



ORIGIN OF
DENTAL HYGIENE
1913

CONNECTICUT DENTAL HYGIENISTS' ASSOCIATION,
INC.

February 28, 2009

Testimony to: Senator Paul Doyle, Representative Toni Walker and the Human Services Committee,
Re: SB # 843 - An Act Implementing the Governor's Budget Recommendations Concerning Social Services

The Connecticut Dental Hygienists Association, Inc. opposes the proposal to require pre authorization and eliminate funding for non-emergency dental care for adults enrolled in the Medicaid programs. Pre authorization would be yet another barrier to access to oral health care which continues to be a problem for our low-income adults, including Connecticut's growing elderly population. We know that oral health is linked to total health and that poor oral health exacerbates systemic health problem such as heart disease, diabetes, and poor nutrition. We have concerns about the increased risk for mothers with periodontal disease to give birth to low birth weight babies, and to transmit infectious decay causing bacteria to their children. Without access to regular dental care, disease will progress leading to pain, life threatening infections and tooth loss. The cost of treatment will rise and more adults will seek high cost emergency room care.

We have members who work within community and provide direct service to this population. They see on a daily basis the challenges low income adults face as they try to access oral health care and the physical, emotional and social consequences of poor oral health.

We understand the state of the economy in Connecticut today. However, we believe taking away opportunities for prevention and early interventions will, in fact, be more costly in the long run. We believe in oral healthcare for all - it is the right thing to do for the residents of Connecticut.

Celeste Baranowski, RDH Jody Bishop-
Pullan, RDH

Celeste Baranowski, RDH
(203) 322-9917
Legislative Chair

Jody Bishop-Pullan, RDH
(203) 852-1655
Legislative Committee member

CDHA Central Office
P O Box 1091, Hartford, CT 06143-1091
860-688-7307 Fax 860-688-5188 www.cdha-rdh.com