



Connecticut's Health Insurance Marketplace

February 27, 2013

House Bill 5737 – AN ACT CONCERNING THE USE OF PATIENT HEALTH CARE INFORMATION IN THE ALL-PAYER CLAIMS DATABASE PROGRAM

Access Health CT, Connecticut's Health Insurance Exchange, is providing the following testimony regarding proposed bill 5737.

This proposed bill addresses the important topic of Connecticut's All-Payer Claim Database (APCD). As our state tackles the issue of rising medical and insurance costs, and supports improvements in consistency of practice patterns, patient safety and medical outcomes, the APCD will serve as a powerful tool for state residents and provider greater transparency to consumers.

At the same time, we are also aware of and sensitive to the issue of consumer privacy when it comes to data collection, especially medical information. We fully support making individuals aware of the APCD, as well as informing them of how the data is handled, protected, and ultimately used to improve the healthcare system here in our state. In communicating, it is important that we reinforce that the information is only used at the aggregate level, with de-identifiers utilized so that social security numbers, age, demographic, and other personal information will be protected. It should be noted that current State statutes ensure that data received is securely collected, compiled and stored in accordance with state and federal law. Federal laws protecting confidentiality of health information are extensive and require safe handling of information to ensure that confidentiality is protected as defined in 45 CFR 160.103.

Against the backdrop of these substantial safeguards, we do not support the op-out provision contained in bill 5737, as the quality and value of the APCD to state residents is directly related to the quality of the data provided. The potential impact of the APCD can only be fully realized when comprehensive, representative data is contained. As such, it is in the interest of residents to have a deep database of information from which to provide consumer support. In many ways, the APCD will be the most practical decision support tool for consumers in years ahead.

Allowing individuals to opt out of providing information severely limits the future value of the database and with it one of our greatest tools to effectively address substantial issues in our healthcare delivery system.

As an organization with a strong commitment to transparency, we support APCD consumer communications. However, we do not support the opt-out provision contained in bill 5737.

Thank you for your consideration.

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