

Abstract for Individual Oral Presentation, 2016 OPHA Annual Conference and Meeting

TITLE: Oregon Nurses Advocating for a Universal, Publicly Funded Healthcare System in Oregon

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ABSTRACT: Efforts to legislate universal, single-payer health care have been attacked and defeated in every case by heavily-funded insurance, pharmaceutical, and hospital industry lobbies. As grass-roots volunteers, proponents of single care in Oregon know that the strategy to achieve our goal must be to educate the public and to enlist active supporters. Nurses for Single Payer has a focused strategy advocating for passage of single-payer legislation in Oregon, focusing on the 55,000 registered nurses in our state. Our strategy is to educate and recruit nursing educators, nursing students, and working nurses, who will then reach out to their communities. Nurses are consistently ranked as the most respected profession in the U.S.; informed and educated nurses can educate Oregonians about the need to adopt a system similar to other developed countries where health care costs are, on average, half what they are here and where outcomes on almost every parameter measured are much better. We will discuss approaches that nurse leaders in other states are using successfully, how current political trends make this the right time to push for a groundbreaking change, and how we hope to take advantage of these conditions to achieve the goal of universal, publicly funded health care.

OBJECTIVES:

- Compare our current healthcare system with a universal, single-payer system.
- Explain why nurses are in a unique position to address the public on the need for a universal, single-payer system.

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