

This is the Testimony on HB5301- AN ACT CONCERNING OPIOID ANALGESIC PRESCRIPTIONS ISSUED TO MINORS which would require prescribing practitioners to obtain parental consent for opioid analgesic prescriptions issued to patients under the age of eighteen. I am Dr. Mohammed Ahmer Siddiqui, I am an Addiction Medicine Fellow at Rushford Center. I have finished my Family Practice residency and I am now specializing in Addiction Medicine. I am here today because I support - ACT CONCERNING OPIOID ANALGESIC PRESCRIPTIONS ISSUED TO MINORS which would require prescribing practitioners to obtain parental consent.

As we are all aware there is a heroin epidemic present in our country. In part this epidemic has been fueled by inappropriate prescribing of opiate pain medication. It is extremely important to improve our prescribing behaviors when it comes to opioids for adults and minors. One of the ways we can do this is by obtaining opioid use consent forms filled out by the parents for patients under eighteen years of age. My experience in treating patients who have become addicted is that have been introduced to opiates by physicians who want to help patients manage pain but are not trained in either pain management or addiction. The patient or the parents are often not informed of the risks of overdose or the development of an addictive disorder. This consent form will at the least raise awareness that opiate pain medications are to be taken seriously.

This was a story of a patient who I evaluated this morning for treatment of opioid dependence. When I asked about his addiction history, he mentioned he received Percocet's after four of his wisdom teeth were extracted when he was 17 years old. He was prescribed Percocet for pain control without proper instructions and was not properly educated about the potential side effects. A few months later he found himself stealing his mother's opioid pills, when he ran out of his own supply. This eventually lead him to buying it off the street. Sadly this progressed to heroin use and three overdoses. Stories like these are also very common in the emergency room setting. During my residency I saw a 17 year old male patient in the emergency department with chronic abdominal pain. He was routinely prescribed opioids by his primary care doctor. While the evaluation for a diagnosis of Ulcerative Colitis was under way the patient revealed that he was addicted to opioids. When I had conversation with this patient and his parents about opioid dependence, they mentioned to me they were unaware of the serious addictive potential of narcotics. The point which I am making, there is a role for narcotics in pain control, but it should be used with extreme caution, due to its intoxicating pleasurable side effects. I think it's imperative for medical providers to assess the need for prescribing opioids in greater detail. When doing so it's extremely important to educate the patient and parents about addictive potentials of narcotics. I urge the legislature to pass this bill as it is an important step to continue addressing stricter guidelines for prescribing opioids to minor which will help us in the tragic epidemic of opioid overdoses in Connecticut.