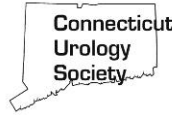




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**Connecticut State Medical Society in support of House Bill 6943  
An Act Allowing Medial Assistants to Administer Vaccines  
Presented to the Public Health Committee  
February 4, 2019**

Senator Abrams, Representative Steinberg and distinguished members of the Public Health Committee, on behalf of the physicians and physicians in training of the Connecticut State Medical Society (CSMS) and the other societies listed above, thank you for the opportunity to provide this testimony in support of **House Bill 6943 An Act Allowing Medial Assistants to Administer Vaccines**.

The ability of credentialed medical assistants to administer vaccines and other medications was undertaken as part of a 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. It is worth noting that every other state, but Connecticut and one other allow medical assistants to perform vaccinations under direct supervision.

CSMS supports the ability to delegate the administration of vaccinations to medical assistants who are appropriately trained and have been credentialed by a nationally accredited organization. The administration of vaccines would be under direct supervision, meaning that the physician 1) has evaluated the patient and ordered the vaccine after determining it is appropriate and safe to administer 2) is present at the site in which the services are being provided and can provide guidance and assistance when needed as well as emergency care if an adverse reaction occurs. Such adverse events include but are not limited to fainting, allergic reactions and serious skin infections.

At a time when we are collectively working to increase access to quality healthcare by strengthening the medical home and its central coordinating function, it is imperative that primary care physicians have the ability to delegate certain functions to properly trained and supervised staff. Medical assistants fulfill this role in many practices and especially in those practices that are exploring new models of health care. Preventative health care services should be performed where they belong, in the primary care office and not outside the medical home in

a fragmented manner where there may be no access to the patient's medical record and duplication of services may occur. Nowhere is this more important than in the administration of vaccines, a cornerstone of the vastly improved public health we all enjoy with the elimination of small pox and the virtual elimination of polio, measles, and whooping cough to name just a few. We need only turn on the TV, scan the internet or read the newspaper to become aware that decreasing vaccination rates are leading to a resurgence of some of these diseases. The movement to expand vaccination privileges to pharmacists has already created problems including the inappropriate vaccination of immunosuppressed patients with live virus vaccines, poor record keeping that makes the administration of booster timing problematic, and shortages caused by distribution issues that favor sales over need.

Allowing properly trained, certified and supervised medical assistants the ability to administer vaccines under the direct supervision of a physician will strengthen the medical home, facilitate the development of new health care delivery models, and will help preserve our public health. Please support this important initiative by voting yes to House Bill 6943.