

Policy Statement 3.7 – Vocational Education and Training for the Dental Workforce

Position Summary

Governments should offer adequate funding assistance for the training of allied dental personnel in vocational sector on a need basis.

- 1.1. BackgroundThe 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, and dental prosthetists.
- 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). The Australian Dental Council is involved with dental practitioner course accreditation.

Definition

- 1.4. A DENTIST is an appropriately qualified dental practitioner, registered by the Board to practise all areas of dentistry.
- 1.5. 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.
- 1.6. DENTAL PRACTITIONER is a person registered by the Australian Health Practitioner Regulation Agency via the Board to provide dental care.
- 1.7. 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.

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, providing such training, must provide adequate clinical experience in dental clinics .
- 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 and bonded positions for Indigenous Australian, regional and remote students.
- 2.7. Traineeships are appropriate forms of training and education for dental assistants, dental technicians and dental laboratory assistants.

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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- 2.8. Education and training for allied dental personnel should incorporate the principles of team dentistry with a dentist as the team leader.

 - 2.9. Dentists must be included in the teaching staff of the Registered Training Organisations involved in the education and training of dental personnel.

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