

Public Hearing on a Proposal to Conduct a Pilot Test of the Medical Orders
For Life Sustaining Treatment (MOLST) Program
In Connecticut

Before the Public Health Committee

State of Connecticut

Presented by:

Marcia K. Petrillo
Chief Executive Officer
Qualidigm

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Good morning. My name is Marcia Petrillo and I am the Chief Executive Officer of Qualidigm, a not for profit health care consulting company located in Rocky Hill, Connecticut. Qualidigm has been working in Connecticut and across the nation for over thirty years to achieve its vision of “Quality Health Care For All”.

We work in a collaborative manner with providers, community based organizations, consumers, business, payers, academia, government agencies and health policy makers to fulfill our mission to advance the quality, safety and cost effectiveness of health care. We serve as Medicare’s federally-designated Quality Improvement Organization for the state of Connecticut, charged with the challenge of working toward better care, improved access and appropriate costs.

Qualidigm is pleased to have the opportunity to participate in this important dialogue regarding the role and use of the Medical Orders for Life-sustaining Treatment (MOLST) program and the potential for its piloting here in our state.

Qualidigm’s work emphasizes patient-centeredness and is organized across all health care settings to do what is in the best interest of the patient. Through our long-standing collaboration with providers, the Department of Public Health and other stakeholders across the state, Qualidigm established the *Communities of Care, a local community-based* initiative in 2010 to support patients in transitioning through the health care system, from hospital to nursing home, hospital to home and the like to achieve the best outcome of eliminating avoidable readmission to the hospital. This intensive initiative is active in 15 geographic regions of the state and includes over 200 organizations representing providers, consumer organizations, and other stakeholders. It offers education and training, and practical tools to assist patients and providers to communicate with each other

to choose the right care, in the right setting, and follow that plan of care to achieve the best outcome. Recent data from the Communities of Care initiative shows that we can both improve quality of care and reduce costs. Since its inception in 2010, Qualidigm estimates that 567 preventable rehospitalizations have been avoided and the cost savings associated with this positive outcome is approximately \$5.4 million here in Connecticut.

Valuable Lessons in Transitioning Patients Applicable to MOLST Pilot

Qualidigm and participants in the Communities initiative have learned valuable lessons from it and improved their systems for transitioning patients to another setting accordingly. One of the key lessons has been to include every patient's wishes and critical health information with them as they move from hospital to home, or to and from other health care settings. We believe the approval of *H.B. No. 6521 AN ACT CONCERNING MEDICAL ORDERS FOR LIFE-SUSTAINING TREATMENT* here in Connecticut will be very helpful in vetting a tool that could support patients and their providers in identifying and defining the patients' wishes and carrying out the treatment plans that support that. Qualidigm has demonstrated that when this critically important information follows the patient, that quality of care and quality of life are improved, and cost savings are possible.

Qualidigm wholeheartedly supports the proposed initiative before you to authorize the Commissioner of Public Health to pilot such a program here in Connecticut. It is incumbent upon health care professionals to have the necessary conversations with their patients and equally important that the patients' wishes be recorded and transported with them throughout out their journey in the health care system. This pilot offers the opportunity to learn how to do it best.

We thank you for the opportunity to lend support to pilot testing the MOLST Program here in Connecticut and stand ready to assist in whatever manner is deemed appropriate. Based on our experience in supporting community efforts to transition patients through the health care system, we believe the MOLST pilot will be a valuable mechanism to increase provider and patient communication and ensure that patients' wishes regarding their care are honored.

For further information, please contact: Anne Elwell,

Vice President for Community Relations

(860)-632-6322

ETC.