

Guidelines

Updated 22 July 2014

Conscious Sedation Area of Practice Endorsement

Authority

These Guidelines have been developed by the Dental Board of Australia (the Board) under section 39 of the Health Practitioner Regulation National Law as in force in each state and territory (the National Law).

Purpose

A Registration Standard for *Endorsement in relation to conscious sedation* (the Standard) was developed by the Board and approved by Ministerial Council on 31 March 2010. The Standard establishes the requirements of the Board for the endorsement in relation to conscious sedation performed by dentists. These Guidelines provide further detail for dentists in relation to the specific practice, education and related matters to the Standard and should be read in conjunction with the Standard.

Background

The Standard for the first time establishes a nationally consistent set of requirements for dentists who practice conscious sedation. The Standard defines the dentists who need to be endorsed in order to practise in this area and these Guidelines clarify additional issues which have been raised following consultation on the Standard.

Summary of Guidelines

The Board has developed these Guidelines to give guidance on:

1. the designation, qualifications, skills and competence of the 'registered person' under the Standard to assist the endorsed dentist;
2. the ongoing education and training requirements for both the endorsed dentist and the 'registered person' assisting the endorsed dentist; and
3. the routes of administration and levels of sedation to which the Standard applies.

1. Registered person assisting the endorsed dentist

It is the endorsed dentist's responsibility under the Standard to ensure that all the requirements of the Standard are met. Where the endorsed dentist is also performing the dental procedure, the Standard states that the endorsed dentist, when administering conscious sedation by the intravenous route, must be assisted by another person in attendance for the entire operation who is either:

- a) a **registered dentist appropriately trained** in the observation and monitoring of sedated patients and in resuscitation, whose sole responsibility in assisting is to monitor the patient's level of consciousness and cardio respiratory function

- b) a **registered medical practitioner appropriately trained** in the observation and monitoring of sedated patients and in resuscitation, whose sole responsibility in assisting is to monitor the patient's level of consciousness and cardio respiratory function
- c) a **registered nurse who has received training in intensive care or anaesthesia**; or
- d) a **registered nurse who has received training in intensive care or anaesthesia** used in the Standard may also include an registered enrolled nurse (Division 2), who is:
 - registered in that division of the Register of Nurses by the Nursing and Midwifery Board of Australia **who is educated, trained and competent in the administration of intravenous medications venipuncture and cannulation**; and also
 - has successfully completed post graduate qualifications in anaesthetic nursing at an advanced diploma level or equivalent courses (with appropriate supporting documentation) and has extensive experience in operating theatre and/or anaesthetic nursing.

Where the dental procedure is being undertaken by another registered dentist and the endorsed dentist's sole role is the provision and monitoring of the sedation then there is no requirement for an additional registered health practitioner.

2. Education and training requirements

For the endorsed dentist: The Centre for Resuscitation Education and Simulation Training (Incorporated) (CREST) course; the Medical Emergencies and the Sedated Dental Patient course offered by the Australian Society of Dental Anaesthesiology; and the Dental sedation refresher course offered jointly by the Australian Dental Association NSW Branch Centre for Professional Development and Cynergex Group are the three courses the Board has currently approved for the endorsed dentist to attend each 12-month period. The Board will publish any additional courses it considers equivalent to the CREST course.

For the assistant to the endorsed dentist: The Board recommends that the assistant to the endorsed dentist must in each 12 months attend and successfully participate in an advanced life support course to maintain competency. The course should meet the Australian Resuscitation Council standard and include medical emergencies in dentistry

3. Routes of administration and levels of sedation

The endorsement in relation to *conscious sedation* is only for that **limited area of practice**. The administration of medication may be by any accepted route approved for that specific use by relevant authorities, such as oral, inhalation and intravenous inductions. The prescription and use of medications are regulated by a number of government authorities. While the Australian and New Zealand College of Anaesthetist's Professional Standards document PS9 (2010) is referred to in the Standard, it does not define the need for endorsement under the Standard.

In relation to routes of administration and levels of sedation, the Standard states that:

This endorsement applies to conscious sedation only and does not include general anaesthesia or anxiolysis techniques. Relative analgesia using nitrous oxide on its own is excluded from this standard for all dental practitioners.

Anxiolysis

Anxiolysis includes minimal sedation through single low dose oral or inhalation-type medications for treating anxious patients, but not inducing a state of conscious sedation. Appropriate initial dosing of a single enteral drug should be no more than the maximum recommended dose of a drug that can be prescribed for unmonitored home use. Minimal sedation does not include polypharmacy.

Polypharmacy is defined as the combination of two or more sedative drugs, and may include drugs which singularly result in minimal sedation.

General Anaesthesia - The Standard states that general anaesthetic must only be administered by a registered medical practitioner (appropriately trained and competent). A dental practitioner must not carry out any procedure forming part of the practice of dentistry on a patient to whom general anaesthetic has been administered, unless the general anaesthetic has been administered by an appropriately trained and competent registered medical practitioner

General anaesthesia does not include conscious sedation in the Standard.

Nitrous Oxide - The Standard and these Guidelines do not apply to dentists using relative analgesia using nitrous oxide/oxygen on its own and does not apply to nitrous oxide/oxygen when used in combination with local anaesthetic. Therefore dentists are not required to be endorsed by the Board under the National Law for use of nitrous oxide/oxygen and local anaesthetic.

To note:

1. An **endorsed dentist** must ensure that he or she adheres to State and Territory jurisdictional requirements in addition to all relevant professional standards, guidelines and requirements approved by the Board.
2. **All dentists** using sedation in any form must have a level of training able to successfully manage a patient from a deeper unintended level of sedation and have medical emergency equipment, protocols and procedures set out in practice manuals which are readily accessible by all staff. Where there is a legislative requirement in the state or territory for a manual for this purpose then this will meet the requirements of the Board.
3. **All dental practitioners** when prescribing, authorising the use and administering medications, must follow appropriate legislation and guidelines for the use and administration of medications. This should include reference to the National Prescribing Service quality use of medicines (www.nps.org.au).

Definitions

Conscious sedation – means a drug-induced depression of consciousness during which patients respond purposefully to verbal commands, either alone or accompanied by tactile stimulation. No interventions are required to maintain a patent airway and spontaneous ventilation is adequate. Cardiovascular function is usually maintained.

Professional Standards document PS9 – Document published by the Australian and New Zealand College of Anaesthetists (ANZCA) and the Royal Australasian College of Dental Surgeons (RACDS).

General anaesthesia means a drug-induced loss of consciousness during which patients are not arousable, even by painful stimulation. The ability to independently maintain ventilatory function is often impaired. Patients often require assistance in maintaining a patent airway, and positive pressure ventilation may be required because of depressed spontaneous ventilation or drug-induced depression of neuromuscular function. Cardiovascular function may be impaired.

Anxiolysis means a drug-induced state during which patients respond normally to verbal commands. Cognitive function and coordination may be impaired but spontaneous ventilation and cardiovascular functions are unaffected. No interventions are required to maintain a patent airway, spontaneous ventilation or cardiovascular function. In addition, Anxiolysis includes minimal sedation through single low dose oral or inhalation-type medications for treating anxious patients or providing analgesia, but not inducing a state of conscious sedation.

Review

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Date of review: The Board will review these Guidelines every three years.