CONNECTICUT HOSPITAL ASSOCIATION

TESTIMONY OF
CONNECTICUT HOSPITAL ASSOCIATION
SUBMITTED TO THE
PUBLIC HEALTH COMMITTEE
Friday, February 6, 2009

HB 6310, An Act Concerning Direct Patient Access To Laboratory Test Results

The Connecticut Hospital Association (CHA) appreciates the opportunity to submit testimony concerning **HB 6310, An Act Concerning Direct Patient Access To Laboratory Test Results**. CHA opposes this bill as written.

HB 6310 seeks to make it easier for patients to receive laboratory test results. CHA applauds that goal. However, the text of the bill will not actually make it easier for patients to access this information, which forces us to oppose the bill as written.

Current law and practice are based on the theory that a physician must explain laboratory test results because, without interpretation by a physician, a patient could be upset or confused by the raw data. Under this theory, direct patient access to raw laboratory data is treated as an exceptional circumstance that requires the ordering physician to affirmatively instruct a lab, including a hospital lab, to release the results directly to a patient.

Unfortunately, HB 6310 does not change the current practice. A physician's express, advanced, written instruction would still be needed to allow a lab to release the results directly to a patient. The reality is that physicians do not have systems in place to take this extra step. The outcome: patients still will not have access to their initial lab results, and will continue to be frustrated when a lab or hospital accurately explains that their initial lab results still cannot be released.

To achieve the goal of open access, we urge you to revise HB 6310 so that patients will have open access to lab results **unless** there is a physician's express, advanced, written instruction to the contrary.

Thank you for your consideration of our position.

For additional information, contact CHA Government Relations at (203) 294-7310.

JDI:pas