

## Dental Board of Queensland

### **Guidelines on the practice of dentistry by Dental Therapists and Dental Hygienists - nitrous oxide.**

#### **Background:**

The practice of dentistry by Dental Therapists and Dental Hygienists is allowed by the *Dental Practitioners Registration Act 2001* provided it is in accordance with the Code of Practice #1, Practice of Dentistry by Dental Therapists and Dental Hygienists.

Dental Therapists and Dental Hygienists have no authority under the *Health (Drugs and Poisons) Regulation 1996* to administer nitrous oxide.

The use of conscious sedation in dental practices must be in accordance with Dental Board Policy #8 General Anaesthesia and Conscious Sedation in Dentistry which requires certain qualifications be held by Dentists administering conscious sedation and that their practices maintain accreditation with the Australian Society for Dental Anaesthesiology. To date, the use of nitrous oxide and oxygen as the sole systemic analgesic and central nervous system depressant by Dentists has been exempt from the requirements of Board Policy #8.

Two important principles of safety for the use of central nervous system depressants are that the practitioners should have appropriate education and should frequently practise the techniques. The education of Dental Therapists and Dental Hygienists has not included appropriate training in nitrous oxide sedation.

#### **Guideline:**

Dental Therapists and Dental Hygienists must not administer nitrous oxide or treat patients to whom nitrous oxide is being administered.

#### **References:**

*Dental Practitioners Registration Act 2001*

Code of Practice #1, Practice of Dentistry by Dental Therapists and Dental Hygienists

Dental Board Policy #8 General Anaesthesia and Conscious Sedation in Dentistry