

**TESTIMONY OF
YALE NEW HAVEN HEALTH SYSTEM
SUBMITTED TO THE
PUBLIC HEALTH COMMITTEE
Friday, March 11, 2011**

**HB 6545, An Act Concerning The Provision Of Prophylactic And Emergency Care
To Hospital Patients**

Yale New Haven Health System (YNHHS) appreciates the opportunity to submit testimony in support of **HB 6545, An Act Concerning The Provision Of Prophylactic And Emergency Care To Hospital Patients**.

Yale New Haven Health System, comprised of Bridgeport, Greenwich and Yale-New Haven Hospitals, is Connecticut's leading healthcare system, with nearly 14,000 employees. YNHHS provides comprehensive, cost-effective, advanced patient care characterized by safety, quality and service. As a system, we offer patients a range of healthcare services, from primary care to the most complex care available anywhere in the world. Our inpatient and ambulatory clinical services include: primary and preventive care, specialty, acute and sub-acute care, and coordination of post-hospital care, including rehabilitative, long-term and home care.

HB 6545 would allow hospitals to utilize protocols and policies, sometimes known as "standing orders" after an assessment for contraindications, a condition or factor that serves as a reason to withhold a certain medical treatment. Such orders would need to be in accordance with a physician-approved hospital policy; used for care that is emergent, timely and necessary or to advance patient care, and; only as permitted by 42 CFR Part 482, the CMS Medicare Conditions of Participation for hospitals.

Some medical treatments may cause unwanted or dangerous reactions in patients with allergies, high blood pressure, or even pregnancy. While treating a patient, it is important for a physician, based on approved hospital policy to make decisions that will not adversely affect a patient's health. HB 6545 would accomplish this and help our physicians act in the best interest of our patients.

CMS has recently clarified its endorsement of the use of standing orders in a communication to the American Academy of Pediatrics (AAP). The communication was in response to an AAP request that CMS clarify the rule on standing orders because many in the provider community, and many state oversight agencies, were under the mistaken impression that standing orders were not permitted.

Standing orders are important because in an Emergency Department, they allow non-physician clinical staff to initiate established, standard of care interventions that should not wait for the physical presence of a physician. An example would be that a nurse, under a pre-approved standing order, can start an EKG on a patient arriving with chest pain immediately upon his/her arrival to determine if he/she is having a heart attack.

Every second counts in this situation, and the ability for a nurse to work under a standing order of a physician saves lives. There are other clinical examples where standing orders are key to maximizing patient safety and positive outcomes.

HB 6545 will remove any confusion for providers, and for DPH, as to whether Connecticut supports standing orders, and in so doing, move us forward to achieving better care outcomes.

Thank you for your consideration of this very important matter.