

TITLE:

General Anaesthesia and Conscious Sedation as an adjunct to the practice of Dentistry

BACKGROUND:

This Code of Practice has been developed in accordance with section 374 of *Health Practitioners (Professional Standards) Act 1999* and pursuant to section 11(e) of the *Dental Practitioners Registration Act 2001*.

This Code of Practice follows the recommendations of a working party, which was established by Queensland Health in 1998 to investigate the use of the controlled drug fentanyl in the practice of conscious sedation for dental treatment.

The Chief Executive, Queensland Health has advised that approval will be granted to applications from dentists to obtain, possess and administer fentanyl in the practice of dentistry under section 56 of the *Health (Drugs and Poisons) Regulation 1996*, provided they are holders of the Graduate Diploma in Clinical Dentistry in sedation conducted by the University of Sydney.

Where registrants are unsure of the application of the legislation or this Code of Practice, they are advised to seek advice from a Solicitor or the Board.

The Board greatly appreciates the input of stakeholders in developing this Code of Practice, including the following:

- Health Rights Commission
- Dental Practice Board of Victoria
- School of Dentistry, University of Queensland
- Faculty of Dentistry, University of Sydney
- Australian Dental Association (Queensland Branch)
- Australian Dental Association Inc
- Australian and New Zealand Association of Oral and Maxillofacial Surgeons Inc (Queensland Branch)
- Queensland Regional Committee of the Australian and New Zealand College of Anaesthetists
- Oral Health Unit, Queensland Health
- Office of Fair Trading, Department of Tourism, Racing and Fair Trading
- Queensland Consumers Association

OBJECTIVES:

The objectives of this Code of Practice are to describe the standards for the provision of general anaesthesia and conscious sedation in dentistry by ensuring that:

- facilities and staff are appropriate;
- present protocols are safe;
- dentists have undertaken the appropriate training to safely administer conscious sedation;
- dentists providing conscious sedation continue to develop their knowledge and skills by continuing education in this area.

It also assists consumers to understand the requirements for the provision of general anaesthesia and conscious sedation in dentistry.

PRINCIPLES OF THIS CODE OF PRACTICE:

1. The provision of any procedure forming part of the practice of dentistry on a patient to whom a general anaesthetic or conscious sedation has been administered must only be undertaken by a dentist or medical practitioner.
2. A dentist must not carry out any procedure forming part of the practice of dentistry on a patient to whom a general anaesthetic has been administered unless the general anaesthetic has been administered by a registered medical practitioner in a facility meeting the following requirements of Australian and New Zealand College of Anaesthetists, - PS7 "Recommendations on the Pre-Anaesthesia Consultation", PS15 "Recommendations for the Perioperative Care of Patients Selected

for Day Care Surgery”, PS21 “Guidelines on Conscious Sedation for Dental Procedures”, PS29 “Statement on Anaesthesia Care of Children in Healthcare Facilities Without Dedicated Paediatric Facilities”, T1 “Recommendations on Minimum Facilities for Safe Anaesthesia Practice in Operating Suites and Other Anaesthetising Locations”.

3. A dentist must not administer conscious sedation to a patient unless:

- (a) The dentist has completed a course of training in conscious sedation that is acceptable to the Dental Board of Queensland. The Board has approved the following courses for the purpose of this requirement:
- Graduate Diploma in Clinical Dentistry, University of Sydney;
 - Diploma in Dental Sedation, United Medical and Dental Schools of Guy’s and St Thomas’s Hospital, London, England;
 - certificates of accreditation by the Australian Society of Dental Anaesthesiology (“ASDA”) granted prior to 6 August 2003.

NOTE: As at 14 November 2006, only Dentists who are holders of the Graduate Diploma in Clinical Dentistry, University of Sydney may obtain, possess and administer fentanyl.

- (b) If the conscious sedation is administered in a dental practice, the dental practice has been accredited by the ASDA prior to the commencement of administration of conscious sedation in that practice and that practice must be re-accredited at least every 5 years. The purpose of this accreditation is to ensure that practice complies with this Code of Practice and has appropriate sedation protocols and comprehensive dental records, including consent, documentation, and
- (c) The dentist is assisted by another person, in addition to the usual dental assistant, whose sole duty shall be to monitor the level of consciousness and cardio-respiratory function of the patient and who is usually a dental assistant holding a current St John Ambulance Senior First Aid Certificate or equivalent and a history of assisting with 30 conscious sedations within the last three years, to be supported by a log book.

The following would also be acceptable:

- a dentist, dental therapist or dental hygienist holding a current St John Ambulance Senior First Aid Certificate or equivalent and a history of assisting with 30 conscious sedations within the last three years, to be supported by a log book;
- a registered nurse who is competent in intensive care or caring for patients receiving or recovering from general anaesthetics.

4. A dentist must not administer conscious sedation unless in accordance with the requirements of the ANZCA/RACDS document PS21 “Guidelines on Conscious Sedation for Dental Procedures” or any subsequent document.

5. A dentist must not administer conscious sedation unless a person described in 3(c) above will continuously monitor the recovery of the patient.

6. A dentist must not administer conscious sedation to a patient who meets the criteria for the American Society of Anaesthesiologists classification ASA (iii) or (iv) (patients who pose poor risks for sedation) unless in accordance with PS21. If the patient has any serious medical condition then the appropriate treating general medical practitioner and/or specialist should be consulted prior to any planned treatment under conscious sedation. If the patient is deemed to be seriously medically compromised then an anaesthetist should be present to administer the conscious sedation and to monitor the patient during the procedure.

In this Code of Practice:

"conscious sedation" means a technique in which the use of a drug or drugs by any route produces a state of depression of the central nervous system enabling treatment to be carried out,
and in which:

- a) verbal contact with the patient can be maintained or the patient responds appropriately to stimulation throughout the period of sedation, and
- b) the drugs and techniques used have a margin of safety wide enough to render unintended loss of consciousness unlikely.

“dental assistant” means a dental assistant with a Dental Assistants Education Council of Australia qualification or equivalent.

“dental practice” means the professional business of a dentist.

“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.

“general anaesthetic” means any drug or substance which when administered to a patient will induce general anaesthesia which is a controlled state of unconsciousness accompanied by a partial or complete loss of protective reflexes, including inability to maintain an airway independently and continuously, and to respond purposely to physical stimulation or verbal command.

EXEMPTIONS:

This Code of Practice does not constrain the use of nitrous oxide and oxygen as the sole systemic or central nervous system depressing agent

REFERENCES:

Australian and New Zealand College of Anaesthetists and Royal Australasian College of Dental Surgeons Guidelines on Conscious Sedation for Dental Procedures PS21 and Australian and New Zealand College of Anaesthetists’s documents PS4, PS7, PS15, PS29 and T1. These documents are available from the Australian and New Zealand College of Anaesthetists, 630 St Kilda Road, Melbourne Vic 3004 (website: <http://www.anzca.edu.au>).

Section 11(e) of the *Dental Practitioners Registration Act 2001*. This is 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: (07) 32252508

Health Quality and Complaints Commission
GPO Box 3089 BRISBANE QLD 4001
Tel: (07)32340272 or 1800077308 (freecall)

For further information, refer to the web sites for the Board (www.dentalboard.qld.gov.au) or the Health Quality and Complaints Commission (www.hqcc.qld.gov.au).