

Testimony in Favor of House Bill 6814

Senator Gerratana, Representative Ritter and members of the Public Health Committee:

I'm Dr. Jeffrey Rosow, the dental director at Connecticut Valley Hospital, a state psychiatric hospital which also has a substance abuse program located in Middletown. I've worked as a dentist at CVH for the last 34 years, during which I have been the dental director for the past 22. First I need to state clearly that I'm expressing my own opinion based on my professional experiences rather than representing the Department of Mental Health and Addiction Services. I am here to testify in favor of House Bill 6814 An Act Concerning Dental Assistants and Expanded Function Dental Auxiliaries. As a dentist serving a special needs population with generally limited access to dental care outside of our hospital, I'm strongly in favor of practical, effective, and economically feasible solutions to Ct. access to care issues. I've participated in Mission of Mercy, and am on the steering committee, I am also on the Access to Care Committee of the Ct. Dental Association. In those capacities I've read numerous documents and participated in many discussions re mid-level provider models, what is happening in other states in addition to our own, to increase access to dental care for all. Being the only dentist serving our entire special needs patient population of close to 600 patients it is critical that our entire team work to our maximum capability and capacity. Expanding the duties of our dental assistants will greatly enhance both the quality and quantity of the procedures we perform. With the intense training required of this certification, there is no reason why under my supervision, that our dental assistants would not be able to perform procedures such as the fabrication of temporary restorations, placing liners, suture removal and other duties now being considered under the EFDA legislation. This would allow me to focus on the portions of procedures needing a higher level of education and expertise. By working at this level, much more would be accomplished, at an increased level of quality, since my focus would more narrowed to the more complicated procedures. With the high level of training that the EFDA certification requires, along with the fact that I would be ultimately responsible, it would insure that the quality of the work performed by our dental assistants met or exceeded our already high level standard of care. There is a tremendous need for dental care, especially in populations such as ours that for various reasons, are underserved. Expanded function dental assistants are being used successfully in over 45 other states. By passing legislation allowing dental assistants to do more, with the safeguard of supervision and responsibility absorbed by the dentist, I strongly feel that it will provide a safe, cost effective, and efficient way, to provide dental services to many who are not now receiving them here in Connecticut. Under this bill, cost effective EFDA educational programs will be designed to efficiently utilize the existing workforce by building on current knowledge and skills. The proposed education/training programs could be

completed in one year with EFDAs potentially in the workforce within 2 years of the bill's passage. Another advantage is that dental assistants AND hygienists could become Expanded Function Dental Auxiliaries, allowing them to expand the scope of services that they can provide, providing these critical team members with a new career ladder. Furthermore, EFDA received a very favorable review from DPH in 2012 during its exhaustive scope review process.

I would like to sincerely thank-you for your time and am in hopes that you will support House Bill 6814. It represents an effective, proven, and relatively easy step in allowing our state to catch up with the rest of the country in expanding the duties of our dental auxiliaries. I would urge you to vote for it. It's time has more than come!! Thank you for your consideration.

Sincerely,

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