

OPPOSE SB808

I fear that SB808 will act as a barrier between pediatricians and their patients as well as add a layer to the dentist/patient relationship that need not exist.

It is clear that the pandemic-frenzy has piqued the interest of healthcare professionals who aren't otherwise approved to administer vaccines. It is disturbing to me that dentists would be interested in exploiting fear in order to increase profits at the cost of their relationship with their minor-patients.

Dentists and child-patients already have an anxiety-ridden relationship in many cases. Children know that a trip to the dentist entails potentially uncomfortable oral procedures but to now have to also anticipate the anxiety and discomfort of vaccination, seems cruel. As superficial as this may seem, as a parent, it is important to me to foster a trusting relationship between my children and their healthcare providers. It would be difficult to explain to my child why someone who specializes in oral health is now interested in providing a vaccination that is unrelated to oral health. Would my child then be worried that the pediatrician might now insist on performing a thorough dental-cleaning? Let's not confuse roles. Specializations exist for a reason. Doctors are more than vaccine-mills and the doctor/patient relationship/history is necessary for proper vaccination-consideration and administration. Similarly, dentists are more than a peddling opportunity for vaccine manufacturers; allow them to focus on their specialty without muddying the waters.

Dental offices are already very busy with patients often scheduled back-to-back. The actual time with the dentist is quite abbreviated. Only several minutes during a routine-cleaning appointment are spent with the dentist face-to-face. How much longer will these appointments have to be to also include the necessary conversation that informed-consent requires to provide a vaccine to the patient? Do dentists have all the necessary information to vaccinate a patient? Vaccination is more than a simple shot-in-the-arm. Many parents have questions about the potential risks of the illness itself as well as the risks and benefits of the vaccine. For example, dentists are not equipped to talk with parents about how the influenza virus is communicated and what the potential consequences of declining the vaccine may be. Even if Dentists did have comprehensive training in virology, they simply do not have the time to have these conversations.

Are dentists equipped to discuss the potential risks of the vaccine itself and to advise patients on where to go if adverse effects occur? How would they explain to their patient that while they are considered qualified to dispense and administer a vaccine, they are not qualified to treat reactions related to said vaccine? It seems like a disconnect that someone who may have a reaction to a vaccine would be advised to then follow-up with a medical doctor when the dentist is the one who administered the vaccine in the first place. The patient would then have to seek out an appointment with a medical doctor who would have to be informed of when/where the vaccine took place and would likely need to consult with the dentist about what may have caused the adverse reaction. Why would we place this potential delay in treatment by confusing the role of the dentist?