



Penobscot Community
Health Care

State of Maine | 131st Legislature
Joint Standing Committee on Health Coverage, Insurance and Financial Services
Testimony of Danica Loring on behalf of Penobscot Community Health Care

March 13, 2025

In support of:

LD 806, An Act to Amend the Scope of Practice for Expanded Function Dental Assistants

Dear Senator Bailey, Representative Gramlich and members of the Health Coverage, Insurance and Financial Services Committee:

Thank you for allowing me to testify today in support of LD 806 An Act to Amend the Scope of Practice for Expanded Function Dental Assistants. I am Danica Loring, Director of Operations for Penobscot Community Health Care, Dental Center.

PCHC is a non-profit, Federally Qualified Health Center that was founded in 1997. PCHC's Dental Center has over 43 dental operatories and offers a wide range of services which include basic dental restorations, extractions, endodontic procedures, routine hygiene maintenance, orthodontics, and walk in care services to the general public. Within the last 12 months alone, PCHC Dental Center has provided dental care to over 4,633 individuals which accounted for 18,552 encounters. Part of our dental team currently consists of 12 dental assistants, 3 of which are Expanded Functions Dental Assistants and an additional dental assistant which is enrolled in the upcoming UMA EFDA course scheduled for this fall.

I am testifying today both in my capacity as a licensed Expanded Functions Dental Assistant in the state of Maine and as a dental leader responsible for the oversight of EFDAs at PCHC. To hold an Expanded Functions Dental Assistant license, one is required to hold a Certified Dental Assistant Certificate from a board approved program or an active dental hygiene license in good standing issued under the laws of this state or another jurisdiction. Both avenues require successful completion of a radiology course or exam, which meets the Maine Dental Board's requirements for a Dental Radiographer License.

In Maine, the scope of practice for an EFDA does not include exposing and processing radiographs and because of this, it requires an EFDA to hold a dental radiography license and an EFDA license. Both licenses are to be renewed every two years at \$200 per license, in addition to their National Certified Dental Assisting Certificate annual renewal of \$75 equaling \$275 every year for a total of \$550 every two years, in comparison to the dental hygiene 2-year license renewal is \$140 and dentist license renewal at \$750. To further compare, the average Maine salary for a general dentist is \$192,269, a dental hygienist is \$82,347, while an EFDA's average yearly salary is \$46,081, almost half of a hygienist. What I have experienced and observed in my role is that many dental assistants are resistant to continuing their education to pursue an EFDA license due to financial constraints, which licensing contributes to. With limited dental access and dental staffing shortages, we want to encourage and support the EFDA scope of practice allowing additional access for patient care, rather than creating barriers for these individuals.



Penobscot Community
Health Care

I am speaking in support of LD 806 because it would not change the education or skillset of an EFDA but rather include the exposure and processing of radiographs in the EFDA scope of practice.

I thank you all for considering my testimony today and I hope you will consider making these necessary changes to support dental staff.

Respectfully,

Danica Loring, CDA, EFDA
Director of Operations
Dental Center and Jackman Community Health Center
Penobscot Community Health Care
1048 Union Street | Bangor, Maine 04401
Phone: 207-992-2152 ext. 2809 | www.PCHC.com