Advocacy

"An Unprecedented 2020 Legislative Session"

It began on January 13th, 2020 and lasted 135 days, adjourning on May 26th. But that’s not what made it remarkable. Due to the COVID-19 pandemic, about 40% of that time was spent in an extended recess. More bills were introduced this year than in any session on record yet only 5% of them made it to the Governor’s desk. Unfortunately, our bill was not one of them.

Senator Kate Brophy McGee sponsored SB 1227 on behalf of the Arizona Dental Hygienists’ Association. It passed the Senate unanimously on February 13th and was heard in House Health and Human Services Committee on March 5th, where it also received unanimous approval. It looked like smooth sailing until the COVID-19 pandemic upended everything and stalled work on all bills.

While we are extremely disappointed, our priority legislation did not make it into law, we will bring it back next year. Below are listed some of the changes we sought:

· Interim Therapeutic Restoration (ITR)— by definition, placing ITRs by dental hygienists are allowed for both permanent and primary dentition.

· Remove Unnecessary Restrictions On Affiliated Practice Dental Hygienists—remove limit on # of APDHs who can provide services at any one time; remove provision that APDH must consult with AP dentist before treating patients who have not been seen by a dentist with 12 months of initial treatment by APDH.

· Clarify Conditions for Root Planing and Local Anesthesia by APDH—protocols must be included in affiliated practice agreement.

"Capitol Day 2020"

On March 5th, 2020 fifty-nine (59) RDHs and students gathered at the Capitol to influence policies that advance our profession and improve oral health. It was a fortunate stroke of serendipity that it was also the day our bill, SB1227, was being heard in the House Health and Human Services Committee! Eighteen (18) out of the 21 appointments with legislators that were pre-arranged were kept which is excellent given the very fluid nature of things during session. Feedback from the meetings was positive, indicating we were well-received and effective. Little did we know that less than 3 weeks later, both chambers would adjourn for an extended recess. Capitol Day 2021 is tentatively scheduled on Thursday, March 4th. Hope to see you there!
"Dental Therapy Rulemaking Begins"

The dental therapy law went into effect in 2018 but to become fully implemented, the AZ Board of Dental Examiners (BODEX) needs to adopt rules that create administrative law. Rules are collectively known as the Administrative Code. The rulemaking process is long with many moving parts and has finally begun in earnest. The AzDHA is “at the table” as representatives of various stakeholder groups provide early input. Eventually, there will be at least two opportunities for public comment so stay tuned! We will keep you apprised as things progress and more specific information is available.

If interested, you can find the audio from the special meeting using this link: Special Meeting July 17th.

" Dental Hygienist Position on Board of Dental Examiners"

Are you interested in making a real difference in regulating the practice of dental hygiene and maintaining standards for the dental profession in Arizona? If so, then you are in luck! One of two dental hygienist positions on the AZ State Board of Dental Examiners (BODEX) will be available in January 2021.

All members of BODEX, like all regulatory boards, are appointed by the Governor. In order to have the Governor consider you for such an appointment, you must complete an online application. It’s not too soon to get started and AzDHA can help you in the process. Please let us know if you are interested by sending an email to info@azdha.org.