

Dear ISDS Board Members (*All names were listed in letter sent*),

I first wanted to thank Dr. Soltys and all the members of the ISDS Board who attended the meeting with the Illinois state dental specialty organizations on February 22nd. The issues that were brought up by all of those present were thought provoking. The meeting in general was well run and educational.

As I mentioned at the meeting, the Illinois Society of Oral and Maxillofacial Surgeons has come out against some proposed rule changes regarding the training of the office staff members who assist with office anesthesia. The ISOMS represents approximately 270 oral and maxillofacial surgeons statewide, the vast majority of who are opposed to the proposed rule change that would mandate that the “hands on” portion of the training be given by someone other than the dentist who is in charge of managing the anesthetic team. Also, we feel very strongly that limiting the amount of on-line training which would satisfy the state requirement to 6 hours is misguided, as on-line learning has proven a very effective tool to augment the in-office training programs which are currently used a vast majority of the oral surgery offices in Illinois.

Our objections to these rule changes are much more than “opposition to change”. The proposed rule changes which require hands on airway management is redundant, as the requirements for anesthesia monitoring already includes a provision for mandatory Basic Life Support (BLS) certification and maintenance (c)(2)(E). As I’m sure you know, BLS teaches airway management on a mannequin as a part of the course, and this course has to be taken every 2 years! In addition, airway management in an acute situation is always managed by the doctor in charge of the case – never the assistant!

Both the American Society of Anesthesiology (ASA) and the American Association of Oral and Maxillofacial Surgeons (AAOMS) offer "online" or "self-study" programs. The AAOMS Dental Anesthesia Assistants National Certifying Exam "DAANCE" program is a home-study format, which is designed to be completed under the auspice of the anesthesia provider. The ASA program is completely online or available on a DVD. Both programs depend on valuable anesthesia provider oversight. In our opinion, the scholarly activities of these sponsoring organizations establish and represent the highest standards of care, and clearly demonstrate that the highest quality of assistant education can be done under the auspicious of the anesthesia provider.

Unfortunately, the ISOMS was not consulted with regard to these proposed rule changes, despite the fact that oral and maxillofacial surgeons administer the vast majority of dental anesthetics in the state. Nor were we notified of the 45 day public comment period, which has long since passed. We are counting on the ISDS to lobby the appropriate lawmakers and dental board members about the misguided nature of these rule changes. **It is our hope that these proposed changes are not adopted.**

I was very encouraged by the fact that all of the members present were in agreement that these changes are redundant and unnecessary. I am looking forward to a unified and forceful push from the ISDS to keep these rule changes from being enacted. My

understanding is that some similar rule changes were proposed a couple of years ago, and that the ISDS took a firm stance against them! The efforts had apparently paid off, as I understand that these rule changes were not enacted. I am hoping that a similar effort will be forthcoming, and that we can demonstrate to all of our membership the value of organized dentistry!

I would be happy to speak directly with Dave Marsh to articulate the details of the ISOMS position and help out in any way possible. It is my hope that meaningful rules can be enacted, and avoid arbitrary rule changes which may actually have a detrimental effect on public safety.

On behalf of the membership of the ISOMS, I want to thank you for your prompt attention to this matter. Once again, I would be more than happy to discuss this issue further with you if have any questions.

Sincerely,

Dr. Michael Zak
President
Illinois Society of Oral
and Maxillofacial Surgeons