



VISITING NURSE ASSOCIATION
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March 11, 2010

Testimony
Governor's Deficit Mitigation Plan

From John R. Quinn
President/CEO

VNA Health Systems/Visiting Nurse Association of South Central Connecticut
One Long Wharf Drive
New Haven, CT 06511

Good afternoon Senator Harp, Representative Geragosian, and members of the Appropriations Committee My name is John Quinn, and I am President and CEO of VNA Health Systems which operates the Visiting Nurse Association of South Central Connecticut located in New Haven and CareSource, a private duty service based in Orange. We primarily serve patients and provide Home Care support in Greater New Haven County, the lower Naugatuck Valley and the Milford area. I appear before you today to express to you, the VNA is strongly opposed to the Governor's proposed 5% cut in Medicaid payments for home care providers.

This approach will not result in cost savings. Rather, the 5% cut will decrease the availability of quality homecare by further deterioration of inadequate Medicaid rates. The result will mean Medicaid patients, will by default, be required and have to avail themselves of the more costly nursing home institutions or re-admittance to the hospital.

Our trade association, the Connecticut Association for Home Care and Hospice, estimates a \$30 million per annum shortfall in Medicaid home health care rates. Medicare rates of the past will soon decrease, and non profit agencies like the VNA will not be able to sustain it's viability as a healthcare provider with even deeper below par Medicaid rates. Reasonable Medicare reimbursement rates, which has helped, in effect, "subsidize" Medicaid, will no longer exist.



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I urge you to take credence in the report issued last week by the Connecticut Regional Institute for the 21st Century. This business group sees the need not to decrease home health care rates and services in the future, but rather to rebalance the system projecting savings around \$900 million a year in 15 years. This goal can only be reached by taking action now. That action is not to decrease Medicaid rates, but rather to significantly increase them.

Please reject this proposal that flies in the face of meeting the needs of thousands of aging Connecticut baby boomers who will need to have homecare available to them to live independently and enjoy the quality of life they deserve as they age out.

Thank you for the opportunity to testify.

Respectfully Submitted,

John R. Quinn
PRESIDENT/CEO

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