



STATE OF CONNECTICUT

DEPARTMENT OF PUBLIC HEALTH

TESTIMONY PRESENTED BEFORE THE COMMITTEE ON PUBLIC HEALTH

February 19, 2013

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House Bill 5978 - An Act Prohibiting Patient Interviews In Common Areas Of Health Care Facilities

The Department of Public Health appreciates the opportunity to provide testimony on House Bill 5978, however the bill as written is duplicative of current safeguards that protect patient information in hospitals and other health care facilities.

The hospital Medicare Conditions of Participation, section 482.13(c), Patient Privacy and Safety directs that the hospital must ensure that privacy and safety requirements are met. Additionally, hospitals that have accreditation through Joint Commission must demonstrate that policies and procedures have been implemented that protect the privacy of health information.

Section §483.10(e) Privacy and Confidentiality, of the Code of Federal Regulations for nursing homes directs that the resident has the right to personal privacy and confidentiality of his or her personal and clinical records.

Health care facilities are routinely inspected and compliance with state and federal laws and regulations is assessed. Should non-compliance be identified during the course of inspection activities, a plan of correction to mitigate recurrence of the deficient practice is required. Additionally, when significant non-compliance is identified in the area of patient confidentiality, a referral may be made to the Federal Office of Civil Rights to ascertain compliance with the Health Insurance Portability and Accountability Act (HIPAA).

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

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