



UNIVERSITY OF HAWAII SYSTEM

Legislative Testimony

Written Testimony Presented Before the
Senate Committees on Human Services and Education
Tuesday, February 1, 2011, 1:15 pm
Conference Room 016

by

Virginia S. Hinshaw, Chancellor

and

Dr. Noreen Mokuau, Dean

Myron B. Thompson School of Social Work
University of Hawai'i at Mānoa

IN OPPOSITION TO SB 799 RELATING TO HEALTH CARE

Chair Chun Oakland, Chair Tokuda, and the members of the Senate Committees on Human Services and Education. My name is Dr. Noreen Mokuau and I am testifying today in relation to SB 799, which appropriates funds to the UHM School of Social Work to conduct a social audit of the QUEST expanded access program.

While the School of Social Work does not necessarily oppose the intent of SB 799, it is unable to conduct an audit of the QUEST program because of a conflict of interest. The School has contracts with the Department of Human Services in excess of two million dollars. Therefore, our involvement in an audit of the department would, at the very least, have the appearance of impropriety.

We thank the sponsors of SB 799 for their confidence in the School of Social Work's ability to conduct an audit of this nature and the Senate committees for this opportunity to offer our comments in relation to the bill.



SENATE COMMITTEE ON HUMAN SERVICES
Senator Suzanne Chun Oakland, Chair

SENATE COMMITTEE ON EDUCATION
Senator Jill Tokuda, Chair

Conference Room 016
Feb. 1, 2011 at 1:15 p.m.

Supporting SB 799.

The Healthcare Association of Hawaii advocates for its member organizations that span the entire spectrum of health care, including all acute care hospitals, as well as long term care facilities, home care agencies, and hospices. Thank you for this opportunity to testify in support of SB 799, which appropriates funds for a social audit of the Quest Expanded Access program (QExA).

QExA is a Medicaid managed care program that replaced a fee-for-service program two years ago to provide care to individuals with low incomes who are aged, blind or disabled. These individuals typically have multiple medical conditions and require care from different health care providers.

The goals of QExA include a reduction in the fragmentation of care and the assurance of coordination across the health care continuum. In addition, the program is designed to be fiscally predictable, stable, and sustainable in order to assure access to high quality, cost-effective care.

However, despite these high ideals, enrollees, advocates, and health care providers have expressed serious concerns that QExA is failing to meet its stated goals and that many enrollees are not receiving adequate care. For example, QExA has been criticized for not compensating providers for care that should have been covered or for not compensating providers in a timely manner. Due to the uncertainty of receiving payment, providers have begun to decline to take new patients who are QExA enrollees. With fewer providers available to enrollees, access to care is reduced. The enrollee's medical condition may deteriorate, requiring more intensive treatment, which increases costs.

QExA should be formally evaluated to determine whether these criticisms are valid, and, if so, to correct existing problems. In this regard, social auditing is a process that evaluates programs to determine their social and economic benefits and limitations. It

is a way of measuring the extent to which a program fulfills its stated values and objectives. Social auditing information is collected through various research methods that include surveys, interviews, and case studies.

The School of Social Work at the University of Hawaii at Manoa has the resources to conduct a social audit and has expressed a willingness to do so.

For the foregoing reasons, the Healthcare Association supports SB 799.

ChunOakland2 - Tyrell

From: mailinglist@capitol.hawaii.gov
Sent: Thursday, January 27, 2011 9:54 PM
To: HMS Testimony
Cc: wailua@aya.yale.edu
Subject: Testimony for SB799 on 2/1/2011 1:15:00 PM

Testimony for HMS/EDU 2/1/2011 1:15:00 PM SB799

Conference room: 016
Testifier position: support
Testifier will be present: No
Submitted by: Wailua Brandman APRN-Rx BC
Organization: Individual
Address: 615 Piikoi Street, Suite 1509 Honolulu, HI 96814
Phone: 255-4442
E-mail: wailua@aya.yale.edu
Submitted on: 1/27/2011

Comments:

Aloha and thank you for the opportunity to submit testimony. I support this bill, as a provider of care to Quest Expanded Access members. This research will greatly enhance our knowledge of how to improve this much needed program, which much needs improvement. Thank you for your support of this bill.

Mahalo.

Wailua Brandman APRN-Rx BC, Immediate Past President of Hawaii Association of Professional Nurses

Jan 31, 2011

Senator Suzanne Chun Oakland
State Capitol, Room 226
415 South Beretania Street
Honolulu, HI 96813

Dear Senator Chun Oakland,

Thank you for this opportunity to testify in support of SB 799, which appropriates funds for a social audit of the Quest Expanded Access program (QExA).

QExA is a Medicaid managed care program that replaced a fee-for-service program two years ago to provide care to individuals with low incomes who are aged, blind or disabled. These individuals typically have multiple medical conditions and require care from different health care providers.

The goals of QExA include a reduction in the fragmentation of care and the assurance of coordination across the health care continuum. In addition, the program is designed to be fiscally predictable, stable, and sustainable in order to assure access to high quality, cost-effective care.

However, despite these high ideals, enrollees, advocates, and health care providers have expressed serious concerns that QExA is failing to meet its stated goals and that many enrollees are not receiving adequate care. For example, QExA has been criticized for not compensating providers for care that should have been covered or for not compensating providers in a timely manner. Due to the uncertainty of receiving payment, providers have begun to decline to take new patients who are QExA enrollees. With fewer providers available to enrollees, access to care is reduced. The enrollee's medical condition may deteriorate, requiring more intensive treatment, which increases costs.

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The School of Social Work at the University of Hawaii at Manoa has the resources to conduct a social audit and has expressed a willingness to do so.

For the foregoing reasons, I support SB 799.

Sincerely,

Mr. Kevin Roberts
640 Ulukahiki St
Kailua, HI 96734-4454

Jan 31, 2011

Senator Suzanne Chun Oakland
State Capitol, Room 226
415 South Beretania Street
Honolulu, HI 96813

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For the foregoing reasons, I support SB 799.

Sincerely,

Mr. Tony Krieg
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(808) 871-9217