



School of Dentistry

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Be The Difference.

April 15, 2020

Dr. Matthew Bistan
Chair, Dentistry Examining Board
Department of Safety and Professional Services
Madison, Wisconsin

Dear Dr., Bistan

Given the unprecedented circumstances and the unanticipated challenges created with the Coronavirus pandemic, I would like to encourage you and you colleagues on the Dentistry Examining Board to seriously consider multiple alternatives to initial licensure.

As the Joint Commission on National Dental Boards has recently announced the release of the Dental Licensure Objective Structured Clinical Examination (DLOSCE). I would urge the Dentistry Examining Board to be among the first to adopt this examination as a pathway to initial licensure. As you have heard this style of examination has been validated and successfully utilized for initial licensure in Canada for many years now. Now more than ever we need to look at serious alternatives to patient-based licensure examinations.

I would also ask the Dentistry Examining Board to consider additional alternatives as a direct result of the wide-ranging impact of the Coronavirus pandemic on the current patient-based licensure examination and our dental graduate's ability to obtain licensure in the aftermath of this crisis.

I would propose that you consider granting a license to 2020 graduates from accredited dental schools on the recommendation of the Dean who would attest to the graduate's competency and readiness for practice. There should be little doubt that accredited dental schools spend a great deal of time and energy focusing on assessing competency of our students during the four years of the educational program. This action would allow the graduate in the unfortunate situation of graduating with their degree but unable to enter practice because of the lack of availability of patient-based licensure examinations an opportunity to begin practice regardless of the extent and length of the effects of the pandemic.

I am available to discuss these matters directly if you would like. I think the sooner that the Dentistry Examining Board can deliberate and act on the newly created issues related to graduates entering practice in 2020 in the wake of this Covid-19 crisis the better it will be. As you can appreciate the graduating dental students from the Class of 2020 are very nervous and concerned for their futures. This consideration would help allay their fears and move Wisconsin forward in seeking more practical and appropriate ways of credentialing and licensing new dentists.

Sincerely,

William K. Lobb DDS, MS, MPH
Dean and Professor

4/9/2020

Dear Board Members,

My name is Calla Lembach and I am a Dental Hygiene student at Madison College. I am writing to you on behalf of the Madison College Dental Hygiene Class of 2020 with concerns of COVID-19 and the restrictions it has placed on our lives. These restrictions include and are not limited to; graduating on time, postponement of written and clinical board exams and the ability to receive licensure during the COVID-19 pandemic.

We want to express our genuine concern and to advocate for ourselves and other dental hygiene students in the great state of Wisconsin. We have worked relentlessly over the last two years to secure and obtain our Dental Hygiene license. The COVID-19 pandemic has unfortunately placed a roadblock to complete this process in a timely manner. We know that we are competent in our ability to perform duties safely and at a very high standard within our scope of practice. With that said, we are requesting the board to advocate on our behalf and waive the clinical board exam for the class of 2020. Other states licensing boards have been listening to their constituents' voices and are meeting to discuss the clinical exam. The Minnesota licensing board will be meeting on Tuesday 4/14/2020 to discuss the waiver of the clinical exam. We hope that Wisconsin will be meeting as well.

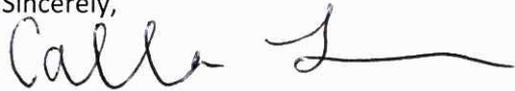
The clinical board exam poses many risks for both patient and clinician during the COVID-19 pandemic. As students, we are responsible for finding our own patient that meets criteria for the clinical board exam. Many students have not yet identified a patient for this exam and have no means to identify a patient due to the closure of Madison College. Unfortunately, there is no end in sight for the COVID-19 outbreak and only continues to grow more concerning every day. Asking students and patients to complete this exam during this outbreak is unethical and jeopardizes everyone's health. By postponing the clinical board exam only delays students in getting their license and ability to contribute to the healthcare field. As you know, Dental Hygiene jobs are very needed across this state. Many of us already have jobs secured to start after graduation. By having our license upon graduation would allow us to enter the work force in a timely manner and potentially offer our services as healthcare providers as the outbreak continues to grow.

We have spent hundreds of hours providing great dental hygiene services in our clinic at Madison College. We see a variety of patients from ages 2-99 years old and patients with varying health needs and conditions. These hours need to be considered and weighed heavier than a one-time clinical board exam when applying for licensure. These hours have also been supervised and instructed by some of the best Dental Hygienists in the state. Throughout our clinical experience, we are continuously assessed by instructors and are held to a very high standard. They test competencies, observe techniques and supervise local anesthetic injections. We believe we are very competent and well educated to provide the gold standard of care to our patients.

Thank you for taking the time to consider our request and hear our voices. We hope that The Dentistry Examining Board of Wisconsin strongly considers waiving the clinical board exam for the class of 2020. By asking students to complete this exam amidst a pandemic jeopardizes the health of all involved, and

by delaying the exam only postpones our ability to obtain our license and practice. We are eager to enter the healthcare field and want to do our part in helping the community. Again, thank you for taking the time to consider our request to waive the clinical board exam for the class of 2020 due to the COVID-19 pandemic. I can be contacted via email cgsharrison05@gmail.com for any follow up. We look forward to hearing from you.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in cursive script, appearing to read "Callie L.", followed by a long horizontal flourish.

Madison College Dental Hygiene Class of 2020