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January 17, 2020

Senator Rhonda Fields
Chair, Senate Health and Human Services Committee
Colorado General Assembly
200 E. Colfax Avenue
Denver, CO 80203

Regarding: Senate Bill 20-087

Dear Chairwoman Fields:

The Association for Professionals in Infection Control and Epidemiology (APIC), a nonprofit, multidisciplinary organization whose mission is to create a safer world through the prevention of infection, urges your support for Senate Bill 20-087. This legislation would require central service technicians practicing in a hospital or ambulatory surgical center to obtain certification within 18 months of hire.

Contaminated medical equipment can increase the risk of surgical site infections. As noted by the U.S. Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, an estimated 157,500 surgical site infections occur per year. They prolong hospital stays, which increases the cost of care and are a substantial cause of serious illness, and death.¹

Central service technicians are a critical part of the team of professionals dedicated to preventing such infections. They play an important role in protecting patients from these deadly and costly infections by ensuring that instrumentation and equipment used in medical and surgical procedures are properly cleaned, disinfected, inspected, and sterilized prior to patient use -- a critical component in the delivery of quality patient care. As central service technicians face ever-evolving technology, instrumentation and standards, certification will ensure that technicians remain well-versed on instrument processing practices and demonstrates their commitment to safety and quality.

We respectfully request your support for Senate Bill 20-087 to help ensure that Colorado central service technicians will be encouraged to earn certification, and continue in their pursuit of excellent practice through ongoing education. Their role in patient safety is integral to the goal of creating a safer healthcare system.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads 'Connie Steed'. The signature is written in a cursive, flowing style.

Connie Steed, MSN, RN, CIC, FAPIC
2020 APIC President

¹ Magill SS, Edwards JR, Bamberg W, et al. Multistate Point-Prevalence Survey of Health Care-Associated Infections. External Web Site
Icon N Engl J Med 2014;370:1198-208.



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January 22, 2020

Senator Rhonda Fields
Chair
Senate Health and Human Services Cmte
Colorado General Assembly
200 E. Colfax Avenue
Denver, CO 80203

Senator Faith Winter
Vice Chair
Senate Health and Human Services Cmte
Colorado General Assembly
200 E. Colfax Avenue
Denver, CO 80203

Re: Support for CO SB20-087: Concerning Requiring Central Service Technicians to Possess Professional Credentials

Dear Senator Fields and Senator Winter:

The Association of periOperative Registered Nurses (AORN) strongly supports Senate bill 20-087, which would require central service technicians in Colorado to pass a nationally accredited central service exam and hold certification as either a registered central service technician or a sterile processing and distribution technician.

AORN, representing the interests of more than 160,000 perioperative nurses, provides nursing education, standards and services that enable optimal outcomes for surgery patients. AORN's 43,000 registered nurse members manage, teach and practice perioperative nursing, a specialized area of nursing practice. As a fundamental member of the surgical team, the perioperative registered nurse can function in the role of circulator, scrub person, or first assistant at surgery.

AORN has consistently supported the provision of the highest quality patient care to achieve optimal outcomes for surgical patients. Central service technicians are responsible for decontaminating, cleaning, processing, assembling, sterilizing, storing, and distributing the medical devices and supplies needed for patient care. Objective measures of competency for central service technicians require expertise in policies, principles, methods, national standards, and management of sterilization processes. Perioperative nurses rely on central service technicians to ensure that instrumentation and equipment used in medical and surgical procedures are properly cleaned, disinfected, inspected, and sterilized prior to patient use.

AORN's attached board-approved Position Statement on Allied Health Care Providers and Support Personnel in the Perioperative Practice Setting provides that allied health care providers, including specifically sterile processing technicians, should be graduates of accredited education programs or should successfully complete a specialty certification process, as will be required by Senate bill 20-087.

This bill will ensure that central service technicians are appropriately educated and that there will be working relationships among medical staff, nursing staff and central sterile supply personnel to assure that all patient care needs are met.

Thank you,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Amy Hader', written over the printed name.

Amy Hader

AORN General Counsel and Director of Government Affairs



Dental Assisting National Board, Inc.

Measuring Dental Assisting Excellence®

January 30, 2020

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Senator Rhonda Fields
Chair, Senate Health and Human Services Committee
Colorado General Assembly
200 E. Colfax Avenue
Denver, CO 80203

Senator Faith Winter
Vice Chair, Senate Health and Human Services Committee
Colorado General Assembly
200 E. Colfax Avenue
Denver, CO 80203

Dear Chair Fields and Vice Chair Winter:

Please accept this letter from the Dental Assisting National Board, Inc. (DANB) in support of Senate Bill 20-087 related to certification requirements for central service technicians.

DANB is the American Dental Association-recognized national certification board for dental assistants, administering the nationally recognized Certified Dental Assistant™ (CDA®) certification program. DANB's exams and certifications are required or meet a part of requirements for dental assistants to qualify to perform specified duties in 38 states, the District of Columbia, the Department of Veterans Affairs, and the U.S. Air Force. DANB's exams meet nationally accepted test development standards, and DANB's CDA and Certified Orthodontic Assistant (COA®) certification programs are nationally accredited by the National Commission for Certifying Agencies (NCCA) and internationally accredited by the International Accreditation Service to the ISO 17024 standard for organizations that certify personnel.

DANB's interest in SB20-087 stems from our mission, which is focused on public protection. Although DANB's expertise is in the area of competency measurement for dental assistants, recent lessons learned in the dental field related to the potential for improperly sterilized instruments to become conduits for infection allow us to provide a helpful perspective on the current bill.

There are about 15 states in which dental assistants do not undergo any state-sponsored credentialing, such as licensing or registration. In most other states, although there is a license, registration, or permit required to perform specified advanced or expanded functions, a dental assistant who does not perform such functions may work as a dental assistant without meeting any specific education or testing requirements. The task of sterilizing reusable dental instruments is often delegated to these non-credentialed dental assistants.

In a highly publicized incident in Oklahoma in 2013, more than 4,200 dental patients required testing for infectious diseases after receiving treatment in the office of an oral surgeon whose staff was found to be using improper sterilization practices. Of those tested, 89 were positive for hepatitis C, with at least one of these cases confirmed through genetic testing as a patient-to-patient transmission of the disease. Though it is unclear whether this oral surgeon's assistants had any formal training or education, we know that they did not hold DANB's Certified Dental Assistant certification and had not taken DANB's Infection Control exam, which is a component of the CDA certification.

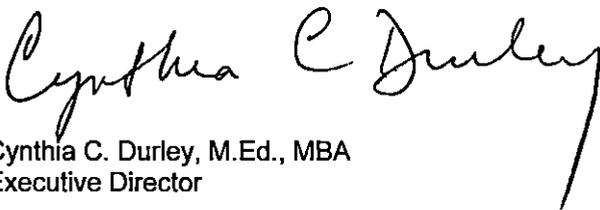
At the time of the incident, Oklahoma did not have any laws or regulations requiring dental assistants to receive any specific education or training in infection control or to hold independent professional certification in dental assisting from DANB or any other entity. The supervising dentist, in a statement to investigators, indicated that he delegated all sterilization responsibilities to his dental assisting staff, yet the errors made by these assistants demonstrated that they lacked even a basic knowledge of infection control principles, including those on which they would have been comprehensively tested had they taken DANB's Infection Control exam and/or been holders of DANB's CDA certification.

DANB believes that independent certification by reputable, accredited certification agencies can and should play an important role in ensuring that unlicensed health care personnel are competent to perform tasks and procedures whose improper performance could cause harm or injury to the public. Requiring such certification of personnel in Colorado who perform sterilization of reusable medical instruments or devices in a surgical facility, if such personnel are not licensed or certified health care professionals working within their scope of practice, will add a much-needed layer of protection for the public.

Both the International Association of Healthcare Central Service Materiel Management (IAHCSMM) and the Certification Board for Sterile Processing and Distribution (CBSPD) certifications that are named in SB20-087 are reputable certification programs accredited by the National Commission for Certifying Agencies. IAHCSMM has also earned international accreditation for personnel certification bodies through the American National Standards Institute (ANSI), which accredits to standards established by the International Organization for Standardization (ISO). These independent, respected accreditations demonstrate that the exams underlying the accredited certifications are developed in accordance with nationally accepted test development standards and that the certification programs are administered in accordance with industry-recognized best practices.

DANB believes that, by passing SB20-087, Colorado will be making significant strides in safeguarding the public from disease transmission due to improper sterilization of surgical instruments.

Sincerely yours,



Cynthia C. Durley, M.Ed., MBA
Executive Director