

LEGISLATIVE UPDATE

REVISION OF INFECTION CONTROL REGULATIONS - A revised California Code of Minimum Standards for Infection Control in the Dental Setting Regulations became effective August 20, 2011. The revision was a collaborative effort of the Dental Board of California and the Dental Hygiene Committee of California, with input from Noel Kelsch, RDHAP, member of the CDHA Government Relations Council and a nationally recognized speaker and writer on infection control protocols. Noel has prepared an extensive overview of the revisions which will appear in an article on the CDHA website during the month of September.

DENTAL HYGIENE COMMITTEE OF CALIFORNIA - The DHCC is celebrating two years of existence and recognition as the first and only dental hygiene self-regulating agency in the nation. The DHCC, housed at the California Department of Consumer Affairs in Sacramento, is an agency comprised of dental hygienists, public members and a dentist meets throughout the state two to three times each year.

The next meeting of the DHCC will be held December 11 through 13; the location has not been posted on the DHCC website and is yet to be determined; the usual location is the Department of Consumer Affairs hearings room in Sacramento. Many oral health professionals are becoming aware of the vast resource of information related to scope of practice and licensure now available through the DHCC. Recent meetings of the DHCC have been webcast allowing the profession and the public to listen in on the proceedings; the full agenda packet is available on the DHCC website at www.dhcc.ca.gov/about_us/committee_meetings.shtml.

Questions about dental hygiene scope of practice are frequently sent to the American Dental Hygienists' Association and the California Dental Hygienists' Association. Another resource for information on statutes and regulations governing the practice of dental hygiene is the DHCC.

FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTION

- **Can the dental hygienist use a laser for periodontal therapy?** The answer is yes, the dental hygienist may use a laser for the removal of diseased epithelial lining of the gingival sulcus. The concern is preparation for performing this therapy - was the clinician "trained" or "certified". The law does not require certification, however, for professional protection of your license, it is in the professional standard of care and the best interest of the clinician to be certified in a two-day course that includes didactic as well as clinical practice on the jaw of a cow or pig.
- **Electronic Fingerprint Requirement** -- Effective July 1, 2011 electronic fingerprinting is required for all dental hygiene license renewals. You are required to have your fingerprints recorded using the Livescan service in California if you have not already done so. Unfortunately, the paper fingerprint cards used historically no longer fulfill this new legal requirement.
- **Can the RDH perform direct supervision duties when the dentist is out of the office?** The answer is no, the dental hygienist may not perform the three direct supervision duties when the employer of record is out of the office.

The neighboring dentist can not provide supervision in the absence of the employer dentist.

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