

TITLE: Sourcing of dental technical services by dental practitioners**BACKGROUND:**

This Code of Practice has been developed in accordance with section 374 of *Health Practitioners (Professional Standards) Act 1999* and pursuant to the *Dental Practitioners Registration Act 2001* and the *Dental Technicians and Dental Prosthetists Registration Act 2001*, as amended by the *Health Legislation Amendment Act 2003*.

The Board has developed this Code of Practice in response to a directive received on 30 October 2003 from the former Minister for Health, Wendy Edmond to prepare a Code of Practice to encourage Dentists to source dental technical services from appropriately qualified and skilled staff.

The *Health Legislation Amendment Act 2003* changed the regulation of dental technical services. The fabrication, alteration, adjustment, repair or maintenance of dental appliances is no longer a restricted part of dentistry although the definition of dentistry does restrict the fitting or intra-oral adjustment for a person of artificial teeth or corrective or restorative dental appliances [New Section 139A(4)(b) of the *Dental Practitioners Registration Act 2001*].

The *Dental Technicians and Dental Prosthetists Registration Act 2001* provides that a person who is not a registered Dental Technician must not take or use a restricted title which consists of or include the title, Dental Technician (Penalty \$75,000.00). A similar restriction applies to the title, Dental Prosthetist.

Where registrants are unsure of the application of the legislation and this Code of Practice they should seek advice from the Board.

The Board greatly appreciates the input of the Dental Technicians and Dental Prosthetists Board of Queensland, the Australian Dental Association (Queensland Branch), the Health Rights Commission, the Oral Health Unit, Queensland Health and the Legislative Projects Unit, Queensland Health in developing this Code of Practice.

OBJECTIVES:

The objectives of this Code of Practice are to provide guidance to Dentists on sourcing dental technical services and to assist consumers of dental services involving the fabrication, alteration, adjustment, repair or maintenance of dental appliances, to understand the legislation and the responsibilities of Dentists.

PRINCIPLES OF THIS CODE OF PRACTICE:

This Code of Practice places the responsibility on Dentists to source dental technical services made by appropriately qualified and skilled persons.

Accordingly, Dentists should assess the skills and competence of Dental Technicians or other personnel undertaking their dental laboratory work. One measure of a Dental Technician's qualifications and skills is registration as a Dental Technician by the Dental Technicians and Dental Prosthetists Board of Queensland. Dentists should take notice of such registration when sourcing dental technical services.

DEFINITIONS:

The *Dental Practitioners Registration Act 2001* provides the following definitions:

“dentistry” means all or any of the following -

- (a) diagnosis of conditions of the mouth;
- (b) fitting or intra-oral adjustment for a person of artificial teeth or corrective or restorative dental appliances;
- (c) performance of exposure prone or irreversible procedures on a person’s teeth, jaw, mouth and associated structures.

“exposure prone procedure” means -

- (a) a sub-mucosal invasion with a surgical instrument; or
- (b) a procedure dealing with sharp tissues or bone spicules in a body cavity or site.

“irreversible procedure” means a treatment, or series of treatments, that causes a permanent change to the affected hard or soft tissues.

REFERENCES:

Dental Practitioners Registration Act 2001

Dental Technicians and Dental Prosthetists Registration Act 2001

Health Legislation Amendment Act 2003

Health Practitioners (Professional Standards) Act 1999

These are available from the Office of the Parliamentary Counsel at web site www.legislation.qld.gov.au

NOTICE TO CONSUMERS OF THE SERVICES OF DENTAL REGISTRANTS:

If you wish to lodge a complaint about the conduct of a dental registrant you may do so by contacting:

Complaints Assessment Coordinator
Dental Board of Queensland
GPO Box 2438, BRISBANE QLD 4001
Tel: 32341340

Health Rights Commission
GPO Box 3089, BRISBANE QLD 4001
Tel: 32340272 or 1800077308 (freecall)

For further information, refer to the web site for the –
Board (www.dentalboard.qld.gov.au)
Commission (www.hrc.qld.gov.au).