

# 3228

November 17, 2020

The Honorable George D. Bedwick, Chairman

Independent Regulatory Review Commission

14<sup>th</sup> Floor, Harrisstown 2, 333Market Street

Harrisburg, PA 17101

Re: IRRC #3228

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IRRC

2020 NOV 25 A 7:28

Dear Chairman Bedwick,

As a Dental Hygienist of 42 years, 30 year Adjunct Faculty member of Northampton Community College and one of the first 60 Licensed Public Health Dental Hygiene Practitioners I would like to express my support for final regulation 16A-4633, Expansion of Practice Sites for the Public Health Dental Hygiene Practitioner.

With the goal in mind to expand the access to oral health care and to provide additional opportunities to screen, educate and provide access to referrals I believe expanding site locations are imperative. I assist my husband, who is a licensed PA Dentist, with school examinations. He provides this service on his non-practice days. These exams have identified some extremely urgent dental care that has been neglected for some children. In some cases, we (and the school nurses) have been able to monitor and report to The Child Abuse Hotline when extreme care is not met.

Given the current Covid-19 accommodations that schools must abide by, it is harder for the Dentists to leave their practices to provide much needed screenings for care referral to adjustments to the segregated socially distanced alphabet order that school days restrict. If Public Health Dental Hygiene Practitioners regulation expanded the scope of practice, more children could be directed or care needed instead of suffering in a learning environment from undetected tooth decay.

Dental Hygiene Practitioners believe these changes will allow us to assist patients to connect with a "Dental Home" and increase access to quality oral health when not available to do this in a traditional dental location.

I would urge the commission to approve this regulation. During our recent quantitative needs during the pandemic and going forward, this would increase access of oral health care to citizens of the commonwealth seeking a pathway to dental stability and care.

Sincerely,



Deborah A. Gschrey, RDH BS, PHDHP