



NEW SOUTH WALES
DENTAL TECHNICIANS REGISTRATION BOARD
NEWSLETTER
August 2008

THE BOARD

Charter

The Board is established under the provisions of the Dental Technicians Registration Act 1975 to exercise the powers, authorities, duties and functions imposed on it by the Act.

Aims and Objectives

The Board's aims and objectives are as follows.

- To maintain a register of qualified dental technicians and an index of qualified dental prosthetists entitled to practice in New South Wales.
- To arrange or approve examinations and determine the standards to be achieved in those examinations for eligibility to practise as dental technicians or dental prosthetists.
- To promote the establishment of courses of training for persons wishing to become dental technicians or dental prosthetists in New South Wales.
- To inquire into the competence of registered dental technicians and dental prosthetists to practise, and suspend or cancel registration or practising certificates, where appropriate.

ACCESS

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MEMBERSHIP

Membership of the Board is prescribed under section 6 of the Act and comprises nine members, as follows.

- An officer of the Department of Health nominated by the Minister for Health:
Ms Meredith Kay (Chairperson)
- A dentist nominated by the Dental Board of NSW:
A/Prof Sybille Lechner
- A dentist nominated by Sydney Dental Hospital:
Dr Alicja Smiech
- A dental technician nominated by the Dental Technicians Association of NSW:
Temporarily vacant following the resignation of Mr Reginald Scott AM (dec'd)
- A dental technician nominated by the Australian Commercial Dental Laboratories Association of NSW:
Mr Derek Tracey
- A dental technician nominated by the Minister for Health:
Mr Robert Boshier
- A dental technician nominated by the Minister for Health:
Mr Keith Anderton
- A dental technician nominated by the Health Services Union:
Ms Ewa Bury
- A barrister-at-law admitted by, or a solicitor of, the Supreme Court, nominated by the Minister for Health:
Mr Michael Miceli

The Board was appointed on 6 September 2006 for a three-year term. (Mr Anderton was appointed on 23 January 2008 following the resignation of Mr Graham Key on 7 October 2007).

Staff

Secretary: Michael Jaques

Asst Secretary: Christine Gursen

VALE REG SCOTT AM

Reg Scott AM resigned from the Board in April 2008 due to ill health. He was appointed a Member of the Order of Australia in the Queen's Birthday Honours in June of this year, but passed away shortly thereafter on 18 July. Mr Scott had been a founding member of the Board upon its inception in 1976, as the nominee of the Dental Technicians Association of NSW. The passing of Mr Scott has led to the Association lapsing and will no longer nominate a member for the Board.

QUALIFICATIONS

The Board has approved the following courses under section 15(1)(a) of the Act, subject to successful completion by applicants of 3500 hours supervised practice*.

- Diploma of Dental Technology, Sydney Institute of TAFE, Sydney, New South Wales
- Diploma of Dental Technology, Southbank Institute of TAFE, Brisbane, Queensland, 2006 onwards
- Diploma of Dental Technology, Torrens Valley TAFE, Adelaide, South Australia, 2006 onwards
- Diploma of Dental Technology, RMIT University, Melbourne, Victoria, 2006 onwards
- Diploma of Dental Technology, Australian Defence Force Dental School, 2006 onwards
- Bachelor of Oral Health in Dental Technology, Griffith University, Queensland, 2006 onwards
- Bachelor of Dental Technology, University of Otago, New Zealand, 2006 onwards

*Employers are reminded that a student in training must make an application for registration within two years of completion of an approved course. Otherwise, the Board will consider that the applicant is no longer a student in training and is therefore unable to perform technical work. **1.**

IS HE/SHE REGISTERED?

It is important to check whether the staff members you employ or are about to employ actually hold current registration. The following names were removed from the Register of dental technicians on 1 July 2008:

BAYRAMIAN	George Kevork
BETHEL	Robert Ernest
BROADHURST	Craig Thomas
DABBOUSSI	Fawaz
DIAB	Ibrahim
DJORDJEVIC	Nikola
HELLIAR	Ted Anastassios
INAGAKI	Ryuichi
JOHNSTON	Arnold Samuel
KHACHAEV	Eduard
KHACHAEV	Iouri
KHOITSEVA	Angelina
LE	An
LI	Hong
MAY	Robert Gregory
MILLIST	Paul Nigel
MOULTON	John Fletcher
NAJA	Bachar
PENARANDA	Maria Jose
PYKE	Robert Anthony
RAHME	Petro
SABA	George
SHUKU	Fitim
TEN HOFF	Jack Francis
WILLIAMS	Phillip Lloyd

The following names were removed from the Index of dental prosthetists on 1 July 2008:

CROOK	Robert Wallace
DEL VECCHIO	Maria
PATTISON	Craig Douglas
RICHARDSON	Maurice John
ROSETTA	Kenneth Patrick
RUSSELL	Philip Scott

Practising unregistered is a breach of the Act and is a serious offence. It is every registrant's obligation to renew his or her registration by the due date. Persons removed from the Register must apply for re-registration prior to resuming practice.

LEGISLATIVE REQUIREMENTS

PROFESSIONAL INDEMNITY INSURANCE FOR DENTAL PROSTHETISTS

The Health Care Liability Regulation 2007 requires **dental prosthetists** to be covered by professional indemnity insurance, unless they can demonstrate they are exempt in accordance with the regulations. The Health Care Liability Act 2001 prescribes that the Board:

- must not register a person unless it is satisfied that he or she will be covered by professional indemnity insurance (or has been granted an exemption under the Regulations) while practising in NSW and
- may cancel or suspend the registration of a dental prosthetist if it is satisfied that the individual is not covered for (nor exempt from) professional indemnity insurance while practising.

Further information is available on the Board's website.

INFECTION CONTROL

Occupational Health and Safety Guide for Dental Technicians and Dental Prosthetists

The Board endorses the document entitled "Occupational Health and Safety Guide for Dental Technicians and Dental Prosthetists", published jointly by the Australian Commercial Dental Laboratories Association, the Australian Dental Prosthetists Association and Australian Capital Territory WorkCover [2002 Edition], and provides a copy to each newly registered dental technician and dental prosthetist in New South Wales for their information and future reference.

It should be noted that the Dental Technicians Registration Regulation 2008 includes infection control standards for dental prosthetists [Schedule 2] and dental technicians [Schedule 3]. The Act and the Regulation may be accessed via the Board's web-site. The Occupational Health and Safety Guide is not intended to replace or supersede the requirements of the Regulation, and where any conflict may exist between the guide and the Regulation, the Regulation will take precedence.

It is the responsibility of each registered dental technician and dental prosthetist to ensure they adhere to the relevant infection control requirements in the Regulation.

BOARD POLICIES

TOOTH WHITENING AND BLEACHING

Bleaching or whitening involves the application of a chemical to alter tooth enamel.

The Board has adopted the Crown Solicitor's advice that the process of tooth whitening or bleaching is an operation within the meaning of Section 1OAF(4) of the Public Health Act 1991. As such, only dentists, medical practitioners or registered dental students undertaking clinical studies may carry out this procedure.

IMMEDIATE DENTURES

The Board considers that performing any clinical procedure whatsoever for immediate dentures by dental prosthetists is beyond the definition of "dental prosthetics" even if a dentist prescribes the procedure(s) to be done.

TAKING OF IMPRESSIONS FOR IMPLANTS

Dental prosthetists with appropriate training and/or experience may be involved in the planning and construction of implant retained overdentures in co-operation with a dentist and may deal directly with the public to take impressions and construct such dentures, once healing of implant/abutment sites is complete.

He/she may not:

- deal directly with the public concerning implant supported prostheses unless the prosthetist has completed the Competency Unit HLTDP608A ~ "Construct and Insert an Implant Retained Overdenture" from the Health Training Package ~ HLT07 ~ Advanced Diploma of Dental Prosthetics, or an equivalent course containing competency based assessment.
- deal directly with the public while implant/abutment sites are healing;
- place, remove or replace implant or abutment components;
- deal directly with the public for any aspect of any other dental implant retained prosthesis;
- deal directly with the public where precision attachments, attached to a natural tooth/tooth root, form part of the prosthetic structure or where the prosthesis is part of an obturator; or

DENTAL APPLIANCE THERAPY FOR THE TREATMENT OF SLEEP DISORDERS

Dental appliances for the treatment of sleep disorders may only be provided and fitted by dentists following assessment by a medical practitioner who specialises in sleep disorders (ideally a respiratory physician). Taking impressions for anti snoring devices is outside the scope of practice of dental prosthetists;

Dental Technicians may fabricate such appliances on the order of a dentist, but should reject a prescription from a dental prosthetist.

WORK EXPERIENCE POLICIES

1. A school student undertaking one week's work experience:

>>>>The laboratory manager must ensure that the student provides an introductory letter from the school

2. A prospective candidate for the Diploma of Dental Technology:

>>>>Board approval is not required as the assessment of such an individual is usually made within two or three days, and the individual is not permitted to work on commercial models

3. A first year TAFE student, prior to the commencement of their first term

>>>>The laboratory manager must ensure that the student provides a letter of acceptance into the course from TAFE and is to remunerate the student in accordance with or above the award rate

4. An overseas trained dental technician wishing to hone their skills prior to undertaking the Board's examination for registration:

>>>> The laboratory manager and applicant must obtain an approval letter from the Board, which will authorise the applicant to undertake technical work up until the date of the examination.

5. A person employed in a dental laboratory as support staff or as an assistant to a technician:

>>>>Such persons must not undertake technical work* as defined under section 5 of the Act.

6. A student who has completed the approved Diploma of Dental Technology course, and who is accumulating their 3,500 supervised hours of paid employment in a dental laboratory:

>>>>Such persons must apply for registration within two years of completing the Diploma, otherwise the

Board will deem the person to longer be a student in training and he/she will be unable to continue to undertake technical work.

* **Technical work** is defined at Section 5 of the Dental Technicians Registration Act as: the mechanical construction or the renewal or repair of artificial dentures or restorative dental appliances.

NATIONAL DENTAL LABOUR FORCE DATA COLLECTION

The Dental Statistics and Research Unit (DSRU) was formed in 1988 to establish and maintain data sets on the dental labour force. The Board encourages dental prosthetists to participate in the Unit's data collection exercises, as the information gained through that source provides statistical and demographic detail that is vital to forward planning.

TAFE QUALIFICATIONS

Holders of NSW TAFE qualifications may use the following descriptions after their name in connection with their practice:

- Associate Diploma in Dental Technology
AssDipDT (Syd)
- Diploma of Dental Technology
DipDT (Syd)
- Advanced Diploma of Dental Prosthetics
AdvDipDP(Syd)

Possession of the above qualifications does not entitle a person to practise as a dental technician or dental prosthetist until the registration requirements have been met and registration has been granted by the Board.

RECOGNITION OF ADDITIONAL QUALIFICATIONS

The Board has determined that a dental technician or dental prosthetist may apply for approval for the use of symbols and letters to describe qualifications in connection with their practice as a dental technician or dental prosthetist, provided the qualifications relate to the practice of dental technology or to the practice of dental prosthetics.

FEES

The Board's fee structure is:

	\$	DT	DP
Registration		120	240
Re-registration		120	240
Annual Roll Fee		80	160

The Board is required under the Act to remove the names of registrants from the Register of Dental Technicians or the Index of Dental Prosthetists if they have failed to pay the annual registration renewal fee by 30 June.

INSPECTIONS OF DENTAL LABORATORIES

Inspectors appointed by the Board undertake random inspections of dental laboratories to assess the compliance of practitioners with the provisions of the Dental Technicians Registration Act and Regulation.

These random inspections have become a regular part of the Board's Compliance Strategy.

Members of the Board do not know in advance where the inspectors will visit, making the process truly unbiased.

REVIEW OF OPERATIONS

Year ended 30 June 2008

REGISTRATION

Registered dental technicians		
As at 1 July 2007		784
As at 30 June 2008		817
Registered dental prosthetists		
As at 1 July 2007		450
As at 30 June 2008		452
New registrations		
Dental Technicians		64
Section 15(1)(a)		35
Section 15(1)(c)		4
Mutual Recognition		25
Dental Prosthetists		16
Section 18B(1)(a)		13
Mutual Recognition		3
Re-registrations		21
Dental Technicians		16
Dental Prosthetists		5
Deletions		66
Dental Technicians		47
Dental Prosthetists		19

During the twelve months, July 2007 to June 2008, the Board conducted two examinations at Sydney Dental Hospital with a total of seven candidates participating, four of whom were successful in either their first or second attempt.

COMPLAINTS AND DISCIPLINARY MATTERS

The Health Care Complaints Act 1993 requires the Board and the Health Care Complaints Commission (HCCC) to advise each other about complaints received and to consult concerning their resolution. A complaint made to the Board is deemed to be made to the HCCC, and vice-versa.

A Complaints Committee has been established to assist in the Board's consideration of complaints. The Board has delegated to the Committee the authority to make decisions relating to complaints.

During the year 2007-08, the Board considered 24 new complaints. The nature of the complaints and outcome of investigations were as follows:

Nature:

Dissatisfaction with Dental Appliance and/or Commercial Dispute	17
Infection control	2
	1

Unethical or unsatisfactory Professional Conduct	5
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Outcome:

Satisfactorily resolved or referred to another body	8
Unsubstantiated	7
Carried forward to 08-09	9

COUNCIL OF REGULATING AUTHORITIES FOR DENTAL TECHNICIANS AND DENTAL PROSTHETISTS

Delegates at the Council of Regulating Authorities (CORA) meeting for Dental Technicians and Dental Prosthetists in Canberra in September 2007, agreed to CORA organising the competency examination for overseas trained applicants for registration. The NSW, Queensland and New Zealand Registration Boards agreed to temporarily suspend their own examinations to allow the CORA exam to proceed in July of this year. Three candidates sat and passed the examination.

The 2008 conference will be held in Wellington, New Zealand in September where it is anticipated that the CORA examination for overseas trained technicians and COAG's plan to introduce a national registration scheme for dental prosthetists will dominate discussions.

BOARD SCHOLARSHIPS

The Board offers a scholarship of \$6,625 to the student who achieves the highest ranking at the conclusion of each intake of the Advanced Diploma of Dental Prosthetics course conducted through the Sydney Institute of TAFE, Randwick. The first two recipients of the award were Mr Eddy Tahtouh (December 2007) & Mr Naim Abboud (June 2008).

The grant is equivalent to 25% of the enrolment fee for the course, and is awarded twice annually at the completion of each intake. The aim of the scholarship is to encourage students to pursue clinical and academic excellence, by providing an incentive for them to excel in their vocational educational pursuits, thereby enhancing the standard of care they might ultimately provide to the public.

The Board also intends offering two annual scholarships of \$2,500 to the students who achieve the highest ranking at the conclusion of each yearly intake of TAFE's Diploma of Dental Technology. The scholarship is designed to cover course enrolment fees and to assist the students to purchase essential tools and appliances. The first such scholarship will be awarded to the top graduating student in December 2008.

NATIONAL REGISTRATION

In March 2008, the Council of Australian Governments (COAG) agreed to establish by 1 July 2010, a single national registration scheme for health professionals who are registered in each state and territory and a single national accreditation scheme for health education and training.

The professions included in the scheme are: medicine, nursing and midwifery, pharmacy, physiotherapy, podiatry, psychology, chiropractic, osteopathy, optometry and dental (including dental therapists, dental hygienists and dental prosthetists but excluding dental technicians). A single national board for each profession will develop registration and accreditation standards. Responsibility for approving those standards will rest with state and federal Health Ministers. Committees will replace the current Boards in each state/territory, and in the main, they will oversee registration and disciplinary issues.

The future status of dental technicians in NSW remains uncertain.

TAFE STUDENTS

The Board recently issued a circular outlining registrants' responsibilities towards students in their employ who are undertaking the Diploma of Dental Technology.

THE USE OF X-RAYS

The Board encourages dental prosthetists to attend courses on interpreting radiographs. X-Rays cannot be used for diagnostic purposes, but having the skills and knowledge to interpret radiographic images is a useful tool in planning treatment.

COMPETENCY IN ENGLISH – TECHNICIANS TRAINED OVERSEAS

The Board requires applicants for registration as a dental technician in New South Wales, who have trained overseas in a language other than English, to provide evidence of competency in English.

ADVERTISING

It is an offence under the Dental Technicians Registration Act 1975 to advertise services in a manner that is false, misleading or deceptive or that creates an unjustified expectation of beneficial treatment.

USE OF "SPECIALIST" TITLES

Registrants are reminded they are not permitted to use the descriptions "Denture Specialist", "Master Technician" or "Specialising In" in connection with their practice.

ANNUAL REPORT

Copies of the Board's Annual Report are available from the Board's office or may be downloaded from the web-site.

REVIEW OF THE ACT

On 19 May 2006, the former Minister for Health announced that the Dental Technicians Registration Act 1975 will be opened for review. The Board had been pressing for such a review for a number of years and acknowledges that a review would trigger significant changes to the legislation. The Board lodged a submission to the Department of Health, but is disappointed to report there have been no developments, possibly due to the impending national registration scheme.