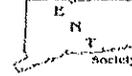
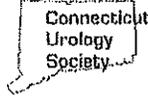




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Testimony on House Bill 5129
An Act Concerning The Administration of Vaccines By Pharmacists and Medical Assistants And the Listing Of Certified Medical Assistants
Public Health Committee
February 16, 2016

Senator Gerratana, Representative Ritter and members of the Public Health Committee, on behalf of the physicians and physicians in training of the Connecticut State Medical Society (CSMS) and the specialty organizations listed above, thank you for the opportunity to present this testimony to you today on **House Bill 5129 An Act Concerning The Administration of Vaccines By Pharmacists and Medical Assistants And the Listing Of Certified Medical Assistants**. This legislation would expand the ability of pharmacists to administer vaccinations to children less than eighteen years of age and also allow certain certified medical assistants to administer vaccinations under the direct supervision of a physician, advanced practice registered nurse or physicians assistant.

First, regarding the ability for certain medical assistants to administer vaccines, discussions regarding the use of Medical Assistants (MA) were undertaken as part of the comprehensive process to review potential changes to scopes of practice established under Public Act 11-209. In 2012, CSMS actively participated in the process, along with representatives from several organizations with an interest in the issue. A final report on the process was submitted to this committee on February 1, 2013. We believe the final report offered information supporting a careful expansion of the role of the MA in physician offices.

CSMS supports the ability to delegate the administration of certain forms of medication to medical assistants who are appropriately trained and have been credentialed by a nationally accredited organization. Legislation should establish limitations and conditions under which such delegation can occur, and not change the level of supervision required for medical assistants. Currently, direct supervision of medical assistants is required in which the physician is present at the site in which the services are being provided.

At a time when we are collectively working to identify ways to increase access to quality healthcare to a rapidly increasing population of people seeking services, appropriate increased functions of the MA would afford physician practices the ability to provide services to a greater number of patients. More services could be provided in a shorter time period while maintaining the same high standards for care quality.

Second, CSMS opposes language in HB 5129 to increase the ability of pharmacists to administer vaccinations to children less than eighteen years of age. You have before you today, comprehensive testimony from the American Academy of Pediatrics Connecticut Chapter (AAP). CSMS fully supports the testimony of AAP and the reasons included raising concerns for this expansion of abilities. As with AAP, CSMS has been intricately involved in efforts within this state to develop medical homes for all of our citizens and to ensure that Connecticut has one of the highest vaccination rates for children in the country.

Preventive care is critical to the overall health and well being of us all. For children it is necessary for primary care physicals to be done annually. Unfortunately, as seen in the adult population, those who receive vaccines at alternative sites are less likely to seek primary care wellness services. Compound that with the fact that children are dependent on others to ensure access to these services, the concern increases for missed diagnosis and treatment as well as undetected illness.