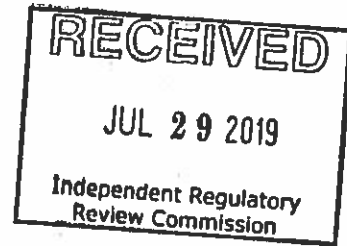


3228

Kaitlin Karalunas, BSDH, PHDHP. MHS  
3808 Lydon Lane  
Moosic, Pa 18509



Ariel O'Malley  
Board Counsel  
State Board of Dentistry  
Department of State  
PO Box 69523  
Harrisburg PA 17106-9523

May 8, 2019

Dear Ms. O'Malley:

I am writing on behalf of the Pennsylvania Dental Hygienists' Association (PDHA) and as a registered dental hygienist who holds a license as a Public Health Dental Hygiene Practitioner (PHDHP) in support of rulemaking 16A-4633.

The PDHA is committed to expanding practice sites to increase access to care for individuals who may not be able to obtain services from a traditional brick and mortar dental setting. The PHDHP, while not providing a diagnosis, is educated to recognize disease and can help navigate a patient to their proper dental home.

I have been a dental hygienist in various practice settings for 10+ years including private practice, education and public health. There is an established link between oral health and overall body health most especially in the at-risk populations of those with special needs and medical vulnerability. A PHDHP will be able to offset the effects of bacterial overload by providing staff education and direct patient care.

The utilization of a PHDHP in alternative practice settings will increase access to quality oral health for those who otherwise might miss the opportunity to find a true dental home.

In summary, the PDHA supports rulemaking 16A-4633 Public Health Dental Hygiene Practitioner Practice Sites and respectfully requests acceptance of the rulemaking as proposed.

Thank you for your consideration and support.

Sincerely,

Kaitlin Karalunas, BSDH, PHDHP, MHS