

Legislative Testimony- Public Health Committee
HB 5654 – An Act Allowing Dentists to Perform Certain Facial Therapies
As Part of Their Dental Practice
Monday, February 11, 2019

Dear Senator Abrams, Representative Steinberg, and Members of the Public Health Committee,

My name is Nancy Summer Lerch. I have a DDS degree, a Fellowship in the Academy of General Dentistry and am Accredited by the American Academy of Cosmetic Dentistry. I have been practicing dentistry for over 35 years, in New Haven, Connecticut. Nearly 30 years ago I attained my Accreditation in Cosmetic Dentistry. Now I am one of 450 world wide and one of 3 in CT. I am a former examiner for the Accreditation process and also Past President of the New England Academy of Cosmetic Dentistry.

I am writing in support of House Bill 5654-An Act Allowing Dentists to Perform Certain Facial Therapies As Part of Their Dental Practice

I love being a dentist! There are never two teeth alike. And over the years what I have seen is that a new, natural smile is everything to a human being who's smile has been harmed, or who's teeth are crooked, stained, chipped, missing, yellowed or just plain worn down. A self-pleasing smile changes the endorphins that course through our bloodstream. It changes our approach and confidence in life. It changes how we connect. A natural, self-pleasing smile alters life.

I have seen this over, and over, and over again.

As many of my esteemed colleagues have written to you about or testified today, there are ample reasons dentists should be allowed to preform facial injectables.

- We are the most skillful at giving injections as we do it everyday.
- We have hours and hours of study in facial anatomy, often taking the same initial curriculum as medical students.
- We deal with the lips and lower face almost exclusively, on a day in and day out basis.
- We have offices and trained staff designed to react immediately to any negative situation.

I am not going elaborate on the above. I want to talk about scope, training and results.

1. Connecticut is one of only 12 states that do not allow dentists to preform facial injectables. In those states that have passed this expanded scope issue, the due process showed that properly trained dentists can, safely and reliably, deliver botox and facial fillers to patients. For instance, back in 2013, the Dental Quality Assurance Commission (DQAC) of Washington State issued a statement supporting the ability of general dentists to use Botox and dermal fillers when "used to treat functional or aesthetic dental conditions and their direct aesthetic consequences and the treating dentist has appropriate, verifiable training and experience."¹
2. In our own state, like in NY next to us, nurses are allowed to preform these services. Nurses who are not experts in the lower face/oral cavity as dentists are. There is even one state, Nevada that currently allows dental hygienists to administer facial injectables. Surely an expert in the oral cavity, the dentist, should have the ability to preform these procedure too.

3. This expanding of the scope of practice is now trending nation-wide. In just over ten years, nationally, 50% of states have enacted laws enabling dentists to preform these services.

So where then is the training and it is accessible to dentists for their patients?

4. According the American Academy of Facial Esthetics (AAFE)² training should include:

- Indications and contraindications for these pharmaceutical agents³
- In-depth instruction in the anatomy, neurophysiology, musculature, and circulatory system of the oral and maxillofacial areas³
- Patient evaluation for the best dental and facial esthetic and therapeutic outcome³
- Review of sterile technique as it relates to the use of injectable pharmacologic agents³
- Safety and risk issues for botulinum-toxin and dermal-fillers injectable therapy³
- The physiology and pharmacology of oral and maxillofacial injectable treatment³
- Integrating botulinum-neurotoxin and dermal-filler therapy into therapeutic and esthetic treatment plans³
- Volumizing nasolabial folds, marionette lines, and lifting up the corners of the mouth using anatomical landmarks³
- Beautiful and subtle lip enhancements by adding volume to establish proper lip and smile lines³
- Smoothing lip lines and eliminating vertical "smokers" lines³
- Treatment techniques, including anatomical muscle sites, muscle depths, proper preparation, and dilution for the best oral and maxillofacial therapeutic and esthetic outcomes³
- Botulinum-toxin therapeutic treatment for bruxism to relieve temporomandibular joint disorders (TMJ/TMD)³
- How to avoid, manage, and treat possible adverse reactions and complications³

5. Training courses are all over. Course listings include in person attendance at Universities, formal courses like those provided by the American Academy of Facial Esthetics, and small group format from in-office trains to live on-line webinars. **There would be no cost to the State of Connecticut to pass this legislation!** The cost will be solely the dentists responsibility.

Finally, let's look at who will benefit. Surely the dentist who gets to add a new service to their scope of practice. And surely the public, who twice a year sees the dentist, their champion for oral health. There they can get immediate pain relief (muscular tension headaches) or facial pain relief as in getting treatment for Bell's Palsy; or emotional relief as in "I can finally smile and connect with others" or psychological relief as is "I hated my gummy smile...now that it is gone, I can be confident no one is staring at my gums since I just had my lip botox'd to cover up my gums."

We all want to make people happy. That is why you are in the legislature and I am a dentist. This is a bill that allows for more happiness with very minimal risk to the public, the practitioner and/or the state.

Ardently, I urge you to pass HB 5654 – An Act Allowing Dentists to Perform Certain Facial Therapies As Part of Their Dental Practice.

Respectfully Submitted,

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Footnotes:

1. Dental Boards Organization (2012). Dentists' Botox Use Laws. Retrieved 10/11/2015 from <https://www.dentalboards.org/PDFS/2012/BackgroundBotox.pdf>
<https://www.doh.wa.gov/Portals/1/Documents/2300/DQACInterpStatementIS-1.pdf>
2. Website link for faculty of American Academy of Facial Esthetics:
<https://www.facialesthetics.org/about-aafe/aafe-faculty/>
3. "AAFE prepares courses for hygienists allowed to treat with dermal fillers in Nevada." DentistryIQ. <http://www.dentistryiq.com/articles/2015/12/nevada-allows-dental-hygienists-to-treat-with-facial-injectables.html>. Published December 16, 2015."