



*Quality is Our Bottom Line*

**Public Health Committee Public Hearing**

**Friday, March 16, 2018**

**Connecticut Association of Health Plans Testimony**

**In Opposition To**

**HB 5299 AN ACT CONCERNING TELEHEALTH PRESCRIBING FOR TREATMENT OF PSYCHIATRIC DISORDERS**

The Connecticut Association of Health Plans respectfully urges rejection of HB 5299. Health insurers were among the first adopters of Telehealth services recognizing the added value that Telehealth brings in terms of capacity, convenience, and cost savings to the system. Telemedicine allows patients to access high quality treatment services directly from their own homes.

Likewise, Telehealth, and telepsychiatry in particular, afford practitioners an attractive business model that can be done from any location such as an office, a home, or a vacation destination as long as the appropriate HIPAA compliant technology is utilized. The same “fixed costs” associated with a brick and mortar facility are simply not required for the practice of Telehealth and therefore; the same “fixed reimbursement” or parity isn’t called for either.

Telehealth has also provided consumers with affordable options for particular types of service like psychiatry. Passage of the parity component of HB 5299 will have serious negative connotations for consumers robbing CT’s citizens of yet another affordable option for care.

We respectfully urge your opposition to HB 5299.