



DENTAL ASSISTING COMMITTEE MEETING MINUTES

Thursday, May 19, 2011

Embassy Suites SFO, 150 Anza Blvd.
Burlingame, CA 94010

Members Present:

Judith Forsythe, RDA, Chair
Bruce Whitcher, DDS, Vice Chair
Fran Burton, Public Member
Luis Dominicus, DDS
Huong Le, DDS
Thomas Olinger, DDS

Members Absent:

Staff Present:

Richard DeCuir, Executive Officer
Kim A. Trefry, Enforcement Chief
Jocelyn Campos, Enforcement Coordinator
Karen Fischer, Administrative Analyst
Sarah Wallace, Legislative/Regulatory Analyst
Linda Byers, Executive Assistant
Kristy Shellans, DCA Senior Staff Counsel
Greg Salute, Deputy Attorney General

ROLL CALL AND ESTABLISHMENT OF QUORUM

Ms. Judith Forsythe, Chair, called the committee meeting to order at 2:40 p.m. Roll was called and a quorum was established.

DA 1 - Approval of the February 24, 2011 Dental Assisting Committee Meeting Minutes

Dr. Whitcher stated that there was a typographical error in DA 2. In the fifth sentence the acronym "SERP" should be "CERP". Tamara McNeely of CADAT stated that in DA 5, Lori Gagliardi is listed as "Director of CADAT". Her title is "Director of Public Policy, CADAT". M/S/C (Whitcher/Burton) to approve the February 24, 2011, Dental Assisting minutes as amended. The motion passed unanimously.

DA 2 - Update Regarding Approval of Dental Assisting Programs and Courses

Ms. Sarah Wallace reported that at this time the approval or denial of applications received after January 1, 2011 for Registered Dental Assistant Educational Programs, Infection Control Courses, Orthodontic Assistant Permit Courses, Dental Sedation Assistant Permit Courses, and Registered Dental Assistant in extended Functions Programs, are being held until our new regulations become effective. We anticipate this date to be mid-summer.

DA 3 - Update on Examination Dates and Sites for the Registered Dental Assistant (RDA) Practical Exam

Ms. Forsythe stated that this item was previously discussed at length during the Examination Committee Meeting. A schedule of RDA Practical examination sites and dates for the remainder of the year was provided.

DA 4 - Dental Assisting Forum (DAF) Report and Recommendations

(A) Discussion and Possible Action Regarding the DAF recommended Scope of Responsibility as stated in the April 7, 2010 minutes

Ms. Shellans, Legal Counsel, reviewed with the Board, Business and Professions Code 1742 pertaining to the scope and creation of a forum. Richard DeCuir, Executive Officer, suggested possibly holding this item for six months due to the fact that our Sunset Review may change all of this. Dr. Whitcher suggested that the DAF focus on numbers 1, 3, 4, and 5. Bill Lewis, CDA, suggested amending the words in #3 from "Evaluating and updating" to "Reviewing and suggesting". M/S/C (Burton/Whitcher) to accept the DAF recommended Scope of Responsibility and ask them to focus on #1, 3, 4, and 5, and amend #3 to read "Reviewing and suggesting" instead of "Evaluating and updating". The motion passed unanimously.

(B) Discussion and Possible Action Regarding the Dental Assisting Forum Recommendation to Consider Adding Administration of Local Anesthesia as a New Allowable Duty for Registered Dental Assistants in Extended Functions Licensed after January 1, 2010

There was lengthy discussion regarding the DAF's request that the Board consider the concept of initiating a rulemaking to add administration of local anesthesia as an additional certification, after post-secondary training, to the duties of the RDAEF licensed after January 1, 2010. Rosa Solorzano gave public comment stating that she feels that there is a growing need for RDAEF's to be able to administer local anesthesia. It takes a lot of time and dedication to become an RDAEF. She stated that she feels that people who go to such great lengths to become an RDAEF actually care about dentistry at a different level than the average dental assistant does. She further stated that they are not asking to be given a license to administer anesthesia but only to be further trained and get the same level of education that doctors and hygienists have for the sole purpose of making the dental community a better place. Dr. Bob Muckey, Sacramento dentist and former examiner for the Board, stated that he feels that one of the biggest barriers to care is fear of pain. He stated that he feels that patients are far less likely to experience any discomfort when they are being anesthetized and closely monitored by an RDH rather than having a busy dentist running in and out of the operatory. He stated that he has had the pleasure to work with 2 of the first RDAEF licensee's and feels that they are quite capable of being trained to provide local anesthesia. Dr. Muckey stated that he hopes the Board will be as foresighted now as it was when it granted local anesthesia to RDH's. Dr. Victor Savage, stated that he supports having auxiliaries perform local anesthesia. Joan Greenfield stated that as one of the schools that has been teaching the RDH local anesthesia certification for the past 28 years, there has not been a single enforcement issue regarding RDH's and local anesthesia. She stated that she believes that appropriately educated individuals, including RDAEF's are fully capable of performing this duty. Dr. Guy Acheson, stated that he is very concerned about allowing RDA's to administer local anesthesia. He supports expanding the duties of dental auxiliaries under direct supervision allowing thus expanding access to care. He stated that he looks forward to good evidence building to support the need for this. Katie Dawson, California Dental Hygienists Association (CDHA) stated that CDHA has no position at this time. She stated that CDHA has many questions since this proposal is the first of its kind in the nation; CDHA would support a pilot study. She stated CDHA understands how popular this idea is among RDAEF's and dentists but is concerned that it may not be in the best interests of the public. CDHA would like to see the need and evidence to support adding this additional certification. Sun Costigan, DDS, stated that as a dentist with a small practice, many of her colleagues do not have practices big enough to support an RDAEF. She feels that this is more an access to care issue. Bill Lewis, California Dental Association (CDA), expressed his disappointment that after the lengthy process of developing AB 2637, changes are being proposed so soon. CDA concurs with other statements that there is a need for more extensive study. Elizabeth Delappe, RDAEF, stated that dental assisting has come a long way since she began practicing 26 years ago. She remarked that all they are asking for is the opportunity to educate themselves and pursue anesthetics. M/S/C (Burton/Dominicis) to table this issue until further research can be done and submitted to the committee at which time they will reconsider. The motion passed unanimously. Dr. Whitcher asked that when additional information is submitted, it be comprehensive and factual in nature and that in the absence of substantive evidence the committee will hold this issue.

(C) Discussion and Possible Action to Consider the DAF's Request to Correct Prior Recommendation Regarding Changes to the Outline for the RDA Written Examination

Richard DeCuir, Executive Officer, reported that he has contracted with Applied Measurements to review the RDA examination. Mr. DeCuir stated that we are beginning to put together the work groups. Anyone interested in participating in that can contact Mr. DeCuir or Denise Johnson, Assistant Executive Officer, at 916-263-2300. Mr. DeCuir stated that Section 139 of the Business and Professions Code dictates how we must put an examination together and how we update them. This request can be addressed during the review. M/S/C (Olinger/Dominicis) to accept the Dental Assisting Forum's recommendation to the Board to reconsider the Dental Assisting Forum prior recommendation and that upon review of the examination, the Board consider changes in the following content areas to exclude or reduce the quantity of questions for Infection Control, Dental Radiation Safety and preventative procedures. The motion passed with 11 ayes and 1 abstention. Tamara McNeely, CADAT, thinks the examination is fine the way it is. Karen Wyant, Dental Assisting Alliance (DAA), stated that after reviewing the examination it was found that over 50% of the questions had to do with Infection Control, an area which they are not required to be licensed in. Ms. Wyant stated that the DAA thinks it would be more appropriate for the examination to be weighted toward the duties that they are legally allowed to perform once licensed.

(D) Discussion and Possible Action Regarding the DAF Recommendation to Split the RDAEF Examination into two Separate Parts

Judith Forsythe, Committee Chair, explained the two different components in the RDAEF Examination, one using a live patient and one using a manikin. She stated that DAF is recommending that the examination be split into two separate parts so that candidates who fail only one component of the exam are not required to retake both, only the failed component. From a psychometric perspective, can this be done? M/S/C (Whitcher/Burton) to study the issue of exam validity and psychometric aspects and ask for an opinion from DCA's Office of Professional Examination Services. The motion passed unanimously.

DA 5 - Staff Update on the Possibility of Combining the Registered Dental Assistant and Registered Dental Assistant in Extended Functions Examinations.

Ms. Forsythe stated that given the differences in the two examinations, she agrees with the recommendation from staff that combining the two examinations is not a feasible alternative.

DA 6 - Discussion and Possible Action Regarding the Feasibility of Conducting a Survey of RDAEF Licensees for the Purpose of Analysis of Workforce and Barrier to Care Issues

Judy Forsythe reported that the purpose of the survey would be to try to determine what, if any, effect RDAEF's are having on access to care. M/S/C (Whitcher/Olinger) to forward this item to the full Board as part of the committee report and make a recommendation that a subcommittee be appointed to develop survey questions for the study. Joan Greenfield stated that she is in contact with all of her former students and could provide statistics for Northern California. The motion passed unanimously.

PUBLIC COMMENT

No additional.

ADJOURNMENT

The committee adjourned at 4:10 p.m.