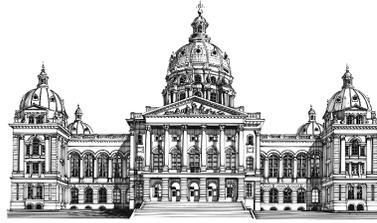

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Des Moines, IA 50319
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Dental Hygiene Programs

ISSUE

A review of the status of the Dental Hygiene Programs at the University of Iowa and community colleges.

AFFECTED AGENCIES

Board of Regents, University of Iowa

Five community colleges

CODE AUTHORITY

Section 262.9, Code of Iowa (Board of Regents)

Section 260C.14, Code of Iowa (Community Colleges)

Section 6, HF 2477, FY 1997 Education Appropriations Act

BACKGROUND

Board of Regents: Prior to 1992, the curriculum at the University of Iowa (SUI) included a Bachelor of Science (B.S.) and a Masters of Science (M.S.) in Dental Hygiene. Average class enrollment was 20 for the Bachelors of Science degree and one for the masters of Science degree. The Bachelors of Science degree typically took four years to complete.

Following completion of a Peat Marwick Organizational Study by the Board of Regents, the SUI proposed elimination of the Dental Hygiene Program. The Board approved the elimination in April 1992 with an effective date of June 1992, while permitting completion in the Program of those already enrolled. The last graduates were in May 1995. Tenured faculty within the Program were reassigned within the SUI. There were 4.8 faculty positions to serve the 40 SUI enrollees in the undergraduate program, in addition to utilizing adjunct faculty. Approximately \$200,000 annually was internally reallocated within the College of Dentistry following the closure of the Dental Hygiene Program.

Three tenured faculty from the Department of Dental Hygiene at the SUI filed a lawsuit in federal District Court alleging sex discrimination and retaliation by the SUI. The Court awarded the plaintiffs (faculty) \$195,000 (\$65,000 per person) for certain retaliation claims

and \$227,800 for attorney fees and costs. Both the SUI and the plaintiffs appealed the decision and in July 1996, a three judge panel of the 8th Circuit Court of Appeals ruled on the side of the SUI and reversed the judgment of the District Court vacating the awards. In September 1996, a plea by the plaintiffs for a rehearing *en banc* was denied by the Court of Appeals. The plaintiffs had until December 20, 1996, to decide if they wished to appeal the decision to the U.S. Supreme Court. The plaintiffs did file the necessary legal action on December 19, 1996, to continue the appeal to the U.S. Supreme Court.

Community Colleges: At the same time that the SUI Dental Hygiene Program was available, an Associate of Applied Science (A.A.S.) program was available at Des Moines Area Community College (DMACC) and Hawkeye Technical Institute (which has since become Hawkeye Community College). Average class enrollment was 20 at the Des Moines Area Community College, and 20 at the Hawkeye Technical Institute. The Associate degree typically took three years to complete.

Between 1991 and 1996, enrollments at the two community colleges remained constant, although applications tripled. Iowa Western Community College (located in Council Bluffs) in connection with Creighton University in Omaha and Kirkwood Community College (in Cedar Rapids) in connection with the SUI are both exploring the possibility of adding a Dental Hygiene Curriculum. House File 2477 (FY 1997 Education Appropriations Act) prohibits any community college, except Kirkwood, from adding a Dental Hygiene Program until after the adjournment of the 1997 General Assembly to allow time for the lawsuit to be completed. Kirkwood Community College was exempted from this approximate one-year moratorium since a letter of intent to the Department of Education for consideration of a Dental Hygiene curriculum had been filed prior to enactment of HF 2477.

CURRENT SITUATION

Educational Opportunities: A person desiring an education in dental hygiene in Iowa is limited to an associate degree at a community college. Relationships exist between community colleges and institutions offering a four-year degrees outside of the State to facilitate those students who may wish to pursue further education in dental hygiene. A bachelors degree is possible in a health education-related curriculum at one of the Regents institutions or a private institution of higher education in Iowa but would require a minimum of four years to complete and would be in a more general health curriculum rather than in dental hygiene specifically.

As of February 1996, there were 53 educational programs providing bachelors degrees for graduates of associated degree dental hygiene programs in the United States. The degree may not always be in Dental Hygiene but these numbers include degrees in health-related subjects also. Of the 53, there were 25 programs with a B.A. in Dental Hygiene. In 1984 there were approximately 280 programs designed with a four-year degree from a health-related program, which indicates a nation-wide trend of closures and reorganizations.

The Des Moines Area Community College and the Hawkeye Community College offer a dental hygiene program. Kirkwood Community College is the only one of the three community colleges (North Iowa, Iowa Western, and Kirkwood) considering the dental hygiene curriculum to file a letter of intent with the Department of Education and the Iowa Coordinating Council for Post-High School Education. Filing the letter of intent with the Department is required. However, the Council is a voluntary group of all higher education entities to the State which reviews curriculum changes and takes non-binding action.

Cost: Due to the considerable clinical expenses involved, Kirkwood Community College is pursuing an option of utilizing the facilities within the College of Dentistry at the SUI to reduce the cost of the start-up of a dental hygiene program. The SUI is also studying a complementary bachelors degree program for dental hygienists with an associate degree.

One national research article indicates that (dependent upon the student enrollment) costs could be \$1.0 million to begin a program without assistance from existing programs. Documentation from the SUI indicates that in 1993 a per student cost would be \$4,437 for a 12-student enrollment and \$3,487 for a 20-student enrollment. The estimate does not include faculty and staff which would be provided by Kirkwood.

Supply - Faculty: One common concern among the institutions is the availability of faculty for Dental Hygiene Programs. Both current community college programs have faculty that have both bachelors Dental Hygiene graduates and associate degree graduates with a four-year degree in another program. With the elimination of the bachelors degree in Dental Hygiene at the SUI, a greater number of faculty of the community college programs will have the associate dental hygiene degree and a bachelors degree in a related field or faculty will need to be recruited from the existing dental hygiene pool or from out-of-state.

Supply - Students: Duplication and the student pool quantity is a concern of the two existing community college programs if others would expand the curriculum to include dental hygiene. A study completed by the Iowa Dental Hygienists' Association in 1993 showed that:

- 50.0 FTE additional hygienist positions would occur each year for five years.
- Of the 437 dentists responding to the survey, 17.2% indicated a need to start an associate degree in the eastern part of the State and 11.9% in the western part of the State. The survey was conducted after the Board of Regents action to eliminate the Dental Hygiene Program at the SUI, yet 34.5% of the responding dentists indicate a need to continue that Program.
- A market study completed by the Iowa Dental Association Survey in 1990 used by Kirkwood Community College for the Department of Education Intent process indicates an annual need of 129 new dental hygienists and an annual supply of 33 in the State.

From data provided by the Iowa Dental Hygienists' Association it would appear that out-of-state programs provide many dental hygienists in the State when there is not an educational program located nearby.

Income: According to those within the industry and those within the educational arena, there is little differential if any in income between those with an associate degree or with a bachelors degree. It appears that personal educational needs and career choice drive the decision as to the educational level attained, even before the elimination of the SUI Dental Hygiene Program.

ALTERNATIVES

The alternatives that the General Assembly may wish to consider include:

- Changes in the available dental hygiene programs by:
 - Encouraging the reestablishment of a bachelors degree program at the SUI.

- Encouraging the Regents institutions or private four-year institutions to establish a health-related bachelors degree program which the dental hygienists graduating from an associated degree program at a community college could transfer to without difficulty.
- Encouraging the expansion of the existing associated degree programs at the two community colleges currently offering a dental hygiene program.
- Encouraging the establishment of other associate degree programs at community colleges.
- Encouraging an existing or new associate degree community college program and the SUI to work together to have the SUI offer the third and fourth year of a bachelors degree program for a dental hygiene program.
- Determining the appropriate number of graduates necessary to meet the actual need for dental hygienists.
- Allowing the market place to work following the final graduation of four-year degree dental hygienists in 1995 and delay action.
- Establishing reciprocity agreements with other states which have four-year degree programs in dental hygiene to allow Iowa residents to obtain a four-year degree without paying out-of-state tuition.

Historically the General Assembly has not entered into curriculum decisions at the Regents institutions, private four-year institutions, and the community colleges. Statutory authority exists for the Board of Regents and the boards of directors at the 15 community colleges to make such decisions. Legal action is still underway with the appeal by the three dental hygienists from the SUI following the Eighth U.S. Circuit Court of Appeals reversal of the lower court ruling. Waiting for the final court action to take place may be beneficial in the event there is a financial impact from the decision.

BUDGET IMPACT

The Board of Regents typically makes curriculum changes, as it did with the Dental Hygiene Program at the SUI without approval of the General Assembly. With this action comes the financial responsibility also, as the Board considers the costs or savings with curriculum changes. The General Assembly has not historically provided additional funding for a particular degree program to be added nor appropriated less funds when a degree program is eliminated at the Regents institutions. Funding has been provided at certain times when the General Assembly has determined that a particular program existing at a Regents institution needs to be expanded or improved.

When the funding formula for community colleges was in place and utilized, there was additional funding provided for a college when a certain program considered more expensive and yet determined appropriate by the General Assembly, such as radio stations and heavy equipment programs. Although the formula is not used for FY 1997, the additional funding which was provided remains in the base of the affected community colleges. However, typically when the board of directors of a community college adds or deletes a curriculum subject to approval of the State Board of Education, additional funding from the General Assembly has not been received nor decreased when a program is eliminated.

Nothing precludes the General Assembly from appropriating additional funds to create or expand a dental hygiene program. The cost would be determined by projected enrollment, tuition income and clinical income, and whether the institution providing the program is affiliated with an existing dental program. A free-standing program would have a greater cost.

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