



# PENNSYLVANIA STATE BOARD OF DENTISTRY



Secretary Carol Aichele

[www.dos.state.pa.us](http://www.dos.state.pa.us)

July 2011

[Disciplinary Actions](#)

## Secretary Aichele Sees Education, Professional Licensing, Job Creation Ties in Visit to Lake Erie College of Osteopathic Medicine

Secretary of the Commonwealth Carol Aichele recently brought Governor Corbett's message of attracting and retaining top professional talent in Pennsylvania, thus creating jobs in the state, by setting and maintaining high standards, to the Lake Erie College of Osteopathic Medicine.

The secretary's tour of the school, the largest osteopathic medical college on one campus in the country, gave her a first-hand look at innovative education practices designed to help hold down costs for students, while meeting the growing demand for medical professionals.



Secretary Carol Aichele tours the Lake Erie College of Osteopathic Medicine with Provost Silvia M. Ferretti, right, and Pharmacy School Dean Hershey S. Bell, M.D

LECOM Provost Silvia M. Ferretti, DO, and Pharmacy School Dean Hershey S. Bell, M. D., conducted the tour. They discussed the school's innovative program

providing the only campus in the nation awarding three-year degrees for students in the fields of osteopathic medicine, pharmacy, and for physicians' assistants to obtain a DO degree.

This accelerated program helps control students' educational costs, helping control the overall cost of medical care, and by focusing on the primary care fields of family medicine, pediatrics, internal medicine, and OB/GYN, provides qualified doctors in needed areas more quickly. The same is true for the three-year pharmacy program, which helps get these needed medical professionals in the field more quickly and at lower expense to students.

"This program dovetails perfectly with Governor Corbett's policy of creating jobs by creating an environment to attract the best professionals, by establishing and maintaining the highest professional and ethical standards for the 29 professions licensed by the Department of State in Pennsylvania," Aichele said during the tour.

By drawing more top pros to the state, jobs will be created, evidenced by the statistic that following completion of the residency requirement, each osteopath creates 20 jobs. By setting up practices and agencies, professionals bring needed jobs to Pennsylvania's communities, by hiring people to work in their businesses as well as employing other workers for all kinds of services, ranging from legal representation to cleaning services. Professional-led businesses also support local economies by purchasing goods and services, from computers to paper to vehicles.

Being home to top professional talent also supports quality educational facilities such as LECOM. This school supports 1,000 jobs in the greater Erie area, and adds \$136 million annually to the Erie regional economy, and \$225 million to Pennsylvania's economy. LECOM graduated 242 osteopathic doctors and 124 pharmacists this past May.

LECOM is planning further expansion, adding a dental school, which is slated to open its doors next year.

[Contact Us](#)

[Report Unethical Activity](#)

[Renew Your License](#)

[Meet the Board](#)

[PHMP](#)

## Policy Changes Strengthen Public Protection Efforts

Protecting the public health and safety is a top priority for the Bureau of Professional and Occupational Affairs. During their first week in office, Governor Tom Corbett and Secretary of the Commonwealth Carol Aichele were confronted with a tragic situation that challenged this important premise. This situation involved the Women's Medical Society and Dr. Kermit Gosnell in Philadelphia.

Governor Corbett acted swiftly in charging the Departments of State and Health with implementing new procedures to strengthen public protection efforts.

Following Governor Corbett's direction, Secretary Aichele has implemented several policy changes to prevent a similar occurrence in the future. Specifically, these Bureau of Professional and Occupations Affairs policy changes are now in place:

- All complaints concerning a person or facility are assigned to the same attorney, a common sense approach to ensure proper management of each case.

- All attorneys now cross-check open and closed files with other staff attorneys, to make sure patterns of misconduct do not go unnoticed. For a prosecutor, pattern identification is a key component in demonstrating consistent wrongdoing. Often, proving a pattern of misconduct provides sufficient evidence for prosecutors to present to the appropriate professional licensure board, which can then take appropriate action.

- Reports on individuals and facilities will be more detailed, including history of any prior complaints or violations. These include checklists, which cover the file cross-checks mentioned above, appropriate data collection and history review.

- Bureau attorneys are receiving formal training on investigative procedures and rules and regulations, including prosecuting complaints.

In addition, the Departments of State and Health are working to strengthen communications and complement administrative and regulatory efforts, including:

- Setting up a means of sharing information between agencies, on a monthly basis, including complaints, serious events, complications, deaths, and investigations. If one of our agencies is looking into a situation, the other agency will know about it and will coordinate information and efforts. To streamline this, each agency has established a point of contact to avoid any confusion.

- We have also established a process for joint investigations.

The vast majority of the approximately 830,000 professionals licensed in 29 areas by the Bureau adhere to the high professional and ethical standards inherent in the granting of their licenses.

BPOA looks forward to continuing its work with these individuals to enhance the status of their professions here in Pennsylvania.

## State Board of Dentistry Moves to Promote C.E. in Professional Ethics for Dental Health Practitioners

*“The dental profession holds a special position of trust within society. As a consequence, society affords the profession certain privileges that are not available to members of the public-at-large. In return, the profession makes a commitment to society that its members will adhere to high ethical standards of conduct. These standards are embodied in the ADA Principles of Ethics and Code of Professional Conduct (ADA Code). The ADA code is, in effect, a written expression of the obligations arising from the implied contract between the dental profession and society.”\**

*\*Ethics and Code of Professional Conduct of the American Dental Association.*

In order to maintain the highest standards for the practice of dentistry in Pennsylvania, and thereby assure the safety of the general public, the State Board of Dentistry is empowered by Section (a) of The Dental Law “To establish and alter, from time to time, the standards of preliminary and professional education and the training required for licensure to practice dentistry and as dental hygienists and certification for expanded function dental assistants.” Section 3.(j.2)(1) further provides for the Board to “Adopt, promulgate and enforce rules and regulations establishing requirements for continuing dental education to be met by persons licensed or certified under this act.” (Act of May 1, 1993, P.L. 216, No. 76 Cl. 63).

Emphasizing both the crucial role of on-going education in the clinical and academic competence of dental health professionals, and the obligation of practitioners to keep their professional knowledge and skills up to date, *Section 3 (2) of Pennsylvania’s Dental Law states*

*specific continuing education requirements as a “precedent to biennial renewal of credit hours for a license to practice*

*dentistry; 20 credit hours for a license to practice dental hygiene, with 5 hours in public health-related courses for a public health dental hygiene practitioner; 10 credit hours for a certificate to practice expanded function dental assisting. A credit hour is defined as one clock hour of instruction ((3) and courses in office management or practice building are excluded in calculating continuing education credits ((j.2)(1).*

For dental health professionals, however, often involved in a “fee-centric” environment, the challenges of balancing the moral and legal issues involved in recommending treatment and providing referrals are a part of routine practice that are not discussed, clarified, or supported through currently authorized continuing education subject areas in Pennsylvania.

In the March, 2011 SBOD discussion of the continuing education subject areas authorized in Chapter 33 of the PA Code, Subchapter F. Continuing Dental Education, Mariellen Brickley-Raab, R.D.H., Chairperson of the SBOD Ethics Committee, proposed that Section 33.402 be revised to include authorization of courses on Professional Ethics for dental health practitioners. The Board voted unanimously to forward this recommendation to Board Counsel for further development.

With the promulgation of new regulations that include professional ethics as an authorized subject area, Pennsylvania’s dental health professionals can avail themselves of the evolving information and legalities related to patient rights and practice restrictions (such as fee splitting in patient referrals).

Philip T. Siegel, D.D.S.  
Chairman  
PA State Board of Dentistry