



1000 N. Rand Rd., Suite 214, Wauconda, IL 60084 www.idha.net

December 12, 2020

Dear Dr Ezike,

The Illinois Dental Hygienists' Association is the largest state organization representing the professional interests of the 9,035 Registered Dental Hygienists in Illinois. Dental hygienists are licensed preventive oral health professionals who provide educational, clinical and therapeutic services and also support total health through the promotion of optimal oral health.

As Illinois moves into *Phase 1a* distribution of the COVID-19 vaccine [<https://dph.illinois.gov/covid19/vaccination-plan>] ***please consider including dental hygienists amongst other healthcare professionals permitted to administer COVID-19 vaccinations.*** This would help to address our most vulnerable populations including those residing in long-term care facilities and assisted living residences, and those seeking COVID-19 vaccinations at local health department mass vaccination sites. Like pharmacists and nurses, dental hygienists can help alleviate the expected shortages of available medical staff vaccine administrators during this critical time.

Other states, such as Connecticut, permit dental hygienists to administer vaccines. Connecticut's governor recently authorized dental hygienists to administer COVID-19 vaccines: <https://portal.ct.gov/-/media/Coronavirus/20201207-DPH-Order-Expanding-Authorized-Professions-to-Administer-Vaccines.pdf>.

Currently, there are 32 U.S. states that allow dental hygienists to administer local anesthesia. Illinois is among them. The Illinois *Dental Practice Act* states dental hygienists may administer local anesthesia under the following conditions:

The dental hygienist functions under the supervision of the dentist who remains in the facility. The dental hygienist is responsible for obtaining proof of certification, indicating successful completion of a 32-hour course that contains 24 hours of lecture and 8 hours of clinical training relative to the administration of local anesthetics and submitting certification to the dentist. An individual who graduated from an approved dental hygiene program after January 1, 1999 that contained administration of local anesthetics in the curriculum shall not be required to complete the 32-hour course upon proof to the dentist of the required curriculum. Proof of completion of education shall be made available to the Division upon request. The required hours shall include both didactic and clinical components and be given by a continuing education sponsor approved pursuant to Section 1220.440 or a dental or a dental hygiene program approved by the Division pursuant to Section 1220.250.

While Illinois works towards rolling out a safe and effective vaccine distribution plan, dental hygienists look forward to working alongside other health care professionals to ensure that public health actions, like vaccinations, suppress COVID-19 transmission and reduce the mortality rate of the population. Thank you for considering including dental hygienists as COVID-19 vaccine administrators. I may be reached for further comment at the number provided below.

The Illinois Dental Hygienists Association looks forward to your response.

Sincerely,

Sherri S Foran, RDH, BSDH, MPA, PHDH
President 2020-21
Illinois Dental Hygienists' Association
IDHASherri4N@gmail.com
269.873.6264

cc: Governor Pritzker