



**THE NEW JERSEY SOCIETY OF
PATHOLOGISTS**
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January 13, 2016

Honorable Chris Christie
Governor, State of New Jersey
P.O. Box 001
Trenton, New Jersey 08625

Re: Support for enactment of Assembly Bill 431 / Senate Bill 2773

Dear Governor Christie,

On behalf of the New Jersey Society of Pathologists (NJSP) I am respectfully requesting the enactment for Assembly Bill 431 / Senate Bill 2773. This legislation requires that each Accountable Care Organization (ACO) in New Jersey establish a Clinical Laboratory Testing Advisory Board.

Under of provisions of the bill, the Clinical Laboratory Testing Board would make recommendations to an ACO on guidelines or protocols for clinical laboratory testing. The Board would be required to include at least one physician, affiliated with the ACO and who is a medical director of a laboratory regulated under federal Clinical Laboratory Improvement Amendments of 1988 (CLIA).

The NJSP believes that every ACO will need to utilize clinical laboratory tests to achieve their goal of controlling health care costs and improving patient outcomes. It is estimated that 70% of all health care decision making stems from laboratory tests. Laboratory tests are critical to the diagnosis, treatment and prevention of diseases, and are needed to monitor and measure diagnostic expediency, treatment efficacy and patient population health status within an ACO.

Furthermore, we believe the purpose of guidelines and protocols for clinical laboratory/ pathology testing should do the following:

- Ensure that every patient receives an accurate and timely diagnosis;

- Ensure that every patient receives medically appropriate clinical laboratory testing as needed for diagnosis, monitoring of therapy, or prevention of adverse events;
- Prevent the ordering of medically unnecessary testing;
- Establish a system of periodic evaluations and reviews to ensure optimal patient care;
- Integrate patient populations data for ACOs to evaluate the impact on patients; and
- Allow for ordering physician consultation with the physician director of the clinical laboratory, or other staff designated by a laboratory director, on medically complex cases that may require a waiver from any guideline or protocol adopted by the ACO.

The Medical Society of New Jersey, the Association of Pathology Chairs, and the Association for Molecular Pathology, have all endorsed the legislation as have the following national patient advocacy groups:

- The Leukemia and Lymphoma Society
- The National Brain Tumor Society
- The Lung Cancer Alliance
- The American Society of Breast Disease.

For these reasons, I strongly urge enactment of Assembly Bill 431 / Senate Bill 2773.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Brian Erler MD PhD". The signature is written in a cursive, flowing style.

Brian Erler, MD, PhD
President, New Jersey Society of Pathologists

CC: James DiGuilio, Esq., Senior Counsel, Office of the Governor
Laurie Clark, Senior Counsel, New Jersey Society of Pathologists
Barry Ziman, College of American Pathologists