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Statement of Joseph Treadwell, D.P.M.

In support of

House Bill 5443: An Act Requiring Podiatrists to be Board Qualified

Public Health Committee

February 20, 2013

The Connecticut Podiatric community is requesting that newly graduated podiatric residents be allowed to perform ankle surgery independently without restriction if they have met the skills set defined in statute and are board qualified.

The Department of Public Health oversaw a committee of podiatrists and orthopedic surgeons to develop a compromise that would allow an improved podiatric scope of practice within Connecticut that would be more reflective of the national standard.

While an increase in privileging occurred there are some areas of the agreement that need further legislating. Like many policy changes, until enactment occurs shortcomings are not realized. The current statute prevents newly trained and qualified podiatric surgeons from performing procedures within their competency.

This restriction occurs because of a requirement of board certification before being allowed to perform procedures the new practitioner is trained to do.

No surgeon of any specialty is board certified immediately upon completion of their residency. They can either be board eligible or board qualified. They are not denied hospital surgical privileges because they have not yet achieved board certification. Recent graduates of podiatric surgical residencies that have demonstrated the skills set required by state statute should be held to the same standard. Preventing them from performing procedures until they become board certified does not improve their competency to perform such procedures.

Certification typically implies that a surgeon has met the specified educational, evaluation, and examination requirements of their specific Board. The final phase of board certification typically involves an oral or cognitive exam that is based off or impacted by surgeon private practice experience as well as training and education. Preventing newly trained and qualified podiatric surgeons from performing such procedures also impedes the educational component of practice that helps prepare them for the final component of the certification process.

This technical change would not allow those insufficiently trained access to procedures beyond their competency.

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