



Nevada

Dental Hygienists' Association

Historical Overview

**Milestones on the path of
Dental Hygiene in Nevada**

1960's

- Hygienists practice only under the direct supervision of a dentist.
- The Nevada Dental Hygienists' Association (NDHA) becomes a chartered chapter of the American Dental Hygienists' Association (ADHA) (1961)

1970's

- One non-voting, licensed RDH is appointed to the Nevada State Board of Dental Examiners (NSBDE)
- NDHA holds its official association meetings with the Nevada Dental Association (NDA)
- Dental assistants are permitted to do coronal polishing
- The Community College of Southern Nevada begins an Associate of Applied Science Degree Dental Hygiene program, directed by a dental hygienist (1977)
- First Dental Hygiene class graduated from the Community College of Southern Nevada (1978 – 18 mo. after program is initiated)

1980's

- RDHs with NSBDE approval may administer local anesthesia and nitrous oxide for dental hygiene procedures only
- Continuing education is required for license renewal
- A second RDH is added to the NSBDE
- The two RDHs on the NSBDE are granted the privilege of voting on dental hygiene issues
- NDHA begins holding House of Delegates (HOD) and Annual Scientific Session separate from the NDA

1990's

- A third RDH is added to the NSBDE
- RDHs on the NSBDE are granted full voting privileges
- The NSBDE creates a Committee on Dental Hygiene to assist in dental hygiene licensure, regulation, and discipline
- The Governor appoints an NDHA representative to the NV Maternal and Child Health committee
- NDHA establishes a Legislative Committee and hires a lobbyist
- NDHA works with other organizations for statewide water fluoridation – AB284 is successful for counties with populations in excess of 400,000 residents (Clark County only) (1999)
- NV legislature passes statute allowing Authorized Practice for those RDHs with NSBDE approval to provide most dental hygiene services without the dentist present (1999)
- Community based programs begin providing alternative practice settings for RDHs (1999)
- RDHs practicing in alternative practice settings are permitted to place dental sealants (1999)
- Truckee Meadows Community College (TMCC) begins an Associate Degree Dental Hygiene program, directed by a dental hygienist (1999)
- The Public Health Endorsement is created for RDHs

2000's

- TMCC graduates its first class of dental hygienists (2001)
- NDHA resolves to support the pursuit of self-regulation for the dental hygiene profession (2001)
- NDHA establishes policy supporting the elimination of live-patient licensure exams (2001)
- NDHA resolves to pursue legal recognition of RDHs as licensed professionals (2002)
- NDHA resolves to pursue adding “dental hygiene care planning” to the legal definition of “Dental hygiene” (2002)
- NDHA resolves to support national certification and Nevada State Registration of all dental assistants (2004)
- NDHA establishes policy to advocate for and support the creation of an “advanced dental hygiene practitioner” (ADHP) – now known as a dental therapist (2004)
- NDHA advocates for the addition of two RDHs from each component of NDHA to be added to the NSBDE Dental Hygiene Committee (2005)
- NDHA establishes policy to support the administration of local anesthesia by licensed RDHs under authorized practice (without the dentist present in the office) (2007)
- NDHA supports legislation permitting RDHs to perform light activated bleaching under authorized practice (2007)

2010's

- NDHA brought legislation forward to create dental hygiene self-regulation and a Nevada State Board of Dental Hygiene. The bill passed all Senate and Assembly Committees, passed the full Senate vote and was defeated by one vote in the Assembly. Sponsored by Senator Maggie Carlton. (2010)
- NDHA establishes a biennial “dental hygiene day” in Carson City during the legislative session (2010)
- NDHA resolves to pursue online licensure renewal (2010)
- NDHA resolves to pursue limited prescriptive ability (2011)
- NDHA resolves to support collaborative practice regulation (2011)
- NDHA resolves to advocate for proportionate representation as full voting and policy making members of agencies that regulate the practice of dental hygiene and administer dental hygiene examinations (2012)
- NDHA resolves to advocate that RDHs, graduated from accredited DH programs, serve as advisors, consultants, and liaisons to state policy making agencies and/or as full voting members of state agencies that regulate the practice of dental hygiene and dentistry (2012)
- NDHA resolves to support implementation of a mid-level provider with advanced dental hygiene education and credentialing (2012)
- NDHA adopts a definition of “Advanced Practice Dental Hygiene” which supports mid-level providers (2013)
- NDHA resolves to support a tobacco free environment in all public facilities (2013)
- NDHA resolves to pursue changes to the NAC establishing that RDHs practicing in multiple alternative practice settings need only a single Public Health Dental Hygiene Endorsement, listing all sites on their biennial renewal with NSBDE (2013)
- NDHA adopted ADHA’s definition of “dental hygiene diagnosis” and its inclusion in the dental hygiene process of care (2013)
- NDHA resolves to advocate the prohibition of the marketing and distribution of look-alike nicotine delivery systems (2014)
- NDHA resolves to support the removal of “direct supervision” verbiage of dental hygienists from the Nevada State Practice Act (2014)

- NDHA resolves to support all levels of formal dental hygiene education, but with the intent to establish the baccalaureate degree as the minimum entry level for dental hygiene practice in the future (2015)
- NDHA adopted a definition of “direct access” (2015)
- NDHA formally resolves to pursue self-regulation for the profession of dental hygiene (2015)
- NDHA resolves to advocate for the development of an alternative to live-patient dental hygiene licensing exams (2015)
- NDHA resolves to advocate for the direct third-party reimbursement to dental hygienists providing dental hygiene care (2015)
- NDHA supports the expansion of dental hygiene care procedure codes (2016)
- Members of NDHA provide testimony at Nevada Legislature to support to keep existing language in Nevada Statute that would allow dental hygienists to administer Botox and Dermal Fillers. No other groups provided testimony and language was removed due to lack of support. (2017)
- NDHA supports the utilization of telehealth to reduce oral health disparities (2017)
- NDHA supports the use of lasers within the dental hygiene scope of practice (2017)
- NDHA forms a Governance Review Committee to explore a transition from a HOD to a General Assembly model of governance (2017)
- According to the Standard Occupational Classification by the United States Office of Management and Budget, dental hygienists are classified as Healthcare Diagnosing or Treating Practitioners, the same as classification as dentists. (2018)
- NDHA resolves to support dental hygienists’ ability to prescribe, administer, and dispense all evidence-based preventive and therapeutic fluorides. (2018)
- NDHA adopted a definition of “oral prophylaxis” (2019)
- NDHA resolved to support the promotion, use, and administration of vaccinations for disease prevention by dental hygienists. (2019)
- The NDHA adopts a legislative agenda that supports autonomy, expanded practice and education opportunities for the dental hygienist and solutions to help improve access to care for the public. (2019)
- NDHA brings forward legislation in SB366 to address the Oral Health Crisis in Nevada. The bill had 4 main goals: self-regulation of the dental hygiene profession, Teledentistry, local anesthesia under authorization and the creation of a new dental hygiene based midlevel provider, dental therapist. The Dental Therapy and local anesthesia language passed with 75% majority vote and bipartisan support in the Nevada Legislature. Sponsored by Senator Julia Ratti. (2019)

2020's

- The NDHA works with the NDA and the Nevada State Oral Health Division on COVID-19 Pandemic Response for dental settings.
- NDHA supports the inclusion and utilization of dental hygienists and dental therapists in response to local, state, national and global crisis.
- NDHA drafts amendments for the Oral Health Bill, including adding the use of the term “licensed dental providers” to include dentists, dental hygienists, and dental therapists, to add dental hygienists as a recognized healthcare provider in Nevada Statute and define a dental home. (2020)
- Governor Sisolak signed emergency orders under Directive 011 to allow licensed dental professionals to administer the COVID vaccine. (2021)