



Testimony of  
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Public Health Committee Hearing  
March 13, 2017

***HB 7174 An Act Allowing Certain Hospital Personnel To Administer A Saline  
Flush To An Intravenous Line***

Good afternoon Senators Gerratana and Somers, Representative Steinberg and members of the Public Health Committee.

My name is John Brady and I am a Registered Nurse and the Executive Vice President of AFT Connecticut, a diverse state federation of more than 30,000 public and private sector employees which includes state workers, healthcare workers, public school teachers, paraeducators, and higher education faculty and staff.

I am here to express my concerns over HB 7174, an act allowing certain hospital personnel to administer a saline flush to an intravenous line.

First let me say that I am unsure as to the intention of this bill. I assume that this bill is put forward with the best of intentions in regards to the patients of Connecticut, but I am unable to understand how loosening the safety regulations on an invasive procedure can achieve that goal.

As an Emergency Room Nurse, I am familiar with the possible complications involving an IV line.

There are many reasons to flush an IV line: upon first starting the line; between medications so medications do not mix; to check patency of a line prior to medication administration; or to attempt to clear a line if it has slowed or stopped. In each case an assessment is needed. This is a nursing function, and not simply a task.

The first step in infusing any medicine in an IV line is to assess the line and the patient, for skin color and temperature, mental alertness, patency of the line, and infiltration. The next step is to monitor the line and the patient during the infusion. The following step is to reassess the line and the patient upon completion. These are nursing functions because nurses have the training to perform these functions safely and the license to do so legally. If a nurse is shown to be incompetent in such duties, the State has the right and the duty to revoke their license to practice.

The “unlicensed hospital personnel” as this bill is written could be anyone working at the hospital, whatever their job classification. The statement that “normal saline shall not be considered the administration of medication” is to deny that simple fact that 0.9% normal saline is in fact a medication. This bill compromises patient safety.

I urge you to reject HB 7174 as it is written in the interest of the safety of Connecticut’s patients.