

Tuesday, February 10, 2015

Aging Committee Public Hearing S.B. No. 290

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Good day Chairpersons and members of the Aging Committee. My name is Melinda Montovani and I am a Social Worker who has the privilege of working at the Brain Injury Alliance of CT. I am writing testimony in support of SB No. 290, An Act Concerning Patient Designated Caregivers.

Working at the Brain Injury Alliance of CT I hear numerous stories about individuals with brain injuries being discharged from hospitals to the community without proper preparation. Caregivers are not being given the information that would allow them to support their loved one in the community. Instead brain injury survivors and family members are sent home without education and resources. This often times leads to caregivers being overwhelmed and not knowing how to handle the situation when complications arise.

Every brain injury is unique which requires each individual and caregiver to be given specific instructions on care after discharge. Brain injury can impact someone physically, cognitively, emotionally and/ or behaviorally. The individual with the brain injury may have more difficulty processing information. It will be important that a designated caregiver is appointed and is provided proper discharge instructions. This can prevent situations that result in Emergency Room visits or hospital readmissions which are overwhelming for the family; and can be a setback in the survivor's recovery. Hospital readmissions are also extremely costly.

SB No. 290 would ensure that each brain injury survivor could have someone who is informed of their discharge and instructed on how to provide proper support upon return to the community. It would also save money by helping reduce the numbers of hospital readmissions that can result from caregivers not being informed on how to best provide care when their loved one leaves the hospital.

Please support SB No.290: An Act Concerning Patient Designated Caregivers.

Thank you.