

Senator Ann Lynch
G - 24
State Capitol Building
75 Rev. Dr. Martin Luther King Blvd.
St. Paul, MN 55155-1606

26 August, 2008

Hello Senator Lynch,

My name is Teri Youngdahl and I have been a Registered Dental Assistant for over 28 years. I recently attended the initial Oral Health Practitioner (OHP) Work Group and was very disappointed by the lack of representation and consideration of Registered Dental Assistants at that time. Registered Dental Assistants are an integral part of the oral health care process. I am wondering why the role of Registered Dental Assistants wasn't considered in the development of the OHP.

I see the need for an OHP in today's oral healthcare landscape. The OHP will definitely help fill the need for affordable dental care in Minnesota. But I am concerned about the effectiveness of an OHP without the involvement of Registered Dental Assistants. It would be very difficult for a dentist to run their practice without a Registered Dental Assistant. Four handed dentistry, a doctor with an assistant, is the generally accepted way to practice dentistry. Registered Dental Assistants are regulated by the Board of Dentistry, so why not include them in the OHP model?

Minnesota is considered to be progressive in regards to oral health care. The ability of Registered Dental Assistants to perform expanded and restorative functions has been an integral part of that perception. Dental care really has become a "team" effort. It seems odd that a new tier of dental care would not include Registered Dental Assistants.

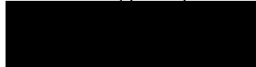
I'd like you to reconsider the decision to exclude Registered Dental Assistants in the development of the Oral Health Practitioner. I would be delighted to talk to you about this. I have been very active in the Minnesota Dental Assistants Association for many years and am proud of the work we do. I am certain that including Registered Dental Assistants in this process would increase the value proposition of the OHP.

Thank you for your time.

Yours, etc.,



Teri Youngdahl, CDA, RDA



cc: Joan A. Sheppard, DDS
✓ Dr. Sanne Magnan
Marshall Shragg
Ellen Bernavides

