



HAWAII MEDICAL ASSOCIATION

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LATE TESTIMONY

Tuesday, March 29, 2011 9:00 AM Conference Room 329

To: COMMITTEE ON HEALTH
Rep. Ryan Yamane, Chair
Rep. Dee Morikawa, Vice Chair

From: Hawaii Medical Association
Dr. Morris Mitsunaga, MD, President
Linda Rasmussen, MD, Legislative Co-Chair
Dr. Joseph Zobian, MD, Legislative Co-Chair
Dr. Christopher Flanders, DO, Executive Director
Lauren Zirbel, Community and Government Relations

Re: HCR 25 REQUESTING THE AUDITOR TO CONDUCT AN IMPACT ASSESSMENT REPORT ON LEGISLATION. MANDATING COVERAGE OF PALLIATIVE CARE.

In Support

Chairs & Committee Members:

The Hawaii Medical Association strongly supports HCR 25 REQUESTING THE AUDITOR TO CONDUCT AN IMPACT ASSESSMENT REPORT ON LEGISLATION. MANDATING COVERAGE OF PALLIATIVE CARE.

The HMA agrees that mandatory insurance coverage of palliative care would accomplish the twin goals of eliminating financial barriers to access for individuals and incentivizing the inclusion of palliative care in mainstream health care, therefore eliminating structural barriers to its provision.

As such, the HMA believes that it is worthwhile to have the Auditor conduct an impact assessment report, pursuant to sections 23-51 and 23-52, Hawaii Revised Statutes, of the social and financial impacts of mandating health insurance coverage for palliative care.

Thank you for the opportunity to testify.

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LATE TESTIMONY



St. Francis

HEALTHCARE SYSTEM OF HAWAII
A Legacy of Caring for Hawaii's People

COMMITTEE ON HEALTH

Rep. Ryan I. Yamane, Chair
Rep. Dee Morikawa, Vice Chair

DATE: Tuesday, March 29, 2011
TIME: 9:00am
PLACE: Conference Room 329
State Capitol
415 South Beretania Street

SUPPORT FOR HCR 25
SUPPORT FOR HCR 68/HR61
SUPPORT FOR HCR55/HR48

I am Joy Yadao, RN, Director of Advocacy and former Executive Director of the St Francis Palliative Care and Hospice Programs. The St Francis Healthcare System greatly appreciates the support of the House Health Committee regarding palliative care in Hawaii. We are encouraged by the enthusiasm of our legislature to improve Hawaii's healthcare delivery system and the continuum of care.

HCR 25 REQUESTS THE AUDITOR TO CONDUCT AN IMPACT ASSESSMENT REPORT ON LEGISLATION MANDATING COVERAGE OF PALLIATIVE CARE.

HCR 68/HR61 REQUESTS HEALTH INSURERS IN HAWAII TO PROVIDE COVERAGE OR REIMBURSEMENT FOR SERVICES RELATED TO PALLIATIVE CARE.

HCR55/HR48 REQUESTS THE DEVELOPMENT AND IMPLEMENTATION OF A PAIN AND PALLIATIVE CARE POLICY.

Each of the three of these important resolutions addresses an aspect of the needs to improve the delivery of palliative services in this state.

Palliative Care has been a priority of the Sisters of St. Francis since the arrival of Mother Marianne 127 years ago. Caring for those with serious illness requires expertise, compassion and a dedicated team approach to patient and family – centered care.

There are many excellent providers of palliative care in our state. Hospice programs provide palliative care for the terminally ill under the Medicare Benefit. Hospitals all across the state are developing or have established inpatient Palliative Care teams to address pain, symptom management and quality of life. St Francis began its outpatient Palliative Care Program in 2009 addressing the needs in the community and skilled nursing facilities.

There is a need to examine reimbursement in this area as physician palliative care consultations and the team services, which often include advanced practice nurses, licensed clinical social workers, chaplains and other disciplines, are time intense. Conversations and family discussions regarding treatment options, goals of care and value-based decision making require skilled professionals. Physicians and other clinicians complete thorough assessments and develop individualized plans to relieve symptoms of serious illness.

Hawaii is fortunate to have a state-wide Hospice and Palliative Care organization, Kokua Mau, as well as engaged third party payors, like HMSA who are making great efforts to increase the capacity for excellent palliative care. Through HMSA's Integrated Case Management Services as well as the HMSA Foundation, we have been able to provide care for more patients.

We believe that continuing the discussion regarding the value of palliative care and subsequent reimbursement is important and the development of a state-wide policy will enhance our efforts.

St Francis Healthcare System and I personally, appreciate the opportunity to share our thoughts and applaud your dedication to improving health care in Hawaii.