

Legislative Testimony
H.B. 5630 AAC The Establishment Of Licensure For An Advanced Dental
Hygiene Practitioner
Public Health Committee
Friday, March 6, 2009
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My name is Anjannette Gjertsen and I am an endodontist practicing in Norwalk. I also serve on the Council of Legislation for the Connecticut State Dental Association. Before attending dental school, I was a dental hygienist for 15 years. Stated frankly, I did not know what I did not know. Now having 11 years (4 years to attain a BA, 4 years to attain a DDS degree, and 3 years to attain a certificate in endodontics) of tertiary education, including related degrees and certificates, I see the minimal education requirements of the proposed ADHP as inadequate. For example, the clinical curriculum of the proposed ADHP program contains 1 credit hour in Management of Dental Emergencies and Urgent Care. That is 45 hours of exposure in developing these competencies. Dental emergencies and urgent care are an integral part of my specialty practice, which again, required 11 years of tertiary education. The equivalent of 1 week of education in said area of dentistry is in no doubt inadequate.

The following is a synopsis of the proposed curriculum for the ADHP:

Didactic Courses (21 credits)

Theoretical Foundations of Advanced Dental Hygiene Practice (3)
Translational Research (3)
Healthcare Policy, Systems and Financing for Advanced Practice Roles (3)
Management of Oral Healthcare Delivery (3)
Cultural Issues in Health and Illness (3)
Advanced Health Assessment and Diagnostic Reasoning (3)
Pharmacological Principles of Clinical Therapeutics (3)

Advanced Practice Clinical Courses (16 credits)

Community-based Primary Oral Healthcare I-IV (12)
Management of Dental Emergencies and Urgent Care (1)
Capstone Community Practice (3)

This is insufficient to provide the level of care proposed in this legislation.

Secondly, the proposed curriculum requires only 3 didactic hours of pharmacology and clinical therapeutics. The dental school and endodontic curriculae require on average 1.5 years of combined didactic course work. This is a great discrepancy, and again, an insufficient amount of training to be prescribing controlled substances and antibiotics. With the aging population and an increasing amount of the population taking prescription medication, the issue of drug interactions

is of great concern. Considering such, the state of Connecticut residents need better educated practitioners than the proposed ADHP can provide.

Respectfully submitted,

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