

THE CONNECTICUT ASSOCIATION
for *Home Care, Inc*

Incy S. Muir, RN, CNA, MPA
Chair, Board of Directors

Brian Ellsworth
President/Chief Executive Officer

TESTIMONY
BEFORE THE PUBLIC HEALTH COMMITTEE
REGARDING:

Proposed H.B. No. 7222

AN ACT CONCERNING USE OF UNLICENSED ASSISTIVE PERSONNEL IN
RESIDENTIAL CARE HOMES

March 5, 2007

Senator Handley, Representative Sayers and members of the Public Health Committee, my name is Kimberly Skehan and I am Vice President for Clinical & Regulatory Services for the Connecticut Association for Home Care, which serves over 75,000 elderly and disabled Connecticut citizens. I am a Registered Nurse with twenty years of home care experience.

The Association **opposes** H.B. 7222 AN ACT CONCERNING USE OF UNLICENSED ASSISTIVE PERSONNEL IN RESIDENTIAL CARE HOMES. The current state regulations (sec. 19-13-D6) clearly describe the training requirements and responsibilities of unlicensed personnel certified in medication administration. We do not support the proposed change to these regulations, which would allow unlicensed assistive personnel in residential care homes to use digital medical instruments in conjunction with medication administration. We feel that allowing unlicensed personnel to perform these tasks would place them in a position of making a judgment as to whether or not a medication needs to be administered. This is considered assessment, which requires the skills of a licensed nurse or other qualified professional to make this determination. This is outside the scope of practice for unlicensed assistive personnel.

Home health agencies have expressed concerns regarding appropriate follow up and potential issues with medication administration by unlicensed personnel in residential care homes. Allowing unlicensed personnel to assess residents as part of the medication administration responsibility places a level of clinical decision-making on these personnel without appropriate knowledge, skills or training. In addition, residential care homes do not have nursing staff available to supervise these assessments or make a clinical determination as to whether or not a medication should be administered or if any further follow up should occur, including reassessment or contacting the patient's physician.

The Connecticut Nurse Practice Act- Chapter 378 Section 20-87a. defines nursing as “the process of diagnosing human responses to actual or potential health problems, providing supportive and restorative care, health counseling and teaching, case finding and referral, collaborating in the implementation of the total health care regimen and executing the medical regimen under the direction of a licensed physician, dentist or advanced practice registered nurse.”

The Association believes that allowing unlicensed assistive personnel to perform nursing activities without the delegation or supervision of a registered nurse constitutes practicing nursing without a license. Allowing this practice is unsafe and is not in the best interest of the residential care home clients or the community.

Thank you for consideration of our testimony. I will be pleased to answer any questions you may have.