

NZIDT Otago Branch 2007 report

The NZIDT executive on the 10th Feb and discussed a number of issues. The executive motioned that a professional secretary be employed. The executive is still actively involved in communicating with the Board regarding the implant overdenture scope and the issue of maxillofacial work (see below response from the Board). They are also investigating the issue of dental technicians ability to take shades and if they should be able to remove temporary crowns that have been loosened by the dentist. These issues will be part of ongoing discussion with the Board, along with many others. The NZIDT CPD Sub-committee has been formed and is now in operation, detailed information about the CPD process is available on the new NZIDT web site. The web site has a lot of new features and I would like to encourage you to have a look at the site (<http://www.nzidt.org.nz>) . There is a section for advertising jobs and equipment and it is hoped that members will take advantage of this new look web site. The executives' thanks go to Tim Burton for creating and managing the web site.

The next NZIDT conference is on Saturday the 6th of October, it will be located at the Novotel Hotel, Ellerslie, Auckland, more details are forthcoming. A Friday programme will be developed in conjunction with the Saturday conference. The Friday morning will either be filled with company workshops or focus groups. The afternoon will have a presentation from the Dental Technology Board followed by the NZIDT AGM. This will be timed to allow people to attend any company social events on the Friday evening.

The Board has agreed to allow dental technicians to do repairs direct to the public as long as the patient is referred appropriately. There is no longer a requirement for it to be an emergency situation. Below is a response from the Board regarding the process of re-certification. This is something that will occur every year to a percentage of dental technicians and clinical dental technicians.

I look forward to seeing you on Friday the 2nd of March and I will be happy to expand on all of this information. As usually there is heaps to take in and plenty of work associated with dealing with the dental Technicians Board.

Cheers

John Aarts

Response from the Board regarding:

Implant Overdentures

Notwithstanding the above there is a clear public safety rationale for Council/Board decisions in relation to a separate implant overdenture scope. The provision of implant overdentures is a surgical intervention and does not involve 'natural' teeth. Implant overdentures are not taught as part of the CDT training programme and clinical dental technicians do not have an adequate understanding of the underlying scientific knowledge required to add such a procedure to their practice without additional training.

The Council has not denied clinical dental technicians the opportunity to undertake implant overdenture work. Rather it has provided a pathway for registration in this additional scope. Provided a practitioner can demonstrate appropriate clinical experience and competence (by providing full details of 8 cases commenced or completed) they will be able to gain registration under the grandparenting provisions which end on 30 June 2007.

It is not considered appropriate to include implant overdenture work in the general CDT scope because this is not taught in the CDT course. The Act provides that the authority must accredit and monitor the courses of training it approves for registration. The Act requires applicants for registration to hold a prescribed or equivalent qualification and to be fit and competent. It is inconsistent with the legislation to include health services within a scope of practice where those health services do not form part of the relevant qualification required to practise the profession. For this reason the Board considers that implant overdentures should remain as an additional scope of CDT practice.

The requirement for the dentist to undertake the final fit of implant overdentures is no different from the requirements for dentists to undertake the final fit of immediate and over dentures. Dentists have been informed by the Council of their responsibility in this regard. NZDA are being approached to also highlight this in NZDA News.

The Institute's submission notes that New Zealand clinical dental technicians can undertake implant overdenture work in Australia with no specific training required. If this is the case, it only applies in some Australian jurisdictions and the Board considers that allowing CDTs to undertake this work without appropriate training places the public at risk.

Subsequent to 30 June 2007 the prescribed qualification for registration in the additional scope of clinical implant overdenture procedures will be:

- *Either, successful completion of a DCNZ approved implant overdenture course;*
- *Or a pass in the DCNZ implant overdenture registration examination.*

Subsequent to 30 June 2007 clinical dental technicians will only be able to undertake clinical implant overdentures procedures if they are registered in this additional scope or if they are undertaking a training course which has been approved by the Council as a prescribed qualification for registration in this scope or during the implant overdenture examination.

I attach for your information the Council's policy on the approval of courses to equip registered oral health practitioners for registration in an additional scope of practice.

What this means is that NZIDT or other providers could:

- *develop and stage a short course (non clinical) to prepare candidates to sit the registration examination (which could also be submitted for approval for CPD purposes) ; or*
- *develop a more comprehensive course involving clinical procedures which could be submitted to the Council for consideration as an approved course for registration in the additional implant overdenture case. Candidates who complete such an approved 'add on' course would not be required to sit and pass the registration examination*

Clinical Maxillofacial work for dental technicians

In your submission you note NZIDT's concern that there is no pathway for overseas-trained dental technicians with appropriate training and experience to include clinical maxillofacial work in their scope of practice.

This is not the case. Section 21 of the HPCA enables the Council to authorise an individual scope of practice for practitioners and as such this mechanism can be used to accommodate dental technicians with adequate overseas training in clinical maxillofacial prosthetic work (ie a condition would be entered on the scope to allow the practitioner to carry out this work)

The Board does not consider it appropriate to extend the dental technology scope of practice to include clinical maxillofacial work as the current training programme does not include clinical procedures.

Please note that the University of Otago has a paper called "Advanced Maxillofacial Techniques" which is part of the Postgraduate Diploma in Dental Technology. A dental technician who successfully completes this paper would have the clinical competencies to meet the criteria to apply to have extra oral maxillofacial techniques added to their scope of practice.

The School has not approached the Dental Council to accredit this paper for registration as there has been no interest from anyone in undertaking it. The School intends to include the paper as part of the next accreditation round and will submit it earlier if it receives an application to undertake the paper.

Please note that the clinical dental technology scope includes maxillofacial prosthetic work. Clinical Dental Technicians can do maxillofacial prosthetic work provided they can demonstrate that they are competent and experienced in this area. For Clinical Dental Technicians who are not currently competent in this area this would require working as part of a dental team, building on their practical experience and undertaking relevant training and courses. A formal pre-requisite training course is not required at this time

Professional Development and Re-certification requirements

As you will be aware the re-certification framework provides that each year from April 2007, 5-10% of practitioners will be randomly selected to complete a questionnaire as the first step in checking compliance with the required professional standards (Codes of Practice). From this group a number of practitioners will be selected and visited to confirm compliance.

The first round of compliance monitoring was successfully carried out in 2006 for dentists and dental specialists. The focus was educational unless there was an immediate risk to public safety. As such, any issues which arose during the practice visit were addressed with advice on how to modify practice to the standard required with realistic timeframes as to the period within which to achieve these changes. The Dental Technicians Board will adopt the same approach when it undertakes its first compliance audits in March/April this year.

The Board has agreed that 10% of practitioners from the lower half of the North Island will be randomly selected and issued a Codes of Practice compliance questionnaire. The questionnaires will be issued concurrently with the 2007-08 APC application forms. The 10% (roughly 45 practitioners) are to be comprised of 50% dental technicians and 50% clinical dental technicians.

From this 10% five practitioners, including one Board member, will be randomly selected for a practice visit to audit compliance with the Codes of Practice. Practitioners selected for completion of the questionnaire and for practice visits will be provided with full explanations of the process.

For this first round of compliance monitoring the Board was very concerned to ensure that an experienced person should lead the audit and be accompanied by a practising CDT (to gain experience).

The Board has therefore invited the Council's Professional Advisor, Dr Dexter Bambery to undertake the audits on behalf of the Board. Dr Bambery conducted the compliance monitoring of the Dentists and Dental Specialists in 2006. The Board is also contacting a number of CDTs to ascertain whether they would be willing to assist with this process in 2007, with a view to assuming overall responsibility for the process in 2007.
