

Bonhomme, Penny

From: mblozzon@bridgeport.edu
Sent: Monday, March 19, 2012 11:01 PM
To: PHC Testimony
Cc: kminihan@bridgeport.edu; cmbrdh@gmail.com
Subject: Electronic Testimony ADHP

Hello, My name is Meaghan Blozzon.

I am a Registered Dental Hygienist, licensed in Stratford, Connecticut. I would like you to support, on my behalf, legislation to establish the Advanced Dental Hygiene Practitioner. The ADHP will add a new member to the dental team to deliver care to the underserved in Connecticut. Access to dental services necessary to maintain optimal oral health, which is an integral component of total health, can increase with the creation of a midlevel practitioner like the ADHP.

I have spent the last year working in private practice while finishing my BSDH. For my internship this Spring I am working at an inner city elementary school in Bridgeport, CT. It is the only school in the area that provides support services, radiographs, sealants, x-rays and the like to school aged children. During this time I have found the everyday dental care of the children poor to non-existent. Many of the children have abscesses, caries, incipient caries, gum disease, missing teeth, and the need for extractions. The children are treated in the clinic with routine prophies student dental hygienists from the Fones School of Dental Hygiene. Students are referred out for any additional and/or restorative work to be done that is not in our scope of practice. The sad truth, however, is that the additional necessary oral care is never obtained.

Either the child's family does not have insurance or the family does not have access to transportation to and from a provider. Of the 127 students screened, 99 had state insurance, only 9 had private insurance, and 19 had no insurance. Perhaps even more disturbing were the lack of providers actually accepting the state insurance. Many said they did take the state insurance, but were full (their quotas had been met) so they could not take any more. The sad fact is, if the patient had the money, they would have been accepted by the dentist. Few offices were found on the bus line, however difficulties arose in access to the bus line and funds to purchase tickets.

Please support the Advanced Dental Hygiene Practitioner. This proposal will make it possible for thousands of underserved patients who cannot obtain care, to receive needed dental care.

This type of midlevel provider, akin to the APRN (nurse practitioner) is the way of the future and as you know CT is the Origin of Dental Hygiene - Bridgeport 1913. We will be celebrating the 100th year, next May.

Thank you for taking the time to read and review what I have to say,

Meaghan Blozzon RDH