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From: Donald Price [communitydentaled@gmail.com]
Sent: Monday, September 29, 2008 4:33 PM
To: CGrovich@state.pa.us
Cc: IRRC
Subject: Public Health DH Practitioners in nonprofit and free clinics

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INDEPENDENT REGULATORY
REVIEW COMMISSION

Christopher Grovich, Esq.
PA State Board of Dentistry
Harrisburg, PA 17105-2649

Dear Mr. Grovich:

Poor oral health is a "silent epidemic" evident among vulnerable individuals – especially children, elderly, certain racial and ethnic groups and those with disabilities. Dental care is costly and virtually inaccessible for those without health insurance and many people with health insurance do not have dental coverage.

Right here in Chester County there is a shortage of dental professionals. Coatesville and adjacent communities have been designated by the US Health and Human Service Office as a Dental and Medical Health Professional Shortage Area (HPSA), where the population to dentist ratio is 27,090:1. Rare is the dentist who accepts any kind of MA insurance.

The proposed Dental Hygiene Scope of Practice Regulations offer hope in helping resolve this problem in sections of almost every county in Pennsylvania which are designated HPSAs. Chester County Community Dental Center is a non profit dental center providing basic family dental care for MA, CHIP, uninsured and welfare insured members of our community which constitutes 88 % of our clinical patient population.

We urge you to please include **non-profit and free** dental clinics in your practice sites for Public Health Dental Hygiene Practitioners. This will provide additional clinic days for needy children and families when the dentist director is not available, i.e.; evenings, Fridays and Saturdays. The need for prevention is overwhelming and even with 2 hygienists working; we can not keep up with the demand for health learning and preventive dental hygiene care.

Your recognition of the need for preventive dental care across PA is to be commended. Thank you. With your support for this mid-level practitioner we plan to make a positive difference in the dental health of our Coatesville community as verified by decreased admissions statistics on patients with oral and facial pain from our local Brandywine Hospital Emergency room.

Thank you again for considering the inclusion of NonProfit and Free dental clinics in practice sites for Public Health DH Practitioners.

Sincerely

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