

Testimony of Michele Lopez, RN
In Opposition to SB 1128
An Act Concerning Influenza Immunizations for Health Care Employees

Public Health Committee
March 20, 2013

My name is Michele Lopez and I am writing in opposition to SB 1128. I am a 36 year old nurse who has worked at the bedside since 2002. I earned my BSN with a 3.3 Grade Point Average from Mt St Mary College in May 2002. I am an American Heart Association Basic Life Support instructor who voluntarily teaches lay and professional CPR throughout the community. I am certified in emergency room nursing by the Emergency Nurses Association. I have an excellent work ethic in my years of practice at Danbury Hospital. My skill and leadership at the bedside have been noted in hundreds of letters from patients and management.

Healthcare choices should be exactly those - CHOICES. It should not be a mandate and not a condition of employment. A CHOICE. Doctors, Certified Nursing Assistants, and Home Health Aides are still considered US citizens with the same human rights which SHOULD be conveyed to all persons, including health care workers (HCW). There are multitudes of reasons why people chose not to vaccinate. Allergic reactions, a want to be free of chemicals which do not belong in the human body (such as mercury), alternative medicine belief and religious objections. Whatever the reason we all should have a choice.

This year I was given a choice by my employer, Danbury Hospital, to take the vaccine or wear a mask. After four weeks of extended surgical face mask wearing I developed an upper airway and esophageal reaction. It was so bad that I choked and needed an emergency endoscopy to save my life. That was on a Tuesday (1/29/2013) -- Friday of the same week I went to employee health to voice concern about the requirement to wear a face mask for such long periods of time. I was given the option to go home and use my time off or take the shot.

Before the start of my work day on January 31, 2013, I was offered a Thimerisol free (aka preservative free) form of the vaccine. Being that I have 2 children who depend on my income and healthcare benefits (my kids have a genetic bleeding disorder called Von Willibrands disease which is similar to hemophilia it would not be in their best interest for me to jeopardize my job) so I took the shot. In that moment I felt so violated as a human being. With no fair choices I was coerced to compromise my own health and my own body, be injected with chemicals in-order to be allowed to work?

Several hours later my left arm was swollen to twice its usual size, it was red, hot and inflamed. I had hives all over my body and eczema like rash-I had already taken Allegra D twice to help with these symptoms - I itched so badly my patients said "you need to get that checked out" -- I went to employee health but they were closed. I was then seen as a patient in my own emergency room where I was given immunosuppressive therapy

along with some Pepcid ...after about 1 hour I was told to go home and return if symptoms returned. I continued to take allergy medications and over the weekend I recovered.

In order for me to take this vaccine, in the future, I not only have to violate my personal beliefs, but I am forced to then get immunosuppressive treatments, compromise my own health and safety and take heavy duty allergy medications for another week. As a medical note, allergies get worse every time you are re-exposed. **Someday I may die from the injection.** I also have congenitally mal formed kidneys and must be cautious about medications I take. All allergy medications tax the kidneys. Taking allergy medications daily for such a long period of time is risky business; I could send myself into real failure.

What is the reason for this mandate? Vaccinated people spread the flu too; I emailed the CDC. Here is the response to my personal inquiry.

Ms. Lopez:

There are three ways that the virus can be spread by someone who has been vaccinated. If a person has been vaccinated, but the vaccine is ineffective, and that person becomes infected (either symptomatically or asymptotically; upwards of 25% of healthcare workers with the flu are asymptomatic), transmission can occur. Also, vaccinated persons can spread the virus via contact. For example, a healthcare worker who has been effectively vaccinated, and is disease-free, can transmit the disease to others via hand contact if he/she comes in contact an infected individual (therein lies another reason for good hand washing technique and the use of personal protective equipment (e.g., gloves, etc.). Lastly, a successfully vaccinated healthcare worker who comes in contact with an infected individual can spread the flu to an inanimate object (e.g., bed sheets, bed rail, etc.) that may subsequently be touched by another individual and result in disease transmission (i.e., fomite transmission).

Raymond Roberge, MD

The flu vaccine is only 62% effective at its best. The flu vaccine is also not without inherent risk. It is one of the most dangerous vaccines available. The CDC says no vaccine is 100% safe and no vaccine is 100% effective. That is why the National Vaccine injury compensation program was created in 1986 and pays out billions every year to those injured. I feel this new push to vaccinate all HCW is nothing more than a human experiment. The Declaration of Helinski from the 1960's states a specific set of ethical standards for human trials -- mandatory vaccination clearly violates this. HCW need to be protected too. We need our rights as humans to be protected. The right to make our own health care choices.

No HCW needs to come to work sick thanks to Governor Malloy's legislative bill which is law in CT now that employers must offer paid sick time to its employees. That was the right thing to do for everyone. I will not ever come to work ill. I will maintain the highest infection control habits with hand washing, environmental cleaning, and use and teach cough etiquette. I will use proper diet and exercise to maintain optimal health. Please, respect my right as a human being to make my own health care choices. For this

reason I oppose SB 1128.

I would encourage all members here to do some of your own research. Including VAERS data search (which is purposely made difficult) and read the testimony's from people who've had serious adverse reactions to the vaccine. I would also encourage you to read the web site for Physicians Against Mandatory vaccination.

www.vaccinetruth.org

www.vran.org

www.vaccinationcouncil.org

Sadly, many USA physicians will not speak out about mandatory vaccine issues because they fear retaliation from their state licensing and professional agencies. For all the reasons I have stated, and for all health care workers in CT, I urge you to oppose SB 1128, An Act concerning Influenza Immunizations for Health Care Employees.

Thank you for your time.

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