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INDEPENDENT REGULATORY  
REVIEW COMMISSION

#2720



Montgomery County  
Community College

September 16, 2008

Mr. Christopher Grovich  
State Board of Dentistry  
P.O. Box 2649  
Harrisburg, PA 17105-2649

Dear Mr. Grovich:

I am writing in support of the proposed Rules and Regulations regarding dental hygienists' administration of local anesthesia, the establishment of the public health dental hygienist and changes in supervision requirements for patient treatment (removal of ASA Classifications) as well as changing direct to general supervision for exposing dental radiographs.

As a licensed dental hygienist, dental hygiene educator (26 years) and currently Director of the Dental Hygiene Program at Montgomery County Community College (5 years), Blue Bell, PA, dental hygiene students complete an average of 3-4 years of education on a college level with specific and in-depth background in basic sciences, general education, dental sciences as well as over 600 hours of clinical experience with patients. Thus, they are well educated and well prepared to take on an expanded scope of dental hygiene practice.

In relation to local anesthesia, pain control is vital to ensure patient comfort and to allow for maximum effectiveness and efficiency of dental hygiene procedures. It has been demonstrated in the 40 states that legally allow the administration of local anesthesia that dental hygienists can safely and effectively provide these procedures to patients.

It is also essential to acknowledge the number of underserved patients that currently do not have access to dental health services. Much of the high demand for patient services in our dental hygiene clinic and through our grant programs is the result of many members of our community that are unable to access dental care in the private sector. All of the provisions addressed by these rules and regulations will expand public access to early and essential preventive dental health services and ultimately lead to the reduction in more complex and costly dental care.

I commend the Board for their efforts in revising the Rules and Regulations to the State Dental Practice Act for dental hygiene practice as these revisions reflect current research, standards and practice in dental hygiene and will help move dentistry forward in providing patients with greater access to dental care.

Sincerely,

*Jenny K. Sheaffer*

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