



## National Children's Dental Health Month Is Here!

National Children's Dental Health Month is in full swing. If you missed our first event on February 3rd at the Children's Library, you can still make McDonald's Day at the Keyser Avenue McDonald's on Saturday, February 9th

from noon to 1:30 p.m.! We are also in need of doctors willing to do presentations at local schools. Please contact Dr. Christopher Kotchick at 346-7301 if you are interested!



## Expanding Dental Hygienists Scope of Practice

The SBOD proposed regulations that would change the scope of practice and supervision requirements for dental hygienists. The SBOD voted on its draft regulations at its November 30, 2007, meeting and they will soon be published in the Pennsylvania Bulletin, initiating a 30-day public comment period with the public, and a 60-day public comment period for the House and Senate Professional Licensure Committee.

The draft regulations contain provisions on the following:

1) Allowing dental hygienists to administer local anesthesia

2) Elimination of the ASA Classifications to regulate supervision of dental hygienists

3) Allowing public Health Dental Hygienists to practice independently in public settings

4) Auxiliary performance of radiological procedures

PDA formed a committee to formulate a position on the draft regulations and will submit its recommendations to the SBOD and other appropriate governmental agencies.

*(Taken from the January 2008 PDA Government Relations Update)*

## January's Meeting

January's general membership meeting was held on Wednesday, January 23, 2008 at the Inn at Nichols Village during the lunch portion of the CE course: "Immediate Loading of Implants."

Dr. Chris Kotchick gave a very informative presentation regarding issues recently addressed by the PDA. For more information on those items, see the articles on Amalgam and Dental Hygienists inside this newsletter.

Dr. Kotchick also took the attendees through the SDDS website and demonstrated all the ways in which dentists can access good information. If you missed this meeting, mark your calendar for the next one on March 18th. There will be no general meeting in February.



## Welcome New Members!

We are proud to have the following doctors as part of our Society. We wish you luck and success and look forward to seeing you at our meetings.

Dr. Jessica Falk  
Dr. Richard Heartland  
Dr. Rose Heartland  
Dr. Todd Angelo  
Dr. Michael Salvia

# Regulating the Use of Dental Amalgam

Pennsylvania experienced firsthand a growing national trend toward regulating the use and disposal of dental amalgam when the Philadelphia City Council passed an ordinance on December 13, 2007, requiring dentists practicing in Philadelphia to give their patients a brochure outlining the restorative options available to them prior to receiving restorative care. Patients must sign they have received the brochure.

The ordinance, introduced by Councilwoman Reynolds Brown would have been much more onerous to Philadelphia dentists had the PDA not intervened and lobbied the Philadelphia City Council on their behalf. The ordinance had originally required that dentists install amalgam separators and display a poster in their offices warning patients about the “dangers of mercury amalgam.”

PDA was able to take advantage of the invaluable resources offered by the ADA’s State Public Affairs Program to launch an effective lobbying and public relations campaign to minimize the proposed ordinance’s negative impact on Philadelphia dentists.

Despite the overwhelming scientific support for the safety of dental amalgam, PDA had to face the political reality that Philadelphia City Council was intent on passing an ordinance that it felt would better educate the public. Though stripped of its original language that required amalgam separators and posters for dental offices, the Council made clear that it wanted all Philadelphia dentists to use a brochure outlining all the restorative options available to patients, as well as any potential risks associated with each restorative option.

In response, PDA’s lobbyists spoke to each Council member about the importance of using the ADA brochure, which includes a fair and scientific-based assessment of all the restorative options. While it initially gained

enough support for it to be attached to the ordinance, Councilwoman Brown later had the brochure removed. She inserted an amendment that the Philadelphia Department of Health must work with PDA, the New Era Dental Society (an affiliate of the National Dental Association) and Consumers for Dental Choice in writing the brochure, which must be submitted to the Council for approval.

PDA lobbied extensively against this amendment, hoping to gain enough support from other Council members to amend the ordinance so that the ADA brochure was once again included or that the Philadelphia Department of Health must use the brochure as a model when writing its own.

Despite PDA’s best efforts, the Council unanimously passed the ordinance by a vote of 17-0. It still requires the Philadelphia Board of Health to work with PDA, the New Era Dental Society and representatives from Consumers for Dental Choice in promulgating a brochure that all Philadelphia dentists must hand out to their patients.

PDA has already communicated its recommendation that the Department adopt the ADA-approved brochure on restorative options. It continues to work with the ADA, and lobbyists and public relations representatives, to affect a positive outcome to the issue Philadelphia City Council intends to revisit in 2008: the installation of amalgam separators.

PDA established a task force with the authority to make immediate decisions when negotiating with the Council about an ordinance requiring amalgam separators, as well as with the Department of Health when promulgating the patient brochure. PDA will also notify all Philadelphia-area members of this new requirement, which is simply to mandate a standard practice for dentists who already educate their patients on restorative options.

It will also monitor legislative activity at the state level and respond to any attempt by the Governor’s Administration and PA General Assembly to pass similar mandates.

Because the trend for more government oversight over the use and disposal of dental amalgam will continue and most likely strengthen, PDA encourages all Pennsylvania dentists to have the ADA brochure available to patients.

By illustrating to public officials in advance dentistry’s commitment to patient education and choice, PDA will improve its chances of blocking onerous legislation and regulation that restricts dentists’ ability to provide all restorative options to patients. It may also increase the likelihood that governmental agencies such as the Philadelphia Department of Public Health, and other governmental agencies in the future, will adopt a scientifically accurate brochure already widely accepted and used by dentists.

PDA is hopeful that by taking this proactive approach to educating patients, dentistry is able to avoid mandates at the state level or in other cities across Pennsylvania.

*(Taken from the January 2008 PDA Government Relations Update)*

## 2008 Officers

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# Upcoming Events

Tooth Fairy Day	Scranton Children's Library	February 3, 2008	2:30 p.m.
Dental Health Day at McDonald's	Keyser Ave. McDonald's	February 9, 2008	12:00 -1:30 p.m.
<i>There will be no general meeting in February.</i>			
CE Course: <i>Oral Anesthesia</i>	Inn at Nichols Village	February 20, 2008	8:00 a.m.
Board Meeting	Foccia Luna	February 25, 2008	6:30 p.m.
General Meeting	TBA	March 18, 2008	6:30 p.m.
CE Course: <i>All Facets of Endo, including Rotary Endo</i>	Inn at Nichols Village	March 19, 2008	8:00 a.m.
Board Meeting	Foccia Luna	March 31, 2008	6:30 p.m.
Third District Meeting	East Mountain Inn	April 2, 2008	6:30 p.m.
PDA 141st Annual Session	Hotel Hershey	April 10-13, 2008	8:00 a.m.
General Meeting/Shair Award	Radisson	April 15, 2008	6:30 p.m.
Board Meeting	Foccia Luna	April 28, 2008	6:30 p.m.
CE Course: <i>Sleep Apnea</i>	Inn at Nichols Village	April 16, 2008	8:00 a.m.
PDA Council & Committee Mtg	State College	May 30, 2008	TBA
PDA Leadership Conference	State College	May 31, 2008	TBA
President's Dinner	Michaelangelo's	May 17, 2008	TBA
Yankee's Game	PNC Stadium	May 23, 2008	6:30 p.m.
Golf Tournament	Scranton Country Club	June 2008	TBA
Third District Meeting	Woodlands	November 14, 2008	8:00 a.m.

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