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**To:** [dentalboardconsultation](#)  
**Cc:** [REDACTED]  
**Subject:** Allowing dental hygienists/dental therapists to work independently  
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To the Dental Board of Australia

Dental auxiliaries have been trained to work as part of a dental team. In private practice there is usually a dentist on the premises while any auxiliary (therapist or hygienist) is working. In government clinic this has been stretched so that this is not always the case – not ideal and certainly not was legislated for – but it saves money.

If these auxiliaries are allowed to run an independent practice, there will be no supervision/ no back up . The rules are always stretched – even at government clinics, and so any limitations put on the treatment that will be carried out will become a theoretical rule only.

As it is the newly graduated dentists (and I know from personal observation this is the case in WA) are not adequately trained to run a practice, so what hope would an auxiliary have ? A period after qualifying stipulating compulsory supervision should be established – easy to organize in general practice or government clinics. By introducing these proposed changes you are moving in the wrong direction and putting a possible short term saving of money at the expense of standard of work.

The one procedure which uses all the skills, associated medical knowledge, and people skills that a dentist should have I “THE INITIAL EXAMINATION” and to a lesser extent follow up examinations. The training for auxiliaries is woefully lacking as far as examinations of (particularly new) patients.

Martin R Jones BDS BSc  
A GDP for 50 years

Also enclosed as a document