



Dental Hygiene Committee of California

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***Dental Hygiene Committee of California
Licensing and Examination Subcommittee Meeting***

*Department of Consumer Affairs
2005 Evergreen Street
Sacramento, CA 95815*

September 27, 2010

1. Roll Call/Establishment of Quorum

Members Present

Michelle Hurlbutt, RDH Chair
Cathy DiFrancesco, RDH
Rhona Lee, RDHEF

Staff Present

Lori Hubble, Executive Officer
Nichole Johnston
Tom Jurach
Traci Napper

Meeting began: 10:07 a.m.

Ms. Hurlbutt asked the members present to identify themselves.

2. Public Comment

There was no public comment.

3. Approval of March 22, 2010 Licensing and Examination Subcommittee Minutes

It was m/s/c (Lee/DiFrancesco) to adopt the minutes. The minutes were adopted unanimously.

4. Chairperson's Report

Ms. Hurlbutt attended two Dental Hygiene Committee of California (DHCC) Exams and was impressed with how well the examinations were run. For the last three exams, the examination staff has been monitoring water usage with regard to ultrasonic scalers and has noted an anecdotal decrease in trauma.

Ms. Hurlbutt has also attended 2 Department of Consumer Affairs (DCA) conference calls and reported that the budget strain is felt by all boards. She thanked the dedicated DHCC staff for their hard work and continued contributions.

Ms. Hubble added that DHCC missed a hiring opportunity because of the hiring freeze. Ms. Hurlbutt was thankful that DHCC is not in a dire situation. Ms. Hurlbutt then mentioned the drug level being done through Maximus was being done incorrectly. The detection levels used were higher than those specified in

the contract. The Department is encouraging **all** boards that require drug testing of licensees on probation to confirm the use of cutoff levels consistent with their contract. Any board that does not have a contract to conduct drug testing should use the department-wide contract. Ms. Hubble explained that it is still under investigation and that there was a contractual misunderstanding that raised reporting levels of certain substances to a level that would have allowed people to receive a negative result when, in fact, they may have tested positive had the correct contractual levels been enforced.

5. 2011 Clinical exam schedule for Registered Dental Hygienists

Ms. Hubble explained that it takes nearly a year of planning to secure the dates and locations for our exams. These are the firmed up dates. Ms. Johnston, DHCC Exam Coordinator, presented the 2011 exam schedule and explained that the listed examination date of March 5 should read March 6.

6. Clinical and Written Exam Statistics

Ms. Johnston presented the exam statistics, noting that there are 2 more exams to be administered. The DHCC has a current pass rate of 80%. This may change given the upcoming 2 exams. The pass rate is about the same as it was last year.

Katie Dawson asked about test statistics for 3rd or 4th year dental students. It was explained that these statistics are provided in a later agenda item, but the total 3rd and 4th year dental student RDH licenses issued are 4 and none are currently active. Ms. Lee asked for a historical breakdown of pass/fail rates to identify trends.

It was asked if the DHCC can track how many “retakes?”

Ms. Johnston explained that she has maternity leave approaching and her replacement will have much to learn in addition to culling statistics. Ms. Hubble mentioned the hiring freeze relative to Ms. Johnston’s vacancy and will do what can be done to generate the reports.

7. Dental Hygiene Law and Ethics Written Examinations

On July 7, the DHCC resumed testing candidates for the Registered Dental Hygiene Law and Ethics exam. This was 2 months sooner than projected which reduced the impact on licensure. Psychological Services, Incorporated (PSI), the computer based testing company, had an internal error in reporting test scores and has agreed to retest (at PSI’s expense) any candidates who failed during the initial testing period. The exam is now being administered as usual.

Ms. Hurlbutt asked about a contract with PSI and if they may have violated a contract by presenting exam scores incorrectly over the phone and online. Ms. Hubble explained that PSI has made good on their error by offering the free retests. Ms. Johnston expressed that PSI was “*firmly advised*” of the displeasure experienced by the DHCC and their candidates.

JoAnn Galliano expressed her concern about the Law and Ethics exam and that it is not important how they learn it, but that they *do* learn it. Further, it is difficult to test the subject of ethics. Ms. Galliano would like DCA to turn the test into a

learning experience, not just a test. Ellen Standley expressed support for a more positive examination experience.

Ms. Hurlbutt presented the PSI candidate information bulletin which directs RDH and RDHAP candidates' studies for the Law and Ethics Exam. Currently the exam is created using various ethics resources and standardizing them is proposed. Ms. Lee asked if there were any glaring differences and Ms. Hurlbutt replied that there was nothing glaring, but there are differences and believes in developing the exams using standardized resources in the future. It was suggested to evaluate the differences between ethics resources. Ms. Galliano expressed that it is hard enough to learn one code of ethics and proposed having one code to teach.

M/S/C(Lee/DiFrancesco) to look at standardizing the ethics resources.

Ms. Johnston added that the DHCC is updating the RDHAP law & ethics exam to reflect current law.

8. *Licensure Statistics*

Ms. Johnston presented licensing statistics. There were no questions.

9. *Update on regulations relating to courses in the administration of nitrous oxide and oxygen, administration of local anesthetic agents and periodontal soft tissue curettage (California Code of Regulations, Section 1072.2)*

Ms. DiFrancesco touched on the subcommittee's work relating to courses in the administration of nitrous oxide and oxygen, administration of local anesthetic agents and periodontal soft tissue curettage regulations. Information will be acquired and evaluated before reporting at the December DHCC Committee Meeting.

10. *DHCC California Clinical Exam Review*

Ms. Lee provided an update on the California clinical exam review. The following were planned for review: RDH Candidate Information; RDH Examiner Handbook Guide; and RDH Recorder Handbook Guide. Ms. Lee asked to place this review on the next subcommittee meeting and include chief examiners and educators. Ms. Hubble discussed deadlines and lead time to update examination materials. A review and update is conducted annually and will consult with subject matter experts. She hopes to have more information to present in December.

11. *Standardized Exit Exams for California Graduates*

Ms. Hurlbutt stated that the committee will examine the option of a standardized exit exam for California graduates. Ms. DiFrancesco asked how each examiner would be calibrated. Ms. Galliano suggested, considering expense, one person from each college would be enough to calibrate other examiners at exam sites.

12. *Information regarding new dental hygiene program - Concorde Career College, San Bernardino*

This item was informational. Ms. Hurlbutt instructed that the statute does not require a committee to approve a dental hygiene program. The DHCC accepts the Commission on Dental Accreditation (CODA) approval.

13. *Job Creation Licensing Backlog Initiative*

Ms. Johnston reported, in January 2010, the Governor enacted the Job-Creation initiative, a goal to spark California's job growth and economy. In response to this initiative the DCA set a goal of reducing pending licensure applications by fifty percent by July 1, 2010. She highlighted the DHCC met this goal and continues to maintain minimal to no backlog of licensing applications.

14. *Future Agenda Items*

Ms Hurlbutt would like staff to research an alternative way to test Law and Ethics examination and review the Code of Ethics references. She would also like to discuss: DHCC approval of new dental hygiene programs vs. accepting CODA approval; alternative methods of initial licensure, including a standardized exit exam.

There being no further business, the subcommittee meeting was adjourned at 11:30 am.