

## 2015 Legislative Summary

The Connecticut General Assembly has convened their legislative session with a relatively similar membership of Representatives and Senators from the previous session. The House (87-64) and Senate (21-15) will continue to have a Democratic majority; however the leadership of both chambers and many committees has changed. The list of leadership positions and committee members are attached to this report. Advocating for issues important to the pharmacy profession will be much more effective if you know your own Representative and Senator, particularly if they are members of important committees to many of our issues, i.e. the Public Health Committee, General Law Committee, and Human Services Committee. It is also important to note that the Department of Consumer Protection has a new Commissioner, Jonathan Harris, who has been an important advocate in previous pharmacy legislative issues such as collaborative practice, when he was Chair of the Public Health Committee.

With the beginning of the legislative session we have important information to announce. In recent months, CSHP has worked closely with other entities in the pharmacy and medical community to discuss legislation for reimbursement of pharmacist medication management services to Medicaid patients. We're happy to state that this week legislative language was submitted and accepted into the Public Health Committee by Representative Theresa Conroy. Here is the current language for what is now considered a "concept bill":

"The Department of Social Services shall pay credentialed pharmacists for Medication Therapy Management services for beneficiaries taking 3 or more chronic medications to improve medication safety and health outcomes."

There will be a long way to go in this process, as we anticipate multiple variations to the language as it goes through various committees, a public hearing, and a fiscal analysis. CSHP will be part of a work group consisting of representatives from CPA, CT-ASCP, and the UConn and St. Joseph Schools of Pharmacy. This group will work collaboratively to shepherd the bill through the legislative process and provide leadership for their members to advocate for the bill. Achieving medication management reimbursement for Medicaid patients would be a landmark achievement for our profession, and a significant complement to the federal Medicare provider recognition initiative, which Joe Hill described at this year's Catch the Wave Conference as ASHP's major legislative goal. Strengthening our initiative is the timely release from the National Governors Association titled "The Expanding Role of Pharmacists in a Transformed Health Care System." The document is attached to this report, and has also been submitted to the Public Health Committee and Governor Malloy, as evidence of the widely recognized importance of pharmacist medication management services to improve therapeutic outcomes and reduce health care costs.

CSHP will continue to update you on the progress of this legislative initiative and coordinate how you can become an important advocate to your legislator to make this law a reality.