
From: The Sherwood family [fivesherwoods@verizon.net]
Sent: Friday, September 26, 2008 1:13 PM
To: ST-DENTISTRY@state.pa.us
Cc: IRRRC
Subject: PH Dental Hygienist/ anesthesia regulations

To Whom it may concern:

I am employed as a dental hygienist in the School District of Lancaster and I strongly support the new law and regulations that are pending.

The children of our school district and their families benefit from the preventive education and screening services I provide. Many of them have not had a dental examination or learned how to prevent oral diseases outside of the school setting. Seventy-five percent of our student enrollment is eligible for the Federal free lunch program proving they are from economically disadvantaged homes. For many of them, access to preventive dental care is difficult due to a low number of dentists providing care for medical assistance programs.

Allowing a public health dental hygienist to work in the schools is one way the dental profession can help reach a population of children who are experiencing high decay rates and try to reverse this trend.

The Pennsylvania State Education Association (PSEA) listed children's dental health first on a list of health issues which have an impact on student learning and low achievement. PSEA wrote "policymakers may need to consider the idea that the 'root cause' of academic achievement problems may not be in the academic content instruction." I have seen first-hand several children who are not able to concentrate on learning because of tooth/oral pain.

I think the regulations should be accepted as written in the current document so more school districts and hygienists will consider this worthwhile population of Pennsylvanians to serve.

Sincerely yours,
Karen Sherwood RDH, BSDH

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