

REPORT OF THE DENTAL EDUCATION COMMITTEE

2024

Members

Herbert Schulte, Chair; Kim Chart; Alison Forbes; Robert Gardetto; John Noack, BOT Liaison; Hanna Nguyen-Dao, MDA staff; Carmelo Cinqueonce, Ex-officio.

Duties

Pursuant to the Committee Policy Manual of the Board of Trustees, it is the duty of this committee to address dental education, workforce, and practice trend needs, questions, and problems, while serving as the Minnesota Dental Association’s liaison to:

- All dental assisting, dental hygiene, other allied dental health, and dental laboratory programs in Minnesota
- University of Minnesota School of Dentistry
- All entities that provide postdoctoral dental education
- Minnesota Board of Dentistry (BOD)
- Minnesota Dental Hygienists’ Association
- Minnesota Dental Therapy Association
- Minnesota Dental Assistants Association
- Minnesota Dental Hygiene Educators Association
- Minnesota Educators of Dental Assistants
- American Association of Dental Office Manager’s (MN)
- Midwest Dental Laboratory Association
- Indirectly, to Minnesota’s primary and secondary schools to address “dental career days” and dental health education requests by teachers for their students

Activities

The Dental Education Committee met on April 3, 2024 to review past months’ activities and to plan for the upcoming year. The committee, led by Chair Dr. Herb Schulte, Carmelo Cinqueonce, and Hanna Nguyen-Dao, worked on the activities listed below.

1. The committee sponsored a fall meeting with the educators and representatives of the allied dental organizations. It was well attended and represented. The DANB and DASLE exams were discussed and the assisting programs feel that both exams should be kept. Alternative options were discussed and need further review and input from all parties. All programs had different degrees of passing on both exams. Most have some sort of review for those not passing. The average rate for DANB is higher, about 91%, and DASLE is 75%. One of the biggest concerns of the educators and association members is the addition of duties a non-licensed assistant can provide as long as they pass the required courses and exams. It is felt that this dilutes the stature of a licensed assistant and decreases the number of applicants to programs. Schools state that they could benefit from more volunteer dentists to teach part-time in their programs. Increased enrollment is determined by several factors: acceptance by the school’s administration, number of qualified full-time faculty, faculty/student ratio, and number of applicants. Unfortunately, the Dental Therapy program at Metropolitan University closed; however, a new dental program opened at the University of Minnesota, Mankato.

- 1 2. The programs offering the class for unlicensed assistants to take radiographs are keeping
2 their programs full and the completion rate is high. Unlicensed assistants are now able to
3 take digital impressions and photographs under the direct supervision of a dentist. Licensed
4 assistants will be able to administer local anesthetics with the appropriate education under
5 the direct supervision of a dentist. This class is offered by the continuing education
6 department of the Dental School. The Board of Dentistry is currently examining the various
7 implant procedures a licensed assistant can do regarding implant placement and
8 maintenance. Another topic being investigated is the possibility of hygienists
9 administering Botox and what type of education it would require.
- 10 3. The Dental Compact for dentists and hygienists to have reciprocity with other states,
11 providing all the requirements are met, is gradually moving forward. At least seven states
12 need to be in the compact and all are in the initial stages of approving it. Our legislature
13 heard it this year and will likely act on it next year. Licensure of dental assistants by
14 credentials is being reviewed by the Board of Dentistry and has also been introduced to the
15 legislature.
- 16 4. A member of the MDA staff and of the committee have been in attendance at the Board of
17 Dentistry's Allied Dental Committee, Policy Committee, and Licensing and Credentiaing
18 Committee meetings. The most current information and decisions are recorded and
19 comments are made when appropriate.
- 20 5. The Dental Education Committee has plans to send a short questionnaire to the dental
21 education institutions to determine their most urgent concerns and needs. Results will
22 published when available.

23 Goals and Objectives

- 24 1. Continue the liaison program with allied dental education program directors. Multiple
25 contacts will foster the development of personal relationships with allied educational
26 programs and provide the committee with a more accurate picture of their status, needs,
27 and concerns.
- 28 2. Sponsor an educational symposium.
- 29 3. Continue to foster open communication with representatives from dental professional
30 programs and associations by hosting the annual "Meeting of Dental Professionals." This
31 meeting allows them to voice their needs, concerns, and objectives.
- 32 4. Closely monitor the educational issues and changes made by the state legislature and the
33 Minnesota Board of Dentistry.
- 34 5. Investigate and implement ways to increase the number of LDAs and LDHs.

35 Recommendations

- 36 1. Support the Dental Education Committee's efforts to improve communication with the
37 allied programs and allied dental professional organizations.
- 38 2. Support the continuation of the Dental Education Committee as a standing committee of the
39 MDA.
- 40 3. Support the Dental Education Committee's involvement in all educational issues as they
41 arise.
- 42 4. Support the Dental Education Committee's efforts to seek increased membership so more
43 of the districts and the dental schools will be represented.
- 44 5. Approve the Dental Education Committee's budgetary request to allow the committee to
45 meet its goals for 2024-2025.

- 1 6. Encourage dentists to locate students they feel would make a good dental assistant and
2 encourage them to pursue this occupation. They may offer to provide scholarship funding
3 to these individuals with the stipulation that they join their practice after graduation.
- 4 7. Support the Dental Education Committee with funding to produce posters and brochures
5 for dental offices and school counselors to recruit students.
- 6 8. Support the joint effort of the MDA and Minnesota Board of Dentistry in developing a
7 preparation course for the dental assisting licensing exam.

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9 Submitted by:

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11 Herbert Schulte, D.D.S.

12 Chair