

To whom it may concern,

I am writing this email in the response to the raised bill 6814 for the Expanded Functions Dental Auxiliary. I have been a Certified Dental Assistant for almost 14 years. I was trained in a CODA accredited program and can say that my education was exceptional. I have worked in many facets in the dental field, and sincerely want to see it flourish and benefit the community as it should. I have worked as a clinical orthodontic assistant, a general dentistry assistant, a lab technician, a Dental Assisting Educator, a Dental Assisting Program Director, and now as an Oral Health Educator. My goal in my field is to benefit the community by creating awareness of the importance of dental health, and how taking care of your oral health can impact your systemic health.

This is critical, as the community is becoming more and more aware of the importance of taking care of their teeth. This benefits the dental community because more people seek care for their dental needs in response to this. People are retaining their natural dentition (teeth) longer than they ever have before. This means our patient community is growing. We need better access to dental care to service them. By utilizing the Expanded Functions Dental Auxiliary, the dentist can provide comprehensive dental treatment while the EFDA supports the practice with delegated skills that are generally non-productive in nature to the dental practice. This means the Dentist can see more patients, and allot more time in their schedule for emergency patients, and keep dental patients out of the Emergency Departments seeking dental treatment in the wrong location. It would also increase patient trust in their dental practitioners when they are available for them when they need.

The additional benefit of having an EFDA in a dental office is their knowledge due to formal training and certification. The EFDA is required to have training in a CODA (Commission on Dental Accreditation) accredited program, which signifies a certain level of competency a dental assistant should have in the skills they perform. There are many assistants working in the dental field that have not had formal training regarding OSHA standards, CDC guidelines, radiation health and safety, and infection control practices. The formally trained assistant will add a level of safety and security to the health and well-being of the patient and the dental practice. Without this knowledge, cross contamination of disease or improper handling of chemicals and materials can occur to both the patient, and the dental healthcare worker, resulting in lost time from work, and workers compensation claims. Lack of knowledge of OSHA standards could lead to an increase in malpractice claims to a practitioner when some harm befalls a patient, which reflects poorly on all dental practitioners.

Due to the Dental Assisting National Board certifying the EFDA, no registration with the state is necessary. DANB supports, follows and manages the DA and at times will audit to ensure the EFDA is meeting their certification requirements.

Currently, more than 40 states employ EFDA's to perform a variety of delegated skills, and this number continues to grow. I feel that it has something to do with the excellence in service to patients seen in practices and clinics every day. Our state can benefit from this too, and as a result, increase safety to patients, and increase access to care.

Sincerely,

Carrie Chabot, CDA, BA