



March 20, 2026

Governor Tina Kotek  
254 State Capitol  
Salem, OR 97301

**Re: PeaceHealth Emergency Department Transition**

Dear Governor Kotek,

On behalf of PeaceHealth, thank you for sharing your perspective regarding the transition of emergency physician services in Lane County. We appreciate your engagement on behalf of the patients, families and communities who depend on timely, high-quality emergency care.

We share your focus on restoring community trust and moving forward with transparency. As I recently shared internally with our caregivers, I should have communicated more clearly about the rationale for this change, the criteria used to select a new partner and what the decision would mean for the day-to-day operations of our hospitals. I am committed to more direct and consistent engagement as we move forward.

Our highest priority throughout this transition is uninterrupted access to safe and reliable emergency care. We welcome the opportunity to outline how we will deliver on this commitment and work collaboratively with your office to reinforce community confidence.

**A Safer, More Transparent Alternative to Delay**

We hear your concern about deterioration in emergency services. We believe the most effective way to address that concern is not delay, but transparency paired with accountability. Maintaining the transition timeline while openly measuring and reporting readiness metrics provides stronger protection for patients than postponement.

I want to be clear that this decision and the implementation timeline are not rushed. We followed a structured and rigorous process that included timely contract expiration notice, a formal request for proposals, careful evaluation, award and implementation planning. Since the process began in November 2025, service implementation dates of June 1 and July 1 have consistently guided planning, operational readiness and decision-making.

Introducing a delay at this stage would create meaningful patient safety risk by undermining the stability and certainty required to safely operate emergency departments. Reliable transition dates are essential to workforce planning, physician recruitment and clinical readiness.

PeaceHealth is confident in ApolloMD and Lane Emergency Physicians' ability to staff our emergency departments based on the established transition dates. Since early February, ApolloMD has made substantial investments in physician recruitment and operational preparedness in reliance on this timeline. A delay would disrupt those efforts by introducing uncertainty for recruited physicians, extending gaps created by departures of EEP physicians who choose not to stay and complicating staffing at a critical moment. These are conditions that increase rather than reduce risk to patient care.

In a noteworthy advancement toward our shared goals, **we propose regularly publishing community-facing transition dashboards** that track key indicators of emergency department performance, including mortality, diversion, "door to doctor" times, and recruitment statistics. These dashboards would provide



real-time visibility, reinforce public trust and ensure identification of and response to any emerging risks beginning in April and throughout the transition period.

### **Staffing, Credentialing and Emergency Preparedness**

PeaceHealth is not replacing its emergency physicians with a temporary workforce. The physicians of Lane Emergency Physicians will live in our communities. Some temporary physician staffing will be used, particularly at the beginning of the transition, which is a safe and established practice. All physicians, permanent or temporary, must meet the same rigorous medical staff standards for clinical quality, competence and patient safety that the EEP physicians are required to meet today.

If some of the EEP physicians choose to stay in the community, reliance on temporary physicians will be reduced. But, regardless of the decisions of the EEP physicians, our emergency departments will be safely staffed and we do not anticipate the need for patient diversion.

The transition dashboards described above will also track the number of physicians moving through our hospitals' medical staff credentialing processes. This will complement your office's monitoring of the Oregon Medical Board licensing process. We welcome any information you are able to share regarding licensing status, as well as any support that may facilitate timely review of applications.

In collaboration with ApolloMD and Lane Emergency Physicians, we will ensure that a core group of physicians are physically present within the Lane County service area at all times, beginning as of the transition dates. This commitment ensures readiness to respond to mass-casualty incidents or other unforeseen events. ApolloMD physicians are experienced in incident and disaster response, having cared for patients affected by tornados, wildfires and hurricanes, and will be ready to serve our communities if needed.

In addition, consistent with your recommendations, we will share our current patient diversion policies, engage neighboring hospitals and regional healthcare providers, and develop and share risk mitigation and disaster response plans with OHA aligned to potential needs identified during the transition period.

### **Clarifying the decision-making process**

While confidentiality obligations limit our ability to disclose proposal materials or detailed scoring, we recognize the importance of public understanding. We created a more thorough description of our process and decision framework (attached) which we will make publicly available today.

### **Continuing collaboration in service of our communities**

We remain committed to ongoing cooperation with your office, state agencies and lawmakers whose constituents depend on our hospitals. We remain steadfast in our commitment to transparency, collaboration and the delivery of safe, high quality emergency care.

Sincerely,

Jim McGovern, MD  
Chief Hospital Executive, Oregon  
PeaceHealth