RESOLUTION NO. 10

INTRODUCED BY: Kirk Wolfe, MD, DFAACAP, DFAPA, OMA Trustee; Mary McCarthy, MD, OMA Trustee

SUBJECT: Addressing the Crisis in Youth Mental Health in Oregon

WHEREAS, the American Academy of Pediatrics (AAP), the American Academy of Child and Adolescent Psychiatry (AACAP), and the Children’s Hospital Alliance have formally declared a national crisis with children’s mental health. More than 140,000 children in the United States lost a primary and/or secondary caregiver with the pandemic, with youth of color disproportionately impacted. Between March and October 2020, the percentage of emergency department visits for children with mental health emergencies rose by 24 percent for children ages 5-11, and by 31 percent for children ages 12-17; and

WHEREAS, the crisis of youth mental health is even worse in Oregon, with 2022 (published 10/19/21) youth data by Mental Health America ranking Oregon #45 of 51 states related to higher prevalence of mental illness and lower rates of access to care. The state annual prevalence of youth with major depressive episode (MDE) was highest in Oregon at 18.6 percent, with Oregon’s rate of severe MDE more than 33 percent above the national average. The state prevalence of substance use disorder was highest in Oregon at 5.77 percent, more than 41 percent above the national average; and

WHEREAS, the incidence of major depression and substance use are leading risk factors for death by suicide, the #1 cause of death in Oregon youth age10-24 in 2018 and the #2 cause of death in 2019. Be It therefore

RESOLVED, that the OMA conduct an awareness campaign on the crisis of youth mental health and substance use, and risk for suicide, with Oregon legislative representatives, physicians, and physician assistants; and be it further

RESOLVED, that the OMA recommend a state study on whether mental health parity is being fully implemented in Oregon; and be it further
RESOLVED, that the OMA support improved state and federal funding dedicated to ensuring all youth, from infancy to transitional age youth, can access evidence-based mental health and substance use screening, diagnosis and treatment to appropriately address their needs, with particular emphasis on meeting the needs of under-resourced populations; and be it further

RESOLVED, that the OMA promote the adoption of effective and financially stable mental health care in primary care pediatrics and family practice, including clinical strategies and effective models of payment.

References

Pediatricians, Child and Adolescent Psychiatrists and Children’s Hospitals Declare National Emergency in Children's Mental Health
Mental Health America Youth Data 2022
Rideout, et al, Emergency Department Encounters Among Youth With Suicidal Thoughts or Behaviors During the COVID-19 Pandemic, JAMA Psychiatry, 2021.
OHA Center for Health Statistics: Leading Causes of Death Data Dashboard. Access November 9, 2021
Youth Suicide Intervention and Prevention Plan Annual Report 2020
OHA News Release from March 2021 with 2019 data and discussion on 2020 preliminary data
More than 140,000 U.S. children lost a primary or secondary caregiver due to the COVID-19 pandemic