

PUBLIC HEALTH COMMITTEE

PUBLIC HEARING 3/20/13

RAISED BILL No. 6391 AAC THE PRACTICE OF ADVANCED PRACTICE REGISTERED NURSES.

Testimony of Amy R. Weinberg DNP, MS, FNP, AAHIVS

IN SUPPORT OF RAISED BILL No. 6391

Senator Gerratana, Representative Johnson, and members of the Committee

Removal of collaborative agreement requirement for nurse practitioners

There is a shortage of primary care providers in this country. As the state is beginning to implement the Affordable Healthcare Act you can assure that CT's citizens will have increased access to primary care providers by removing the written collaborative agreement which prevents nurse practitioners from filling gaps in healthcare services. Now is the time for progress, and to recognize the exceptional care that Connecticut's Nurse Practitioners are, and have been providing to Connecticut's citizens for many decades.

I am a board certified Family Nurse Practitioner, and HIV Specialist, certified by the American Academy of HIV Medicine. After completing 3 additional years of an internship in community health and fellowship in HIV medicine, I came to practice in CT about 9 years ago. I am also doctorally prepared. My patients entrust me with their most valuable possession, their health. Part of this trust is that I am capable of recognizing when I need to seek further knowledge or guidance from another clinician. Their faith in my clinical acumen is generated from the exceptional healthcare that I provide to them and not the collaborative agreement I maintain with a physician whom they may never meet. Provision of safe and sound healthcare resides in the clinical acumen of the clinician and the self evaluation of their limitations. This is a privilege extended to other healthcare professionals without question. A piece of paper signifying a "collaborative agreement" between nurse practitioner and physician is a fallacious sense of security.

Requiring a collaborative agreement between a nurse practitioner and physician is an illusion that one's health relies solely on the knowledge and expertise of only one type of healthcare provider or service, when in fact, our healthcare needs are often provided by the expertise of multiple disciplines such as pharmacists and nutritionists. I enjoy a wonderful, collaborative and collegial relationship with many different types of physicians and providers, both in the institution where I am employed and within the community where I practice. I call on my colleague's expertise when I have a question. I formally refer patients to their care when I feel that I am unable to provide a service which my patient requires. No healthcare provider, physician or nurse practitioner operates in a vacuum and at the end of the day; we are all here to serve our patient's healthcare needs.

It is time to remove the collaborative agreement requirement in Connecticut for nurse practitioners so they can freely care for their patients as they do presently in 19 other states.

I respectfully submit this testimony to you for consideration.

Amy R. Weinberg, DNP, MS, FNP, AAHIVS

