

October 3, 2017

State Representative Steven Arndt
Chair, House Aging and Long-Term Care Committee
Ohio House of Representatives
77 South High Street, 11th Floor
Columbus, Ohio 43215

Dear Representative Arndt:

On behalf of the Ohio Council for Home Care & Hospice, we would like to thank you for the opportunity to testify in support of HB 286 to create the Palliative Care and Quality of Life Interdisciplinary Council to establish the Palliative Care Consumer and Professional Information and Education Program within the Ohio Department of Health. Over the last decade palliative care has been one of the fastest growing trends in health care with much of that care being provided in the home and community based setting.

OCHCH is a statewide association which represents more than 500 home health, hospice and palliative care providers in Ohio. We are supportive of the intent of HB 286 and appreciate that the legislation was amended to ensure home health agencies who are currently, or potentially planning to, provide palliative care services are included in the discussion.

We believe this legislation is a good step towards creating better understanding by the citizens of Ohio of what palliative care entails. As our hospice regulatory director is fond of saying, all hospice is palliative care, but not all palliative care is hospice. While palliative care is an important component of hospice, it is much broader than that.

Palliative care is specialized medical care for people with serious illnesses. It treats pain and other symptoms, and helps the individual and their family cope with the everyday challenges of living with a serious illness. Palliative care can be provided at the same time as curative treatment, can help an individual stay safely at home, and make a big difference to their quality of life.

Palliative services that can be provided in the home include:

- Medical evaluations, including monitoring for common symptoms like nausea, vomiting, pain, and anxiety
- Prescribing medications to ease these symptoms
- Additional medical applications like treating wounds and other medical needs
- Physical therapy and other rehabilitation needs
- Providing emotional and spiritual support in addition to physical
- Providing social interaction
- Providing guidance on navigating the healthcare system and understanding individual healthcare needs

What are the benefits of receiving palliative care in the home?

- Maximum convenience – We come to your home, on your time.
- Remain as comfortable as possible in your own familiar surroundings
- Avoid additional costs for hospital stays, medical fees, travel, etc.
- Receive help for medical, emotional and spiritual support needs

We look forward to working with you on this issue of importance to our members. If we may be of any assistance, please feel free to let us know.

Regards,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "John Stacy". The signature is written in a cursive style with a large initial "J" and "S".

John Stacy
Director of Advocacy and Communications