

May 18, 2005

I want to thank the members of these committees for holding these hearings on this vital topic for the hospitals of the Commonwealth.

My name is Gerald Greeley. Today in addition to my role at Winchester Hospital overseeing the Medical Record and Information Systems areas, I am representing Don Thieme, Executive Director of Mass. Council. of Community Hospitals (MCCH) and Dale Lodge CEO of Winchester Hospital and President of MCCH – Don Thieme has submitted written testimony as well.

Computerized Physician Order Entry (CPOE) and other information technologies are essential components of a comprehensive patient safety and clinical quality improvement effort for all hospitals.

The experiences of the academic teaching hospitals, in our area and throughout the U.S. have shown that this technology is a key component to a full patient safety plan. Non - Teaching community hospitals are in need of these systems in the same way the teaching hospitals are.

The scalability of these systems is not necessarily equivalent to bed size or patient acuity. Similar financial investment is required for a 600-bed teaching hospital as for a 200-bed community hospital. The average community hospital is experiencing \$3-8M deficit in technology budgets . In fact, the challenge of training community attending Physicians can be more challenging than training residents in a teaching setting.

Community hospitals need the Commonwealth's continued partnership and investment to accelerate what the Mass Technology Collaborative has identified as a pressing need with an achievable solution in CPOE.

We need the Commonwealth's support to access capital for technology including CPOE, bar coding of medications and other critical Clinical Information Technology that supports safe patient care.

On behalf of the 25 Community hospitals represented by the Mass Council of Community Hospitals, I ask for your support in the effort to bring CPOE to all hospitals in the Commonwealth in the near future.