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Insurance and Real Estate Committee

Public hearing Feb 22, 2011

Raised bill no. 6306 AAC the listing of Advanced Practice Registered Nurses In Managed Care Organization Provider listings and Primary Care Provider Designations

The Testimony of Karen D Sullivan, APRN in support of raised bill No. 6306.

Senator Crisco, Representative Megna, and Members of the Committee

Thank you for raising this bill and providing an opportunity to speak on this issue, which affects access to primary care, and seeks to improve continuity of care.

My name is Karen Sullivan. I have been a Family Nurse Practitioner for 16 years and I practice in Manchester Connecticut. I am, and have been the primary care provider for hundreds of patients. My patients tell me that when asked who their Primary Care Provider is when they are having procedures done, and when seeing specialists, they are required to give the name of a physician, even if that physician has not, and never will meet them.

Often letters of consult are written to the physicians I work with for this reason. This makes no sense, since they are simply forwarded to me. The tests I order are resulted to me electronically through laboratory and radiologic agencies. When I first started work in Manchester, many notes and results were sent to physicians I work with. Now not so much since the community has recognized my practice.

I am automatically forwarded and copied or notified of information regarding patients that are considered to be part of my practice. I am considered a primary care provider by my patients, their families and the physicians and specialist I consult on behalf of them. Radiologists don't call physicians results, they call me. The lab calls me, the pharmacists call me, the VNA a school nurse and physical therapists discuss the care and coordination of care of patients. In our Family Practice, patients receive comprehensive respectful care, no matter who they see because we communicate and work together for them. We don't oversee one another, but complement one another.

When our office gets a call from a patient seeking a new medical home, if the practices of the docs are closed, or they specifically are referred to me, they are considered to be a patient, with me listed as their primary source of care. Yes! I have many patients who know someone who recommends me as a PCP! And YES they know I am an APRN.

Being listed as a Primary Care Provider reflects what actually already occurs in primary care. It makes it safer to follow patients and their consults and results if the proper person is sent results and information. Not listing NPs as PCPs is just another way of keeping the money we generate in the pockets of others. It has nothing to do with patient care or safety, other than impeding it.

It is clear that the work that is done is mine, the responsibility is mine, and I am recognized as having that responsibility and designation as a Primary Care Provider by my patients.