

1 November 17

TO: ALL THIRD-PARTY PAYERS

RE: DENTAL SPECIALTY LICENSURE

It has come to the attention of the New Mexico Board of Dental Health Care that certain third-party payers do not recognize dental specialists unless that dentist has a dental specialty license.

There are two pathways that a dental specialist can get a dental license in NM. These are defined in statute and rules. It does not matter which pathway a dental specialist obtains their NM dental license. As long as they have graduated and have certification from an accredited specialty residency program recognized by the New Mexico Board of Dental Health Care, they are able to practice, advertise, and announce themselves to the public as a specialist. They may have a general license to practice dentistry, or a specialty license. Either way, the Board recognizes that they are a dental specialist.

A specialty dental license in New Mexico is actually a restricted license. It is NOT a higher status license. It is meant primarily for those graduates from dental school that have not or were unable to take a regular clinical dental board exam, or other special circumstances. General dentists and specialist dentists that are applying for licensure in NM are encouraged to pursue a general license to practice dentistry, and only apply for a specialty license if they have no other choice.

It is incorrect for anyone, including third-party payers, to refuse recognition of a dental specialist as defined in the New Mexico Dental Practice Act and Rules and Regulations established by the NM Board of Dental Health Care only because they have a general license to practice dentistry.

Charles Schumacher, DDS
Chair, NM Board of Dental Health Care