



**Oral Health Professionals Association Incorporated - ABN 84 179 489 792**

PO Box 959 Brookvale BC NSW 2100

Ph: 02 8006 1916 Em: [admin@ohpa.org.au](mailto:admin@ohpa.org.au) Ws: [www.ohpa.org.au](http://www.ohpa.org.au) Fx: 02 9400 4343

Office Hours: 8am to 2pm Mon - Thurs

08 February 2013

Trevor Ruthenberg MP  
Chair, Health and Community Services Committee  
Queensland Parliament

Parliament House  
George Street  
Brisbane QLD 4000

Dear Mr Ruthenberg,

The Oral Health Professionals Association is a nationally coordinated professional organisation representing dental technicians and dental prosthetists. The organisation's membership includes dental technicians, dental prosthetists, dental laboratory owners and dental suppliers. We also have an affiliation with Australian Dental Assistants Associations.

We are writing to place on record our views and concerns with your proposal that dental technicians be deregistered in Queensland. Queensland is the last state in Australia where dental technicians remain registered. We believe that this situation has occurred because not all states in Australia maintained a register of dental technicians at the time that the Australian Health Practitioners Registration Authority (AHPRA) was established and subsequently other registering jurisdictions believed that AHPRA would adopt registration of dental technicians and hence prematurely moved to dissolve their boards. To date, AHPRA has not proceeded with registration but we believe that this may be a consideration for the future nationally.

The protection extended to the public of Queensland through maintaining a register of dental technicians should be an essential corner stone of any government who has the health outcomes of their constituents as a major priority. Dental technicians are an essential cog in the dental team. With the development of new technologies and techniques, their place in this team is becoming more valuable and essential and therefore the risk to patients will increase. If Dental Technicians are not survived through registration this risks becomes greater.

Our members are called on regularly to participate in treatment planning for patients through the provision of product and material advice, design advice and shade taking. In many cases dental technicians are the only source of this advice to fellow health practitioners. Our members are often required to give important advice to practitioners, particularly remote practices by telephone and in some cases by attending clinics. Recent developments have seen dental laboratory owners adding dedicated space to their facilities where patients can be referred for many of these procedures/discussions. The demands for this are being generated by fellow professionals and the health consuming public.

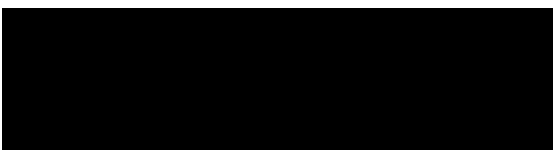
In recognition of this, many teaching institutions are now adopting the team teaching approach where dental technicians qualification has been elevated to degree status and delivered in facilities of integrated learning with dentists, hygienists, therapists and other oral health professionals. Griffith University and Otago University have been the first to adopt this in Australasia with many other universities considering the model presently.

The risk to the public of Queensland for an unregulated dental technology sector will increase rapidly as new technologies and materials are introduced into the marketplace as it is impossible for dentists, dental prosthetists and other Oral Health professionals to maintain a knowledge base to cover all aspects of the new technology.

The Oral Health Professionals Association believes strongly that Queensland should not only maintain a dental technology register but lobby strongly for the registration of dental technicians to be included under the jurisdiction of the Australian Health Practitioners Registration Authority (AHPRA). The maintenance of the Queensland register would ensure that Queensland practitioners had a smooth transition to national registration as their qualifications, registration and continuing education details would already be accessible.

We would ask strongly that your government reconsider your proposed decision to deregister dental technicians in this state.

Yours Faithfully,

A large black rectangular box redacting the signature of Stephen Griffin.

**Stephen Griffin**

Master of Dental Technology in Prosthetics

Queensland Board Member of Oral Health Professionals Association