



**TESTIMONY OF
CONNECTICUT HOSPITAL ASSOCIATION
SUBMITTED TO THE
PUBLIC HEALTH COMMITTEE
Wednesday, March 13, 2024**

**SB 275, An Act Prohibiting Nursing Homes From Rejecting A Patient Solely On The
Basis That Such Patient Received Mental Health Services**

The Connecticut Hospital Association (CHA) appreciates this opportunity to submit testimony concerning **SB 275, An Act Prohibiting Nursing Homes From Rejecting A Patient Solely On The Basis That Such Patient Received Mental Health Services**. CHA provides the following comments on the bill.

Connecticut hospitals are critical to their communities. They are confronting the challenges posed by a post-pandemic healthcare system with an exemplary healthcare workforce that continues to provide outstanding care. But challenges remain. Hospitals are treating sicker patients, it continues to be challenging to hire and retain staff, and the financial headwinds are grave. Through it all, hospitals are steadfast, providing high-quality 24-hour care for everyone who walks through their doors, focusing on making Connecticut's healthcare system more equitable, and driving world-class innovation right here in Connecticut.

The issue of discharge of hospital patients to post-acute settings is one that CHA regularly works on in partnership with the two nursing home associations and the state. It is increasingly difficult to find appropriate post-acute care for patients with complex healthcare needs. It is often true that the placement of patients with mental health needs or advanced healthcare needs, such as for a patient on a ventilator who is in need of dialysis, is a daily challenge. Hospital discharge planners and social workers spend hours and sometimes days trying to find an in-state location for patients with complex needs, and sometimes an out-of-state placement is the only option for patients and families.

The reimbursement levels for the complexity of post-acute care needed by these patients is not sufficient leading to a lack of available placements. As a result Connecticut has patients that remain in hospitals for extended periods of time. Patients with complex healthcare needs often remain in hospitals for weeks, and sometimes months, longer than they need hospital level care because there is not an appropriate post-acute care setting that can meet their needs.

CHA urges the committee to consider creating a work group to look at the barriers to essential care. CHA would welcome the opportunity to work with the Committee, partners across the continuum, and the state to more readily address the needs of Connecticut's residents with complex medical needs.

Thank you for your consideration of our position. For additional information, contact CHA Government Relations at (203) 294-7310.