

1995—No. 218

**DENTAL TECHNICIANS REGISTRATION ACT 1975—
REGULATION**

(Relating to infection control standards)

NEW SOUTH WALES



[Published in Gazette No. 74 of 16 June 1995]

HIS Excellency the Governor, with the advice of the Executive Council, and in pursuance of the Dental Technicians Registration Act 1975, has been pleased to make the Regulation set forth hereunder.

ANDREW REFSHAUGE
Deputy Premier and Minister for Health.

Commencement

1. This Regulation commences on 7 July 1995.

Amendments

2. The Dental Technicians Registration Regulation 1993 is amended:

(a) by inserting after clause 7 the following clause:

Infection control standards

7A. Without limiting the generality of clause 7, a dental prosthetist must comply with the infection control standards set out in Schedule 2 to the extent that they apply to the dental prosthetist in the practise of dental prosthetics.

Maximum penalty: 2 penalty units.

(b) by inserting after Schedule 1 the following Schedule:

SCHEDULE 2—INFECTION CONTROL STANDARDS

(cl. 7A)

Part 1—Preliminary

Definitions

1. (1) In this Schedule:

“**body substance**” includes any human bodily secretion or substance other than blood;

“**patient**” includes (but is not limited to) a person who is accessing any medical or health services or who is undergoing any dental treatment;

“**sharps**” means any object capable of inflicting penetrating injury, and includes hollow bore needles, suture needles, scalpel blades, wires, trocars, auto lancets, stitch cutters and broken glassware.

(2) The requirements set out in this Schedule apply to a dental prosthetist who is assisting in performing a procedure in the same way as they apply to a dental prosthetist who is actually performing the procedure.

**Part 2—General standards applying to dental prosthetists
General precautions and aseptic techniques**

2. (1) Precautions must be taken to avoid direct exposure to a patient’s blood or other body substances. This requirement applies regardless of whether there is any perceived risk of infection.

(2) Aseptic techniques must be used in the course of complying with the requirements of this Schedule.

Hand and skin washing

3. (1) Hands must be washed and dried immediately before and after any direct patient care.

(2) Hands or other skin surfaces that are contaminated with a patient’s blood or other body substance must be washed as soon as it is practicable to wash them.

(3) The requirement to wash and dry hands applies regardless of whether gloves are also required to be worn.

Protective gowns and aprons

4. A gown or apron made of impervious material must be worn while performing any procedure where there is a likelihood of clothing being splashed or contaminated with blood or other body substances.

Gloves

5. (1) Gloves must be worn while handling blood or other body substances.

(2) In particular, gloves must be worn:

- (a) while performing any procedure where direct contact is anticipated with a patient's blood or other body substance, mucous membranes or non-intact skin; and
- (b) while suctioning a patient; and
- (c) while handling items or surfaces that have come into contact with blood or other body substances; and
- (d) while performing any procedure where skin penetration is anticipated.

(3) Sterile gloves must be worn if the procedure involves contact with tissue that would be sterile under normal circumstances.

(4) Gloves must be changed and discarded:

- (a) as soon as they are torn or punctured; and
- (b) after contact with each patient.

(5) Gloves must also be changed if separate procedures are being performed on the same patient and there is a risk of infection from one part of the body to another.

Masks and protective eye wear

6. (1) A mask and protective eye wear must be worn while performing any procedure where there is a likelihood of splashing or splattering of blood or other body substances.

(2) In cases where a mask is required to be worn, it must be worn and fitted in accordance with the manufacturer's instructions.

(3) A mask must be discarded once it has been worn and it must not be used again.

Sharps

7. (1) Sharps must not be passed by hand between a dental prosthetist and any other person.

(2) A puncture resistant tray must be used to transfer sharps.

(3) Reusable sharps must, immediately after being used, be placed in a puncture resistant container specially kept for that purpose and labelled as such.

(4) Non-reusable sharps must, immediately after being used, be disposed of in a puncture resistant container.

Management of waste

8. (1) Contaminated waste must be segregated, placed in a suitable leak proof bag or container and contained at the place it is generated before being disposed of in an appropriate manner. **Contaminated waste** includes microbiological waste or pathological waste, or any material or item (for example, sharps, dressings or disposable linen) that is soiled or contaminated with blood or other body substances and that is likely to cause infection or injury to any person.

(2) Splashing or contamination of skin while disposing of blood or other body substances must be avoided as far as practicable.

Part 3—Processing of instruments and equipment**Prosthetic appliances**

9. Any prosthetic appliance or material that is intended to be sent to a laboratory for processing must be rinsed clear of any debris and be disinfected before it is sent.

Cleaning of instruments and equipment

10. (1) Any instrument or equipment that comes into contact with intact skin must be cleaned before it is used.

(2) Any instrument or equipment that is required under this Part to be sterilised or disinfected must be cleaned before it is sterilised or disinfected.

(3) The process of cleaning must involve water, mechanical or physical action (such as an ultrasonic cleaner) and a cleaning agent (such as detergent or a proteolytic enzyme).

Disinfection of instruments and equipment

11. (1) Any instrument or equipment that comes into contact with non-sterile tissue must be disinfected before it is used. They may also be sterilised if they are capable of withstanding that process.

(2) The process of disinfection must involve either thermal or chemical methods. Chemical disinfection may only be used in cases where thermal methods are unsuitable.

Sterilisation of instruments and equipment

12. (1) Dental hand pieces or any other instrument or equipment used to enter, or that is capable of entering, tissue that would be sterile under normal circumstances must be sterilised before it is used.

(2) The method of sterilisation must be compatible with the particular type of instrument or equipment.

(3) If the method of steam under pressure (i.e. moist heat sterilisation) is used, the recommended temperature/pressure holding time must be attained and the relevant manufacturer's instructions must be followed.

(4) If a dry air oven is used, the instrument or equipment must be held for at least 1 hour at 160 degrees celsius and the relevant manufacturer's instructions must be followed.

(5) Instruments and equipment may be sterilised chemically, by using low temperature hydrogen peroxide plasma in a 75 minute cycle, or by using ethylene oxide, or by using low temperature peracetic acid in a sealed chamber in a 30 minute cycle.

EXPLANATORY NOTE

The object of this Regulation is to specify the standards for controlling infection that are required to be followed by dental prosthetists engaged in the practice of dental prosthetics (i.e. this practice includes the inserting or fitting of artificial dentures). The standards are designed to enhance protection against HIV infection and other infectious diseases. The standards to be followed include general requirements (e.g. hand washing before and after direct patient care, wearing gloves while handling blood or other body substances, and proper handling of sharp objects). The standards also require the cleaning, disinfection and sterilisation of instruments and equipment (including prosthetic appliances).

This Regulation is made under the Dental Technicians Registration Act 1975, including section 35 (the general regulation making power, in particular section 35 (2) (j))
