

CORA

The Council of Regulating Authorities for Dental Technicians and Dental Prosthetists Australia and New Zealand Inc.

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The Secretary
Senate Community Affairs Committee
PO Box 6100
Parliament House
CANBERRA
ACT
2600



14.05.09

Dear Mr. Sir/Madam

Enclosure for your information.

To summarise, dental technicians should be included in the first round of the proposed National Registration and Accreditation Scheme, and secondly a dental technician should be appointed to the 'National Dental Board'.

I can supply copies of correspondence on request.

I am available at your convenience to discuss this matter further.

Yours sincerely


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The Hon. Nicola Roxon MP
Minister for Health and Ageing
Parliament House
Canberra ACT.
2600

14 May 2009

Dear Minister

Re Partially Regulated Health Professions – Dental Technicians

In opening, I give my total support to the proposed National Registration and Accreditation Scheme for Health Professions. I believe that this is a very positive initiative to Nationally regulate practitioners and more particularly to improve the health of the Nation through greater efficiency.

There are two matters that I wish to raise.

Firstly, the non inclusion of dental technicians in the proposed NRAS.

I believe that a very strong case was put for inclusion of dental technicians under 'Dental Care' in the proposed NRAS. This was by way of a joint submission on October 2008 and other correspondence and communication. I represent CORA on the 'National Registration Reference Group' chaired by Dr Louise Morauta and no opposition has been raised for inclusion in that forum.

The Australian Dental Council and CORA and the members and institutions that they represent are all in accord with national registration for dental technicians. This was further reinforced at a meeting of the Presiding Members and Registrars of all Dental Boards in Perth recently. The ADC and CORA were also represented.

The only resistance to the registration of dental technicians has come from the Australian Dental Association by way of a submission in October 2008. An increasing number of practitioners are sending work traditionally done by Australian Dental Laboratories overseas. The opposition may be commercially motivated and I am not in a position to comment further.

Notification of the AHWMC decision was by way of a widely circulated 'Communiqué' dated 8 May 2009. CORA has not received any reasons for the decision, nor has there been any communication regarding additional information or input.

The 'Communiqué' does not mention dental technicians nor was there any mention in the Hansard Transcript of the Senate Standing Committee on Community Affairs, Thursday May 7th 2009. Several other partially registered professions were mentioned but not dental technicians.

A suggested solution is to register dental technicians under the proposed NRAS from July 1st 2010 in the Jurisdictions that currently have a regulation process under State/Territory Acts.

Other Jurisdictions could be given a reasonable time to become part of the proposed NRAS.

Secondly, the proposed National Dental Board.

I am in receipt of a letter calling for nominations to the proposed National Boards from David Roberts dated 11 May 2009.

I further note that a dental technician is not to be included under 'Dental Care'.

Dental technicians are an integral part of the 'Dental Team' and must be included for planning purposes.

The scope of practice for dental technicians includes fixed and removable prostheses as well as corrective and preventative appliances, including but not limited to, orthodontic appliances, orthopaedic appliances, sleep apnoea appliances, surgical stents, bite splints and sports mouthguards. As the owner/operator of a commercial dental laboratory I had daily contact with patients and was often consulted in the treatment planning of patient's dental care.

I assure you that this is the case with most dental laboratories that offer a full service.

If the intent of the National Dental Board is to recommend policy to State/Territory based Boards it is in the public interest that the Board be inclusive of all disciplines in the Dental Profession.

Irrespective of the AHWMC Communiqué, the inclusion of dental technicians in the proposed NRAS is vitally important to maintain a cohesive dental profession.

In summary, dental technicians should be included under 'Dental Care' in the proposed NRAS scheduled to start on July 1 2010, and that a dental technician should be included on the 'National Dental Board' from the initial appointment of this Board.

Dental technicians seem to have been ignored in deliberations and decisions

I wrote to you on February 10 2009 outlining positive reasons for inclusion but this letter has not been answered. I can supply copies of this and all previous correspondence upon request.

I am available to discuss this matter with you or your department at your convenience.

Yours sincerely

Neil J Sullivan
Chairman

cc. Minister Health ACT
Minister Health Queensland
Minister Health NSW
Minister Health SA
Minister Health NT
Minister Health Tasmania
Minister Health Victoria
Minister Health WA
Dr. L. Morauta
Senate Community Affairs Committee
Hon. P Dutton MP Opposition Health Spokesperson