



AHCCCS Adult Emergency Dental Benefit – The final budget passed by the legislature and signed by Governor Ducey includes \$1.2 million to restore the adult dental emergency benefit for AHCCCS members of up to \$1,000 per member per year. AHCCCS will now establish policy regarding what exactly will be covered. Coverage is likely to be consistent with past policy which was limited to extractions and endo therapy on anterior teeth. The benefit will become effective on October 1, 2017.

AHCCCS Adult Dental Benefit for Pregnant Women – legislation unanimously passed the House Health Committee but did not receive consideration by the Appropriations Committee. We will try again next year!

Sunrise Application for Dental Therapy – Committee of Reference (a joint committee of 5 senators and 5 representatives from their respective Health Committees) heard the application on Dec. 16, 2016. It was defeated on a vote of 1 in favor and 8 opposed. Another application is expected next year. Dental Care for Arizona coalition is still actively “working” this issue.

Senate Bill 1362 – Dental Omnibus bill jointly supported by AzDHA and AzDA was signed into law on April 18, 2017. However, it will not become effective until August 9, 2017.

- Defines “Affiliated Practice Dental Hygienist” as able to initiate treatment (limited by scope of practice) based on assessment and conditions pursuant to a written agreement with a dentist.
- Modifies requirement for AP dental hygienists by eliminating requirement to have held an active license for 3 or more years while maintaining requirement of having practiced 500 hours in each of preceding 2 years.
- Re-defines “assessment” to include the collection of clinical information to facilitate an examination, diagnosis and treatment plan by a dentist.
- Allows a dental hygienist to do an interim therapeutic restoration upon completion of a course offered at an institution with a CODA-accredited program; eliminates requirement to go through entire EFDA training.
- Separates certification of local anesthesia and nitrous oxide administration; clarifies and reduces regulatory burden for certification; and allows dental hygienists who are certified in these procedures in other states to be certified in AZ.
- Allow EFDA’s who are certified in other states within last 10 years to be certified in AZ after a demonstration of competency.
- Expands definition of “teledentistry” to include an examination by a dentist.
- Gives BODEX authority to lower credentialing fees for applicants who are beyond the five year limit of having taken a regional clinical examination.
- Eliminates the language in the Dental Practice Act that precludes BODEX from making expenditures of the Board exceeding 90% of their revenue; allows BODEX to “live on its savings” in order to reduce the \$5 million surplus in the Dental Board fund.
- **Renewal fees will be waived for dentists, dental hygienists and denturists, one-time only, when renewing in 2018, 2019, and 2020.**

Another Success – More money in your pocket! Due to the collaborative efforts of AzDHA and AzDA, the Dental Board reduced license renewal fees by 15% for all licensees; for dental hygienists, the fee drops from \$300 to \$255 beginning in 2017!!