

IOWA

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Thanks in part to the dedication of several representatives from the ISO working with an Iowa Dental Board (IDB) committee, there are some very favorable changes to the Iowa Administrative Code pertaining to Registered Dental Assistants (RDA) that will have a positive impact on orthodontists in the state of Iowa. The first adopted changes provide a more realistic pathway for candidates to become registered dental assistants by eliminating several barriers to achieving RDA status. The second changes address barriers to orthodontic assistants to achieve Expanded Function status by separating placement of orthodontic bonding systems from applying cavity liners and bases/desensitizing agents. These changes, which were adopted in December 2022 and January 2023, will make the hiring and training of dental assistants in Iowa a much simpler process.

After a two-year hiatus due to COVID-19, the Iowa Mission of Mercy (IMOM) held November 4-5, 2022, in Des Moines was a tremendous success. 2,009 patients were served and provided with 6,801 procedures totaling \$1,018,709 in free dental care. Many state legislators attended IMOM and were impressed with the magnitude of care and compassion shown by the dental community. The next IMOM will be held in Waterloo on October 13-14, 2023.

The top priority of the Iowa Dental Association (IDA) during the 2023 Legislative Session is continuing efforts to increase Dental Wellness Plan (Medicaid) reimbursement rates to match Hawk-I rates. Medicaid rates in Iowa have not increased in Iowa in 20+ years.

Melissa Bernhardt

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