

IMPORTANT INFORMATION FOR DENTAL HYGIENISTS WHO ARE RECOGNIZED TO ADMINISTER LOCAL ANESTHESIA BY INFILTRATION

In 2009 the Maryland General Assembly passed Senate Bill 602 and House Bill 576 which permits dental hygienists to administer local anesthesia by infiltration to anesthetize soft tissue to facilitate the performance of dental hygiene procedures. Those who completed a 28-hour Board-approved course from an accredited dental hygiene school and applied to the Board have received documentation from the Board that provides “Recognized to Administer Local Anesthesia by Infiltration.”

During the 2012 legislative session the General Assembly passed Senate Bill 344 and House Bill 172 which expanded the scope of practice for dental hygienists who have completed the 28-hour Board approved course on local anesthesia to include the administration of local anesthesia by inferior alveolar nerve block. The law allowing dental hygienist to administer local anesthesia by inferior alveolar nerve block will take effect on October 1, 2012. Senate Bill 344 and House Bill 172 also contain the following important provision:

A dental hygienist who successfully completed the education requirements and examination required under paragraph (1) of this subsection before October 1, 2011, shall take and successfully complete a refresher course and a clinical examination from an accredited dental hygiene program.

As a result of this language please be advised of the following:

1. If you have completed the local anesthesia course on or before September 30, 2011 you must complete a 2-hour Board-approved refresher course and a clinical examination from an accredited dental hygiene school before you are permitted to administer local anesthesia by inferior alveolar nerve block. The course must be completed at a school of dental hygiene. Once you complete the course you must send to the Board at the above address: 1) proof of completion of the course; and 2) the original green wall and wallet recognitions that you previously received from the Board. The proof of completion must be in writing and come from either the Dean or the head of the dental hygiene program. A sample letter will be provided to each school of dental hygiene that has received approval to offer the 2-hour refresher course. Once the submission is made and approved by the Board you will receive a new recognition from the Board which states “Recognized to administer local anesthesia by infiltration and inferior alveolar nerve block.” Even if you complete the course you must first receive Board recognition before administering local anesthesia by inferior alveolar nerve block. If you choose not to complete the course you should retain the original green wall and wallet recognition to administer local anesthesia by infiltration, and you may continue to administer local anesthesia by infiltration without interruption.

2. If you completed the 28-hour Board approved course on or after October 1, 2011 you must return the original green wall and wallet recognitions that you previously received from the Board indicating that you are “Recognized to administer local anesthesia by infiltration”. You will receive a new recognition on or shortly after October 1, 2012 that states that you are “Recognized to administer local anesthesia by infiltration and inferior alveolar nerve block.” Please forward the documents to the attention of Ms. Sandra Sage, Dental Hygienist Coordinator, at the above address. Please do not administer local anesthesia by inferior alveolar nerve block until you receive a new recognition from the Board indicating that you are “Recognized to administer local anesthesia by infiltration and inferior alveolar nerve block.” You may continue to administer local anesthesia by infiltration after you return the wall and wallet recognitions.

The Board sincerely apologizes for any inconvenience and appreciates your patience during the transition.

All documentation and questions should be provided to Ms. Sandra Sage, Local Anesthesia Coordinator. If you have any questions you are urged to contact Ms. Sage at 410-402-8510.