracts with the Department of Administrative Services (DAS) Chief Human Resources Office (CHRO) for Human Resources (HR) services. OPSC has an assigned HR Business Partner, who manages our HR functions, and serves as OPSC's Affirmative Action Representative. OPSC leadership worked closely with our Business Partner over the last biennium and will continue to do so in the next biennium to coordinate services and to ensure equity in hiring, promotion, and succession planning. This partnership is also central to our efforts to foster an inclusive and respectful culture that encourages collaboration, creativity, and flexibility to enable individuals to contribute to their full potential.

2021-2023 Affirmative Action Plan Progress

Goals OPSC Set and Met

- **Send one management and one non-management staff to the state's diversity and inclusion conference, and work with our business partner to identify additional opportunities for staff training on diversity.** Capacity limitation and/or availability may impact this goal. For example, when the conference was virtual, all staff participated. OPSC staff have also been given the opportunity to attend Partners in Diversity (PiD) educational offerings and bring back key learning to share with staff during all-staff meetings. Programs attended by OPSC staff included:
 - Building Racial Equity for Long-Term, Sustainable Change
 - Becoming Anti-Racist
 - Inclusive Interviewing: De-biasing the Hiring Process
- **Identify opportunities to incorporate equity into our patient safety work and information dissemination.** OPSC has elevated equity to be a central focus for both of its programs. We know that for healthcare to be safe, it must also be equitable. However, we know far too little about the role inequities play in the safe delivery of care. OPSC has taken steps to incorporate equity into current and upcoming program work that includes:
 - Beginning the legislative change process to codify health equity as an essential part of the Patient Safety Reporting Program's data collection and analysis.
 - Developing a new data process strategy for Early Discussion and Resolution to both collect information to understand if the program is equitable and to understand the role equity may play in resolution in patient harm events.
 - Developing an Early Discussion and Resolution outreach strategy that seeks to reach historically and structurally underserved groups.
- **Work with our Client Agency HR Business Partner to disseminate employment opportunities to reach diverse candidates, using the CHRO's recruiting process that includes diversity partners across the state.** OPSC has not had a need to recruit for open positions since the start of the biennium but anticipates using this process in 2023.
- **In partnership with the Governor's office, recruit diverse candidates, both culturally and geographically, to our Board of Directors and Task Force on Resolution of Adverse Healthcare Incidents.** Recruiting for open Board and Task Force positions has proven challenging, even with support from the Governor's office. OPSC has, however, added some geographic diversity to

both bodies. OPSC is continuing to post opportunities to serve with Partners in Diversity to reach a more diverse pool of candidates.

- **Track employee demographic data through the statewide tracking system for employee data (i.e., Workday).**
- **Continue our efforts to make the information we share available and accessible to all Oregonians.** Our ongoing focus is to transition to more web-based content that incorporates accessibility principles. OPSC transitioned to a new website platform and this goal was central to that body of work. The platform that was chosen incorporated current accessibility principles, and, when possible, content was transitioned out of attachments to web-based content. OPSC has also transitioned program-related documentation for one of its programs to a web-based Knowledgebase (release November 2022) and is in the process of a similar transition for its other program.
- **Whenever possible, submit project request for proposals to a Minority Business Enterprise (MBE) and a Woman Business Enterprise (WBE).** OPSC has made requests for proposal broadly available, posting with organizations like PiD, when possible. OPSC has also solicited project proposals from and contracted with three small, women-owned businesses.

2023-2025 Affirmative Action Plan

Over the 2023-2025 biennium, OPSC plans to focus on hardwiring equity practices into its recruitment and retention, training, procurement and contracting, and other activities as applicable. As such, identified goals are intended to be ongoing. OPSC also believes that this affirmative action plan is a living document and will look for additional opportunities to incorporate equity into our work.

Strategy 1

OPSC will continue to focus its recruiting outreach efforts to increase the diversity of our workforce, Board of Directors, and the Task Force on Resolution of Adverse Healthcare Incidents.

Actions to Support Strategy

- Post employment opportunities and open Board of Directors and Task Force positions on the PiD job board.
- Work with our Client Agency HR Business Partner to disseminate all employment opportunities to reach diverse candidates, using the CHRO's recruiting process that include diversity partners across the state.
- Request input from OPSC's Policy Advisor at the Governor's office annually on strategies to recruit diverse candidates, both culturally and geographically, to the OPSC Board of Directors and Task Force on Resolution of Adverse Healthcare Incidents.
- Track workforce, Board of Directors, and Task Force demographic data through the statewide tracking system (Workday) and review annually to better understand gaps in diversity in our workforce and public bodies.

Strategy 2

OPSC will continue to foster an inclusive and respectful culture that encourages collaboration, creativity, and flexibility to enable individuals to contribute to their full potential.

Actions to Support Progress on Strategy

- Maintain an annual membership with PiD and encourage staff to participate in available educational offerings.
- Ensure OPSC's workforce, Board of Directors, and Task Force members take the annual mandatory annual trainings offered through Workday (i.e., Maintaining a Harassment Free and Professional Workplace and Preventing Sexual Harassment).
- Send one management and one non-management staff to the state's annual diversity and inclusion conference.

Strategy 3

OPSC will seek to work with contractors from women and minority owned businesses.

Actions to Support Progress on Strategy

- Whenever possible, submit project request for proposals to both a Minority Business Enterprise (MBE) and a Woman Business Enterprise (WBE).

Strategy 4

OPSC will integrate equity, inclusion, and accessibility into existing systems and processes to ensure all Oregonians have access to information OPSC shares and can use OPSC's programs.

Actions to Support Progress on Strategy

- Establish a standardized workflow for Early Discussion and Resolution administration so that every Oregonian using the process receives the same experience.
- Continue our efforts to make the information we share available and accessible to all Oregonians by transitioning to more web-based content that incorporates accessibility principles.
- Continue work to incorporate equity into OPSC's program operations through new initiatives. This ongoing work includes:
 - Introducing legislation in 2023 to codify health equity as an essential part of the Patient Safety Reporting Program's data collection and analysis.
 - In 2023, finalize a new data process strategy for Early Discussion and Resolution to both collect information to understand if the program is equitable and to understand the role equity may play in resolution in patient harm events.
 - In 2023, work with a contractor to develop an Early Discussion and Resolution outreach strategy that seeks to reach historically and structurally underserved groups.