

Proposed Oral Health Therapy Scope of Practice Consultation

I am a registered dual graduate practicing both scopes of practice in both the private and public health sector currently in Northland. I attended the online webinar session held for Oral Health Graduates which was very informative and helpful. I agree there is an absolute need for an oral health therapy scope of practice and agree with all proposals submitted in the final recommendation.

Of particular importance, the proposed transition for oral health graduates seems very clear and affirming. I believe that in the current Bachelor of Oral Health programmes, we are provided with sufficient education / clinical practice to undertake restorative activity on patients over 18 years under prescription of a dentist. This will hugely impact and benefit rural areas where dentists are limited and dental needs amongst low socio-economic communities are alarming. Further to this, the removal of requirement for a dentist to be on site for local anaesthetic on patients over 18 years will be particularly beneficial in rural areas where I currently work and a dentist cannot be on site in every clinic at all times. Medical history education is thoroughly explored in the current Bachelor of Oral Health programme I studied at AUT University and I feel that as registered clinicians we have the knowledge to judge whether a dentist's supervision is required. I believe this transition for oral health graduates will be very productive and positive for the future oral health workforce.

I strongly believe this proposed oral health scope of practice is absolutely necessary and the new framework for oral health graduates appears affirmative. I feel the registration in one new scope of practice will provide clarity to all stakeholders including colleagues, employers and public. The transition process appears constructive and clear. I look forward to this developing framework for oral health graduates and a positive future for the dental workforce.