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March 4, 2021

Senator Ned Claxton, Chair
Representative Michele Meyer, Chair
Members, Joint Standing Committee on Health and Human Services
100 State House Station
Augusta, ME 04333-0100

Re: LD 450, An Act To Promote the Education of Patients by Primary Care and Urgent Care Physicians Regarding the Bone Marrow Transplant List

Dear Senator Claxton, Representative Meyer, and Members of the Health and Human Services Committee:

This letter is to provide information about LD 450, *An Act To Promote the Education of Patients by Primary Care and Urgent Care Physicians Regarding the Bone Marrow Transplant List* and the potential impact of the proposed legislation, if enacted.

This bill proposes to require the Department to coordinate with the national marrow donor program to develop and disseminate information and education materials regarding bone marrow donation for use by the public and healthcare providers. This bill requires the Department to adopt rules to establish the distribution system and methods to ensure the use of such materials by healthcare providers. The Maine Center of Disease Control and Prevention (Maine CDC) is neither for nor against LD 450 and offers the following for your consideration.

Maine CDC currently does not have a public health program specific to bone marrow donation. Adding this program would increase Maine's public health infrastructure that supports the Maine Comprehensive Cancer Control Program (MCCCP). This bone marrow donor program would be appropriately placed within the Maine CDC Division of Disease Prevention where it would be a complementary program to our cancer programs, offering the benefit of shared stakeholders to assist with education dissemination and the like, and furthering MCCCP's mission of reducing the burden of cancer in Maine by promoting healthy behaviors, improving access to preventive and therapeutic cancer care, reducing cancer disparities, and fostering statewide partnerships that enable a synergistic approach to reducing the physical, emotional and economic impact of cancer in Maine.

The State's Cancer Plan does not currently include bone marrow donation and a state-wide evaluation of the available resources and needs related to bone marrow donation would be necessary before this work could be integrated into the current infrastructure and the State Plan. Only two percent of Americans are registered bone marrow donors/Peripheral Blood Stem Cell Donation (PBSD). Less than half of the people who need a transplant find one. This data could

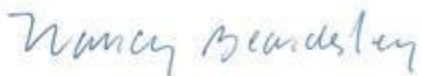
be improved with the addition of this program to Maine CDC's public health efforts and serve to provide critical support to transplant patients and families.

The addition of a bone marrow donation program requires funding for the work that is not within the scope of the grants that currently support the Maine CDC's Cancer Prevention and Control Programs. Additional funding is needed for a program coordinator position to manage the obligations of this legislation. Fiscal backing is also needed in order to implement the distribution system and the surveillance methods to monitor the utility of the developed materials. Further fiscal support would enable a field scan of both the public and healthcare providers to identify current knowledge of marrow donation. This assessment would inform program direction and provide guidance for the resources that will benefit the providers and public. Baseline data will demonstrate program impact over time.

In summary, the Maine CDC is neither for nor against this legislation that requires a system that ensures the distribution of material developed in coordination with the national bone marrow donor program to provide support, information and resources for transplant patients, caregivers and families, which would compliment existing public health programs and expand the current infrastructure. Furthermore, an anticipated outcome of LD 450 is an increase in the number of donors because people will be educated about the bone marrow registry and will sign up to be on the bone marrow donation list, availing themselves to those in need of a transplant.

Thank you for your consideration of this matter. The Maine CDC is available to provide additional details for the Committee's consideration. We will continue to maximize our public health initiatives to optimize health for the people of Maine.

Respectfully,

A handwritten signature in blue ink that reads "Nancy Beardsley". The signature is written in a cursive, slightly slanted style.

Nancy Beardsley, Deputy Director
Maine Center for Disease Control and Prevention