



STATE OF CONNECTICUT

DEPARTMENT OF PUBLIC HEALTH

TESTIMONY PRESENTED BEFORE THE COMMITTEE ON PUBLIC HEALTH February 20, 2013

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House Bill 5738- An Act Requiring Nursing Home Facilities To Provide Information Concerning Safety Incidents To Patients And Their Families.

The Department of Public Health appreciates the opportunity to provide information regarding House Bill 5738 and mechanisms that fall within the department's jurisdiction concerning patient safety for the Committee's considerations.

As written, HB 5738 will only provide aggregate data to patients and families, whereas the information that the Department currently obtains, and which is available to the public, is site-specific and may be more useful to the consumer.

Medicare developed and provides a consumer friendly tool, "Nursing Home Compare" which is available electronically on the medicare.gov website, that not only provides the consumer with a 5-star rating system for nursing homes and results of inspection and complaint visits, but also provides other useful information for determining nursing home placement.

During the Department's annual inspection activities, the safety and security of the nursing home environment is assessed. The federal regulations directs nursing homes to ensure the patient environment remains as free from accident hazards as is possible, and that each patient receives adequate supervision and assistance devices to prevent accidents. If during our inspections, the facility is identified as not being in compliance regarding accidents, they must submit an acceptable plan of correction to the Department explaining how they will mitigate recurrence of the deficient practice.

The federal regulations also state that the patient and public has the right to examine the results of the most recent survey of the facility conducted by federal or state surveyors and any plan of correction in effect. The facility must make the results available for examination in a place readily accessible to residents and must post a notice of their availability.

The Public Health Code mandates facilities to report any reportable events/incidents that occur in a nursing home to the Department. The Public Health Code defines a classification system for reportable events such as fires or patient abuse and sets forth reporting and investigating timeframes. Upon receipt of the reportable event, the Department reviews the event and the facility's response, and determines if further investigation is warranted. In calendar 2012, the Department investigated 71 facility-reported events and a total of 678 public complaints having a variety of allegations involving nursing homes.

Thank you for your consideration of the Department's views on this bill.

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