

Hot Shots

A bill in the Texas Legislature would let hygienists administer anesthetic.



Not all Townies agree
that's a good thing.

**Turn the page to read an excerpt from
one of Dentaltown's message boards.**

Texas Dentist and Hygienist

Is allowing hygienists to administer local anesthetic lowering the standard of care or a smart move in the practice? Townies weigh in on the topic, and comment on a Texas state Senate proposal to keep anesthetic in the doc's hands.

Dr Mac Lee

Member Since: 04/14/00

Posts: 1 and 2 of 108

(Texas) Senate Bill 430 will give properly trained hygienists the right to give local anesthetic. That's right. Texas is still operating in the old days when it comes to certain issues. I am close friends with dentists across the nation and the vast majority are in states where hygienists can give locals. Please contact your senator and let them know your feelings about the issue.

(Editor's note: Check out the status of bill discussed here at legiscan.com/TX/text/SB430/2017)

This is the opposing view offered by the Texas Dental Association:

Dental hygienists are valuable members of the dental team. They are educated and trained primarily to clean teeth and educate patients on proper methods of maintaining optimal oral health. A majority of Texas hygienists (approximately 70%) complete 2-year programs at community colleges and junior colleges focused on learning these skills.

Current Texas law purposely limits the types of health care professionals who are authorized to inject dental patients with local anesthetic. Dentists, physician anesthesiologists, and certified nurse anesthetists must complete 4 years of undergraduate education and 2 to 4 more years of post-graduate education in order to inject anesthetic.

In addition, advancements in topical anesthetics have rendered many dental offices "needle-free" and hygienists in Texas are currently allowed to administer these effective topical agents. These types of injections into the jaw and neck areas are not the same as administering a flu shot; the nerves and intricate structures in these areas pose unique challenges. There are no shortcuts to being properly trained and educated to inject dental patients with local anesthetic, and continuing advancements in topical anesthetics limit the need to do so.

TDA opposes Senate Bill 430 and House Bill 1201, which lower the Texas standard of dental care.

TDA Position Statements

- *Texans—and the Texas Dental Association—demand high standards when it comes to delivery of patient care. Senate Bill 430/House Bill 1201 lower the Texas standard of dental care.*
- *Why lower the Texas standard of dental care when there is no shortage of qualified individuals to inject Texas dental patients with anesthetic? Some have suggested that allowing hygienists with 2-year degrees to inject anesthetic would be "convenient" and "efficient" for dentists and "financially beneficial" to hygienists. TDA strongly believes in the current Texas standard of care where proper education and training, not convenience or economics, drives policy on this issue. Administration of Local Anesthetic by Hygienists | Page 1 of 2 Texas Dental Association | 1946 S IH35 Ste 400, Austin, TX 78704 | 512-443-3675 Efficiencies can be attained under current law without lowering standards, and dentists may currently utilize other qualified/licensed practitioners if needed for local anesthetic.*
- *Some have suggested Texas should permit hygienists to inject local anesthetic because other states have done so. Texas sets its own standards regardless of other states' actions and other states may have had compelling reasons to lower their standards. Texas does not. Other states allowed hygienists to inject anesthetic before topical anesthetics' effective advancements.*
- *There are simply no compelling reasons to lower the Texas standard of dental care set by current law. ■*

2/8/2017

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message board

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Lori Householder

Member Since: 02/19/12
Post: 4 of 108

Look at all the other states that lowered their standards and now have hygienists killing and maiming patients. ■

2/9/2017

davidpalmer

Member Since: 04/14/00
Post: 5 of 108

I know ... it's horrible. This obstinate stance started many years ago when some of the older members saw attempts by hygienists in Colorado to start up their own practices. Oh, the horror! We have some of the most stubborn members in the world. I think we are one of only three states left that do not allow hygienists to give local anesthesia. ■

2/9/2017

doctorwhodds

Member Since: 08/27/04
Post: 6 of 108

I'd call my dental association and ask who decided to oppose this. Then I would find my local trustee and find out their rationale. And they wonder why people are leaving the dental association. ■

2/9/2017

cv02

Member Since: 07/19/16
Post: 7 of 108

Thank you, Texas State Board of Dental Examiners (TSBDE). I 100 percent concur! ■

2/9/2017

davidpalmer

Member Since: 04/14/00
Post: 11 of 108

Are you serious? You prefer not having the option of your hygienists giving local? Hygienists in Texas are put in a bind on a regular basis with this...

1. The patient has very sensitive teeth and the hygienist is unable to give local. So, they have to interrupt the dentist. Usually the dentist (like me) hates to be interrupted so the hygienist will continue even though it is more uncomfortable for the patient.
2. Patient needs full mouth RP/SC. To numb the entire mouth painlessly takes a long time. Dentists in Texas can either rush it and hurt the patient more or let his schedule back up as he slowly gives the injections painlessly.

There is literally no reasonable reason why hygienists in Texas should not be allowed to give local. It's infuriating that it hasn't passed a long time ago. ■

2/9/2017

cv02

Member Since: 07/19/16
Post: 14 of 108

I'm in total agreement with my state board. They, nor I, owe you nothing of explanation. If you have something against people from Texas I don't care. Concern yourself with your own state. ■

2/9/2017

davidpalmer

Member Since: 04/14/00
Post: 17 of 108

cv02, please explain why you do not want an RDH to be able to give LA. I've been in Texas 40 plus years. Probably prouder of the state than you! What's the problem with hygienists giving local? ■

2/9/2017

bats

Member Since: 11/13/12
Post: 18 of 108

Agree in favor of this bill and I just contacted my local senators as well. Here is a link to find your local district representative just in case if anyone is wondering: fyi.legis.state.tx.us/Zip.aspx. ■

2/9/2017

ddedd5

Member Since: 02/23/11
Post: 19 of 108

cv02, do you own a private practice? I just can't fathom why you wouldn't want hygienists being able to inject. I practiced in another state that allowed it and it was wonderful. As was mentioned before, SRP's suck. My line when I come in the room is "I gotta be the bad guy today."

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message board

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I inject them a bunch and then leave. I hate doing that to patients. It gets in the way of production too. I can understand supporting your dental board, but do you at least want it if you could have it? Also for a good laugh look up the TSBDE Google reviews. It seems like a lot of people have gripes with the way they do business. ■

2/9/2017

Happy2th

Member Since: 04/30/02
Post: 22 of 108

The only reason the TSBDE doesn't want hygienists giving injections is not that they believe it would be dangerous, but rather that it would be one small step towards what they believe is the hygienist's goal of eventually being able to have independent practices. ■

2/9/2017

cv02

Member Since: 07/19/16
Post: 23 of 108

Conspiracy theory or truth? Interesting. I'll ask my board attorney. ■

2/9/2017

Stephen

Member Since: 02/14/03
Post: 38 of 108

What Rich is referring to is the Texas Dental Practice Act. They do not like making changes that require opening this practice act up. When it's opened up, apparently many other things can change before it's shut back. This has been the primary concern as Rich has stated, that many have stated for years.

You have seen it happen in other states. It's not just hygiene but its mid-level providers etc., that they are concerned about. Also, the powers that usually are pushing the change to allow hygienist to perform anesthesia have other agendas. So, it's been a standoff on both sides for not so obvious reasons. The safety issue and concern for that is what is debated. I am not voicing an opinion one way or the other. Just reinforcing what Rich has said. ■

2/9/2017

David24

Member Since: 12/01/14
Post: 59 of 108

Here in Maine, hygienists have been administering local anesthesia for a number of years. Having attended State Board meetings for more than 25 years. I have yet to hear of an incident involving complications. The data silences the naysayers. ■

2/10/2017

380Dental

Member Since: 07/22/11
Post: 72 of 108

The liability is the strongest anti-hygiene argument that exists. However, like several mentioned, that is so easily remedied by saying they can do infiltration and not blocks. Of course, you also have to look at needle breaks almost don't happen anymore because of improved designs/materials. Paresthesia can happen to anyone giving a block and has almost nothing to do with the anesthetic, and is not something you can really prevent either.

The hidden issue is about expanding hygiene. Although I have a hard time seeing a hygienist wanting to build an office with nearly the same costs as a dentist, but with a fraction of the possible income. The risk vs reward just isn't there. If you expand to MLPs, then yes, it could be a concern. Personally, I am in favor of hygienists giving LA, mostly because the statistics from states that do are overwhelming that no true concern exists about the LA. ■

2/11/2017

cv02

Member Since: 07/19/16
Post: 85 of 108

I was trained in another state's school which is highly ethical and always in the top five in scores and research. They take a similar stance as the TDA.

It's been my sad personal experience in Texas (Austin, Houston, Dallas) that in the dentist's office in which I have worked (over 18 in 6 years) are generally dishonest money grubbing insurance cheating lying inadequately trained smug asses.

I could fill a damn book with all the tomfoolery that goes on. I've been told by my PSHA

(and ex-cop) agent you have to kill someone or abuse (he used the word molest which I refuse to use here) a child to get in trouble in Texas.

Give them an inch they say...

I have no doubt a talented auxiliary personnel can give an injection. My teenaged crazy girlfriend that was a total material girl flake was a phlebotomist at the local hospital...big whoop. Why would a hygienist want so badly to take on an extra duty (skill) when they won't be compensated for it? Ego? Self-fulfillment? Just being helpful? or is it convenience for the practice owner like the TDA's position statement? Missing a block is easy. Believe me.

You want to open your own hygiene shop? By all means proceed. No problem for me. One less thing. I would love hygienist to start earning that \$40/hour as business owners. Welcome. I encourage you. So my beef is not with the procedure, just the latitude given to Texas practice owners who will find yet another way to exploit the privilege. That's my opinion and I have nothing to prove to you. Respect. ■

2/22/2017



Join the discussion!

Search: "Texas Dentist"

Should hygienists give local anesthetic? Go to dantown.com and search the message boards for "Texas dentist." This thread will be the top result.

\$409,120

Partners Average Net Income*

No Maximum Earnings & No Quotas

Partners earn 55%
of their production**

Ask about our Employee/
Franchisee Hybrid Opportunity

	Corporate Dentistry	Associate/ Employee	Long-Term Owner
Income	+\$8,333/mo (\$100,000/yr)	+\$34,093/mo (\$409,120/yr)	
Social Security Tax	-\$637/mo (\$7,650/yr) (.0765%)	-\$1,333/mo (\$16,000/yr) (.0765% w/ limits)	
Fed/State Income Tax	-\$1,666/mo (\$20,000/yr) (20%)	-\$7,500/mo (\$90,000/yr) (33%)	
Partnership Down Payment	NONE	-\$2,000/mo (\$24,000/yr) (5-year loan)*	
Consulting Payment	NONE	-\$4,000/mo (\$48,000/yr) (10-year loan)**	
Net Income	+\$6,029/mo (\$72,350/yr)	+\$19,260/mo (\$231,120/yr)	
\$350,000 Student Loan Payment	-\$2,800/mo (\$33,600/yr)	-\$2,800/mo (\$33,600/yr)	
Rent	-\$1,200	-\$1,200	
Car	-\$500	-\$500	
Health Care	-\$650	-\$650	
Remaining Income	+\$879/mo (\$10,548/yr)	+\$14,110/mo (\$169,320/yr)	
		+\$16,110/mo (\$193,320/yr) * after 5 years	
		+\$20,110/mo (\$241,320/yr) ** after 10 years	

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