



CONNECTICUT ASSOCIATION FOR  
**HEALTHCARE AT HOME**

**TESTIMONY**

Delivered by Tracy Wodatch, Vice President of Clinical and Regulatory Services  
Before the Human Services Committee

**February 10, 2015**

**To SUPPORT**

**HB 6155: ACC THE MEDICAID WAIVER APPROVAL PROCESS and  
HB 6149: AAC MEDICAID COVERAGE FOR HOME HEALTH TELEMONITORING**

Senator Moore, Representative Abercrombie and members of the Human Services Committee, my name is Tracy Wodatch, Vice President of Clinical and Regulatory Services at the Connecticut Association for Healthcare at Home. I am also an RN with over 30 years experience in home health, hospice, long term and acute care.

The Association represents 62 Connecticut DPH licensed/Medicare certified home health and hospice agencies that foster cost-effective, person-centered healthcare in the setting people prefer most – their own home.

Collectively, our agency providers deliver care to more Connecticut residents each day than those housed in CT hospitals and nursing homes combined. As a major employer with a growing workforce, our on-the-ground army of 17,000 home health care workers is providing high-tech and tele-health interventions for children, adults and seniors.

Our Association and its members support both HB 6155 and 6149 being heard today before the Human Services Committee but the focus of this testimony will be on 6149: AAC Medicaid Coverage for Home Health Care Telemonitoring.

Last week, I testified in support of SB 5 AAC the expansion of the use of telemedicine and the need for health insurance coverage for such services provided best practice standards are in place and followed.

Regarding the use of telemedicine in home health care, nearly half of our home health agencies use telemonitors (a form of telemedicine) in their clients' homes to remotely monitor blood pressure, weight, blood glucose, EKGs, and oxygen levels. Through close monitoring and communication with the physician, we can catch an early warning sign, such as a sudden rise in blood pressure or weight, and treat it before it becomes a bigger problem such as hospitalization.

Used for nearly two decades in home health, telemonitoring is a proven, cost-effective approach to health care yet it is not reimbursed from insurance companies, Medicare or Medicaid. Nonetheless, home health providers have embraced the use



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of this technology, despite the out-of-pocket cost to the agency, simply because it works - and it's the right thing to do for the individual.

Local and national studies have found that telemonitoring:

- Reduces costly hospitalizations
- Improves the quality of life for individuals receiving care at home
- Promotes self-care education and intervention
- Improves depression symptoms
- Is cost-effective and saves millions of dollars across the health continuum
- Produces positive outcomes for patients

As the state of Connecticut's Medicaid population increases so does the number of clients receiving health care at home and aging in place. For home health care to meet the needs of these clients in the most cost-effective way, telemonitoring and technology must play a major role. The cost-benefit of this shift will only be achieved by providing Medicaid reimbursement for the increased use of telemedicine and technology. An investment in the long run that will save costly hospital stays and help manage diseases using a preventative approach rather than reacting to a crisis at a much greater cost.

Please reach out to us as a resource for additional information at any time.

Thank you.