

BEFORE THE BOARD OF COMMISSIONERS OF LANE COUNTY, OREGON  
SITTING AS THE LANE COUNTY BOARD OF HEALTH

ORDER NO: 16-06-07-01

IN THE MATTER OF APPROVING  
SUBMISSION OF A BOARD OF HEALTH  
LETTER REQUESTING LIMITED, DIRECT  
ACCESS TO THE KAISER PERMANENTE  
ELECTRONIC HEALTH RECORD ON  
BEHALF OF LANE COUNTY PUBLIC HEALTH

**WHEREAS**, the Board of County Commissioners of Lane County acting in its capacity as the Lane County Board of Health has a stated interest in promoting the public's health; and

**WHEREAS**, communicable diseases represent a very real danger to individuals and to our community; and

**WHEREAS**, direct access to required surveillance data would improve the ability of the Public Health Division to fulfill its mandate regarding reportable illnesses/events;

**NOW, THEREFORE**, the Board of County Commissioners of Lane County **ORDERS** as follows:

1. that the Chair of the Board of County Commissioners, acting as the Board of Health Chair, is authorized to sign and release the attached letter, or to delegate authority to the County Health Officer to sign and release the letter requesting access to the Kaiser Permanente electronic health record.

**ADOPTED** this 7th day of June, 2016

  
\_\_\_\_\_  
Faye Stewart, Chair  
Lane County Board of Commissioners

APPROVED AS TO FORM  
Date 5/25/16  
\_\_\_\_\_  
LANE COUNTY OFFICE OF LEGAL COUNSEL



## LANE COUNTY BOARD OF COMMISSIONERS

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Jay Bozievich  
Pat Farr  
Sid Leiken  
Pete Sorenson  
Faye Hills Stewart

June 7, 2016

Kaiser Permanente Downtown Clinic  
100 West 13<sup>th</sup> Avenue  
Eugene, OR 97401  
Attn: Medical Director

RE: Request for Limited, Direct Access to Electronic Health Records

Dear Dr. Harburg:

This letter represents the first formal opportunity that I, writing on behalf of the Lane County Board of County Commissioners, have had to welcome Kaiser Permanente to Lane County. County Government has recognized the need for improved access to healthcare and the importance of prevention and has been very proactive in working to provide safety-net health and behavioral healthcare services. We are very pleased that Kaiser Permanente has established not only a centrally-located clinic, but also opened a much needed dental clinic.

The Board of County Commissioners also serves as the local Board of Health and functions as the Local Public Health Authority. As such, we, and our Public Health Department, are charged with the administration and enforcement of the rules related to public health, as outlined in ORS 431.416. These duties include the collection and reporting of health statistics, tracking reportable diseases, the provision of environmental health information, general public health information, and referral services within the County's borders. Under the Oregon Administrative Rules (OAR 333), the Lane County Public Health (LCPH) has specific responsibilities related to investigation and reporting of communicable and preventable diseases.

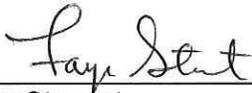
Disease outbreaks are an area of frequent interface between LCPH and clinical entities. For example, in 2015 Lane County had significant outbreaks of Neisseria meningitis, pertussis, syphilis, gonorrhea, salmonella, norovirus, and tuberculosis. Each of these outbreaks included extensive interactions between LCPH and local clinical entities. Such interactions include disease reporting, facilitated collaboration with the Oregon Health Authority (OHA) and the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC), regarding testing and treatment, contact investigations, and a variety of prevention initiatives (e.g., planning and participation in mass vaccination and/or prophylaxis clinics). Success in each of those outbreaks resulted from a close relationship between LCPH and the clinic, hospital, or affected community organization(s).

In order to foster real-time sharing of disease data, as well as to decrease the contact investigation workload of clinic and hospital staff, LCPH has data-use agreements with clinics and hospitals allowing LCPH staff limited, direct access to their electronic health records (EHR). Access to this data is restricted to LCPH communicable disease nurses and physicians, and only includes access to clinical data for persons linked to an

outbreak of a reportable disease. Such seamless and real-time access to the clinical data of persons linked to an outbreak of a reportable disease ultimately limits the size and severity of disease outbreaks. In addition, it decreases the workload of clinical staff since LCPH staff are able to access the EHR without phone calls, faxes, or site visits.

This letter serves as a formal request to Kaiser Permanente to allow LCPH staff access to its EHR for purposes of disease reporting and contact investigation, as outlined above. If this access is approved, County staff will work with Kaiser staff to ensure that all required security safeguards are established to ensure that no confidential information is exposed to unwarranted release and that the actions of County staff in accessing the data serve only to facilitate and not complicate the work of Kaiser staff.

Sincerely,



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Faye Stewart  
Chair, Lane County Board of Commissioners

cc: Chris Overton, Sr. Director