

Policy Statement 3.7 – Vocational Education and Training for Allied Dental Personnel

Position Summary

Governments should offer adequate funding assistance for the training of allied dental personnel in the vocational sector on a need basis. Clinical experience is an essential component for courses training allied dental personnel.

Background

- 1.1. The vocational education sector through Australian TAFE institutions and registered training organisations provides education and training for allied dental personnel including dental assistants, dental technicians, dental laboratory assistants and, in some cases, dental hygienists, dental prosthetists and practice managers.
- 1.2. Funding is variable depending on the course and State and Federal Policies.
- 1.3. Accreditation for vocational sector courses is usually through the ASQA (Australian Skills Quality Authority). There is a complementary accreditation process for courses leading to registration as a dental practitioner through the Australian Dental Council.
- 1.4. There are various modes of delivery of education for allied dental personnel, with variations in hands-on experience gained during training.

Definition

- 1.5. A DENTIST is an appropriately qualified dental practitioner, registered by the Board to practise all areas of dentistry.
- 1.6. The AUSTRALIAN DENTAL COUNCIL (the ADC) is an independent authority assigned the accreditation functions for the dental profession by the Dental Board of Australia under the National Registration and Accreditation Scheme.
- 1.7. DENTAL PRACTITIONER is a person registered by the Australian Health Practitioner Regulation Agency via the Board to provide dental care.
- 1.8. VOCATIONAL EDUCATION AND TRAINING (VET) focuses on providing practical skills for work and may be completed off-the-job in education institutions such as TAFE institutes and private providers.
- 1.9. ALLIED DENTAL PERSONNEL are those, other than dentists, working in the provision of dental services.

2. Position

- 2.1. Australia must be largely self-sufficient with regard to the training of allied dental personnel.
- 2.2. Governments should offer adequate funding assistance for those allied dental personnel trained in the vocational education sector.
- 2.3. Courses for dental hygienists and dental prosthetists in the vocational sector must be accredited by the Australian Dental Council.
- 2.4. Registered Training Organisations must provide clinical experience in dental clinics when applicable to the role.

This Policy Statement is linked to other Policy Statement: 2.1 National Oral Health, 2.3.5 Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Australians, 3.1 Dental Workforce, 3.2 Dentists, 3.3 Allied Dental Personnel & 3.6 Higher Education Funding for the Dental Workforce.2 Dentists, 3.3 Allied Dental Personnel, 3.6 Higher Education Funding for the Dental Workforce & 3.8 Overseas Qualified Dentists

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- 2.5. Simulated training must not replace clinical experience.
 - 2.6. Commonwealth, State, Territory and Local Governments should offer a variety of funding assistance including scholarships for Indigenous Australian, regional, and remote students.
 - 2.7. Traineeships are appropriate forms of training and education for dental assistants, dental technicians, dental laboratory assistants and administration staff.
 - 2.8. Education and training for allied dental personnel should incorporate the principles of team dentistry with a dentist as the team leader.
 - 2.9. Development of curriculum for the training of allied dental personnel should involve dentists.

Policy Statement 3.7

Adopted by ADA Federal Council, April 12/13, 2007.

Amended by ADA Federal Council, November 12/13, 2009.

Amended by ADA Federal Council, April 12/13, 2012.

Amended by ADA Federal Council, April 16/17, 2015.

Amended by ADA Federal Council, August 23/24, 2018

Amended by ADA Federal Council, November 20, 2020

Amended by ADA Federal Council, November 17, 2023