

## **New Indiana Law Expands Delivery of Dental Care**

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In 2008, Indiana passed House Bill 1172 which would allow dental hygienists to administer local anesthesia and practice under prescriptive supervision in public health facilities and for dental assistants to coronal polish and apply fluoride treatments. The Indiana State Board of Dentistry finalized the rules and regulations necessary for that bill to come into practice on January 2, 2011. The bill had the support of the Indiana Dental Hygienists' Association, the Indiana Dental Association, and the Indiana Dental Assistants' Association, marking the collaborative effort to improve access to oral health care.



(Photo taken on 10-1-10, the day the Indiana State Board of Dentistry voted to adopt the rules and regulations. Pictured: IDHA Representatives, left to right, Jenny Huffman, Jane Blanchard, Denise Conrad, Ingrid Churchill, Laverne Whitmore, Linda Galloway, Becky Alles, Mandy Arvin, Eileen Clodfelder, Barb MacMillan)

Indiana is now one of 44 states, including the District of Columbia, to allow dental hygienists to administer local anesthesia. The new rules permit dental hygienists who have a local anesthetic permit to administer local anesthesia under the direct supervision of a dentist. In order to qualify for the permit, a dental hygienist

must first complete a course in local anesthesia administration in an educational program accredited by the Commission on Dental Accreditation of the American Dental Association, then successfully pass the North East Regional Board local anesthesia examination, and lastly, apply for a local anesthetic permit. Once the permit is approved and obtained from the Indiana State Board of Dentistry, the dental hygienist must publicly display the dental hygiene local anesthetic permit in the workplace.

Indiana joins 23 other states that allow dental assistants to polish the coronal surfaces of teeth and apply fluoride medicaments for the control or prevention of dental cavities. This must be under the direct supervision of a licensed dentist. To do so, the assistant must be employed in a dental practice for a minimum of one year or has graduated from a program accredited by the Commission on Dental Accreditation of the American Dental Association. Dental Assistants must complete an additional accredited educational program and demonstrate clinical competency on polishing with a prophylaxis cup or occlusal brush and fluoride use and application. The dental assistant must publicly display documentation that he/she has completed the educational requirements.

The law also contains a provision to expand access to care by allowing dental hygienists to practice under prescriptive supervision in public health settings. This means that a licensed dentist is not required to be present in the facility when patient care is provided as long as the patient has been examined by a licensed dentist who has prescribed the care the hygienist is to provide. The dental hygienist then has 45 days to complete the prescribed treatment. Only certain facilities qualify for prescriptive supervision including fixed charitable (501c3) clinics, public health settings, and correctional facilities. These locations must be approved by the Indiana State Board of Dentistry. At this time, nursing

homes or long-term care facilities are not included.

Indiana dental professionals are excited about the much needed new changes and look forward to improving access to care for the people of Indiana. Dentistry is much like the medical world; there are many different levels of education and only certain dental professionals are allowed to provide certain services. Any dental professional providing services without the proper education and training are in violation of the law.

For details regarding the law and the new rules and regulations, please visit:  
<http://www.in.gov/pla/dental.htm>.

For more information, please contact representatives from IDA, IDHA, or IDAA:  
IDA- [www.Indental.org](http://www.Indental.org)  
IDHA- [www.indiana-hygienists.org](http://www.indiana-hygienists.org)  
IDAA- [www.indaa.org](http://www.indaa.org)