

# Policy Statement 3.7 – Vocational Education for the Dental Workforce

## Position Summary

Governments should offer adequate funding assistance for training of allied dental personnel in vocational sector on a need basis

### 1. Introduction

- 1.1. The vocational education sector through Australian TAFE institutions and registered training organisations provides education and training for allied dental personnel including dental assistants, dental technicians, dental laboratory assistants and, in some cases, dental hygienists, and dental prosthetists.
- 1.2. Funding is variable depending on course and State differences and is associated with the requirements set out in the National Competency Standards that form part of the Health Training Package.
- 1.3. Accreditation for vocational sector courses is usually through the Commonwealth Department of Employment, Education and Workplace Relations. The Australian Dental Council has also been involved with dental practitioner course accreditation.
- 1.4. Dentists are taught in greater depth and breadth and at a higher educational level than other dental practitioners in all areas of dentistry.

#### Definition

- 1.5. DENTAL PRACTITIONER is a person registered by the Board to provide dental care.
- 1.6. A DENTIST is an appropriately qualified dental practitioner, registered by the Board to practise all areas of dentistry.
- 1.7. ALLIED DENTAL PERSONNEL are those, other than dentists, working in the provision of dental services.

### 2. Position

- 2.1. Australia must be largely self-sufficient with regard to the training of allied dental personnel.
- 2.2. Accreditation of courses for dental hygienists and dental prosthetists in the vocational sector should be conducted through the Australian Dental Council.
- 2.3. Registered Training Organisations, providing such training, must provide workplaces in dental clinics to ensure adequate clinical experience.
- 2.4. Commonwealth, State and Local Governments should offer a variety of funding assistance including scholarships and bonded positions for indigenous, regional and remote students.
- 2.5. Traineeships are appropriate forms of training and education for dental assistants, dental technicians and dental laboratory assistants.
- 2.6. Education and training for allied dental personnel training should incorporate the principles of team dentistry with a dentist as the team leader.
- 2.7. Dentists must be included in the teaching staff of the Registered Training Organisations involved in training of dental personnel.

*This Policy Statement is linked to other Policy Statement: 2.1 National Oral Health, 2.3.5 Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Australians, 3.1 Dental Workforce, 3.2 Dentists, 3.3 Allied Dental Personnel & 3.6 Higher Education Funding for the Dental Workforce.2 Dentists, 3.3 Allied Dental Personnel, 3.6 Higher Education Funding for the Dental Workforce & 3.8 Overseas Qualified Dentists*

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### **Policy Statement 3.7**

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## Appendix to Policy Statement 3.7 – Glossary of Terms Relating to Vocational Education Funding

### **Technical and Further Education Institutions [TAFE]**

TAFE covers Technical & Further Education Institutions or colleges that offer a wide range of predominantly vocational education courses. TAFEs are owned, operated and predominantly financed by State and Territory Governments.

### **National Competency Standards**

National Competency Standards are statements describing the ability to perform the activities required by a profession or occupation to the level expected in the workplace.

### **Registered Training Organisations [RTOs]**

RTOs deliver training through courses accredited by the Commonwealth Department of Education & Employment and Workplace Relations (DEEWR).

### **Australian Dental Council**

The ADC is the body which accredits Australian education courses leading to dental qualifications, and also assesses the suitability for practice in Australia of persons with overseas dental qualifications.