
News Bulletin

Dental Technicians and Dental Prosthetists Board of Queensland

April 2003

ADDRESS FROM THE BOARD CHAIRPERSON – Brian Jeffries

Welcome to this issue of the Board's newsletter as we embark on a very exciting next 12 months for the Board. This newsletter contains a significant amount of information relevant to the profession and I encourage you to read it carefully.

I would like to thank my fellow Board members for their input since our formation as a Board in July 2002. We all look forward to the next 12 months.

The issues contained in this newsletter relate to:

- *Renewal of Registration.*
- *Practicing unregistered.*
- *Impact of legislative changes.*
- *Online access to "The Register".*
- *Fitting of Anti-Snore devices.*
- *Education Committee.*
- *Summary of Complaints to the Board*
- *Regional Board meeting.*

RENEWAL OF REGISTRATION

The Board is currently in the process of amending the payment period from a calendar year to a financial year. The notice you have received with this newsletter will be received at this time each year. Upon payment you will receive an Annual Practicing Certificate, which will help verify the currency of registration of Dental Technicians and Dental Prosthetists. It is extremely important that this fee is paid on time through the available methods (Credit card, cheque and in person) to the Office. Although the Board sends out annual reminders for payment of the Annual Registration Fee, it is the responsibility of registrants to maintain current registration. It is also a requirement of the Act that a registrant must inform the Board of any change of name or change in the particulars on the Register (e.g. address) within 30 days from that change

PRACTICING UNREGISTERED

The Board would like to again reiterate to **Practitioners and their Employers** of the obligations both parties have to maintain registration and ensure firms within the state employ only registered practitioners.

The Board again reminds all persons, including those who have recently completed their training, who perform dental technical work and/or provide dental prosthetic services that they are required to be registered with this Board.

Employers are also reminded of their obligation under the Act to ensure that **BEFORE** any person is employed to perform dental technical work or to provide dental prosthetic services, that the person is appropriately registered, and that not to do so would risk prosecution.

The Board appeals to the industry to protect itself against the erosion of skills and to promote high standards by ensuring that only registered persons practice within the profession.

IMPACT OF LEGISLATIVE CHANGES

The most obvious impact of the new legislation changes is most appropriate to detail at this time because it relates to the renewal of registration and restoration to the register for non payment of fees.

If a registrant fails to renew their registration they may, at a later time, seek to restore to the register. The registrant **must** restore to the register within 3 months or under the new legislation they are required to make a new application for general registration. This involves both the application fee and the registration fee.

The Board is then required to assess the application under the new legislation and those practitioners who do not have the prescribed qualifications or have antecedent qualifications will not receive automatic approval for registration. The Board may be required to advise these practitioners that they must sit and successfully complete a Skills Assessment examination at Southbank Institute of TAFE prior to their applications for general registration being approved.

To avoid the inconvenience and cost associated with the above it is advisable to pay the registration renewal fee. Late payment of the fee but still within the 3-month restoration period is also unadvisable as you would be deemed to be practicing unregistered.

ONLINE ACCESS TO THE REGISTER

To enable applicants, registrants, employers and the general public to be aware of the status of registrants the Board has made available online access to the Register. In the case of Dental Technicians and Dental Prosthetists this can be found at the following address on the Internet.

www.dtanddpboard.qld.gov.au

Under point 8, click on Public Access and you will be able to check the registration of practitioners. You will of course need to select separately the registers for Dental Technicians and Dental Prosthetists. For practitioners it is worth checking that your details are listed correctly on this site.

The registration figures as at 1 April 2003 are:

Dental Technicians	558
Dental Technician and Prosthetists	147

FITTING OF ANTI SNORE DEVICES

From information the Board has received regarding the fitting of the snorex device, the Board advises on evidence given to it, that:

- the fitting of any snoring devices should not be undertaken by persons other than a specialist dentist and specialist medical practitioner,
- the criteria being that benefits for dentists are payable but requires a written referral from a respiratory physician before the benefit is paid;
- a high percentage of patients treated with snoring devices experience side effects.

In reply to health funds seeking clarification on this matter, we have had to advise that at this present time legislation does not permit dental prosthetists to fit the snorex appliance.

EDUCATION COMMITTEE

The Board has recently begun a series of Education Committee meetings. This committee has met 3 times since Christmas 2002. The committee is made up of representatives from the following industry groups:

- Board members
- Australian Dental Laboratories
- Griffith University
- Southbank TAFE
- University of Queensland
- Dental Technicians Association
- Dental Prosthetists Association

The Committee is primarily focused on advancing the education available in Queensland for Dental Technicians and Dental Prosthetists. The committee and the Board has been working very closely to maintain high standards in the education provided by Southbank TAFE and has been liaising closely with Griffith University on the proposal for degree courses for Dental Technicians and Dental Prosthetists proposed to commence at under

graduate level in 2004.

Any practitioners who have views on the Education standards or requirements within the profession should send their comments to:

Executive Officer

Dental Technicians and Dental Prosthetists Board of Queensland

GPO BOX 2438

BRISBANE QLD 4000

SUMMARY OF COMPLAINTS TO THE BOARD

The Board has received the following in relations to complaints in the past 12 months:

- 1 complaint - which was closed with no further action after investigating a registrant for allegedly falsifying a Skills Assessment Examination conducted at Southbank TAFE.
- 1 complaint – currently under investigation alleging a Dental Prosthetist has fitted an Anti – Snore device.
- 1 complaint - which eventuated with a registrant being advised by the Health Practitioners Tribunal ruling that they can only practice if they receive written advice from the Board permitting them to practice. This registrant was found guilty of practicing as a Dental Prosthetist whilst not registered but was registered as a Dental Technician.
- There are a further 2 complaints being investigated for unprofessional conduct by registrants.
- 5 complaints were resolved between the Health Rights Commission, the Board, the registrant and the complainant in the past 12 months.

REGIONAL BOARD MEETING

The Board is aware that at times it can appear distant from the concerns of regional registrants. To help facilitate a closer relationship with Regional registrants the Board is looking to hold a Board meeting and open invitation evening with registrants. The full details are as follows:

Friday 20 June 2003

Mecure Inn – Woolcock Street Townsville.

Lakes Function Room at 7.30 pm.

RSVP: David Watson 3234 0102 by 1 June 2003.