

17 June 2013
Executive Officer
National Board of Australia
AHPRA
GPO Box 9958
Melbourne VIC 3001

Dear Sir/Madam,

Re: Scope of practice within workplace policies and new models of care

We are writing to you on behalf of the Adelaide University Dental Students' Society (AUDSS). The AUDSS was established in 1919 and has since been the sole organisation providing representation for over 600 dental, oral health and postgraduate students within the School of Dentistry at the University of Adelaide.

The necessity for this letter arose upon being informed of the proposed changes to the scope of practice within workplace policies and new models of care. As a result of these propositions our society has been approached by concerned students wishing to have their views represented. Having opened the floor for feedback from all of our students (Bachelor of Dental Surgery I-V; Bachelor of Oral Surgery I-III), we would like to present their concerns for your consideration.

Firstly, concern was expressed regarding the processes involved, particularly considering the significance of the potential implications of the proposed change. As our members will graduate within the next 3-5 years - becoming directly affected by the proposed changes - there was a desire for students to be consulted at all stages in the development of the proposal and be given a voice appropriately.

Furthermore, in the context of increased Federal Government funding for more dental school places (and therefore graduates - approximately 25% over the next three years), many students are concerned regarding the possible task shifting that has the potential to occur with the proposed changes in scope of practice. Such task shifting potentially places significant pressure on the ability for graduates to gain employment and maintain or further their skills. Dental graduates who are unable to practice are at risk of de-skilling with limited opportunities for further professional development; which in the long term negatively impacts patients and quality of patient care.

Throughout our education within the University of Adelaide we are taught that dental care should always be patient-centred, and also that our journey of learning will be life-long. Whilst we accept that the scope of practice within the dental profession may vary throughout our lifetimes, we are doubtful that the highest standard of care can be provided to patients without the years of necessary training and experience to support this.

As students, we are excited for the future, but we believe that the proposed changes have the potential to affect the dental profession, perhaps in ways that have not been fully voiced. We greatly appreciate the opportunity to contribute to the ongoing discussion regarding scope of practice, and wider Dental Board issues that have implications on students. Thank you for taking the time to consider our feedback on these proposed changes.

Yours sincerely,



Deborah Wong
2013 President of AUDSS
president@audss.org



Susan Clift
2013 AUDSS Vice President
vicepresident@audss.org





www.audss.org

AUDSS | School of Dentistry, Adelaide Dental Hospital DX 650 518

The University of Adelaide, South Australia 5005

Phone: (08) 8222 8206 Email: info@audss.org

