

**From:** [REDACTED]  
**To:** [dentalboardconsultation](#)  
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To whom it may concern:

I would like to comment on the Scope of the Practice policy particularly in regard to proposed extended duties of Oral Health Therapists. Any extension of Therapists' duties to allow treatment of adults would be a backward step in overall quality of adult dental care. Modern adult dentistry has progressed past the "drill, fill and extraction of teeth". Quality adult care now requires detailed knowledge of endodontics, crown and bridge, orthodontics and implants in order to give an adult patient the best options for their particular needs. These are areas that are lacking in an Oral Therapist's training. If therapists are allowed to practice without supervision, there is an unacceptably high risk that an adult patient will not receive the best treatment options.

The most effective utilization of Oral Health Therapists' skills still lies in dental care to school age children within a team including a qualified Dentist. There is currently a large unmet demand for dental care for this age group already. The recent study by Chrisopoulos S & Harford JE showed that the proportion of children with permanent teeth affected by decay ranged from 5% for 6 year olds to 58% for 14 year olds. If there was any extension of a therapist's duties to include adult patients, it would dilute the work force even further making it difficult to address children's needs.

I would therefore support leaving the Scope of Practice in its current form and strongly disagree with any broadening of duties for Oral Health Therapists and Hygienists which will, I fear, lead to a very real decline in oral health standards for both adults and children.

Kind regards,  
Dr. David Vautin  
Orthodontist