Training of Orthodontic Auxiliaries - an update

There is still some confusion among our membership about training Orthodontic Auxiliaries which the following should help to clear up. We have received confirmation from the Dental Council’s Secretariat on the processes associated with the registration of an orthodontic auxiliary. Don’t hesitate to e-mail Dr Matthew Williams <mjtwilliams@paradise.net.nz> with any further questions.

There are two pathways to registration as an Orthodontic Auxiliary (OA)

Pathway 1.
This is for candidates who hold a Graduate Certificate of Orthodontic Assisting, Academy of Orthodontic Assisting and a dental therapy, dental hygiene or dentistry qualification and has approved experience in the provision of orthodontic auxiliary services under the direction and supervision of a dentist or dental specialist who can attest to competency.

The process steps associated with this pathway are:

- These candidates require a Council approved supervisor (dentist or dental specialist). To achieve this, candidates are required to submit the OA001 form, where the supervisor will be issued with a supervision protocol.
- The applicants then have to complete the on-line Trapezio course and complete the Graduate Certificate of Orthodontic Assisting qualification (Trapezio qualification which is the new brand for Academy of Orthodontic Assisting). This involves:
  - the successful completion of all the online modules, and thereafter
  - the successful completion of the Two Day Clinical Programme, currently run by the NZAO within New Zealand. (Please contact the NZAO Executive Administrator admin@orthodontists.org.nz for details)
- After obtaining the Graduate Certificate of Orthodontic Assisting and the supervisor is assured of the competency of the candidate in all the clinical tasks within the Scope of Practice for an Orthodontic Auxiliary, the supervisor verifies the candidate’s competence by attesting to this in writing to Council.
- The candidates will then receive the registration form (REG001) to be completed and submitted with the required supporting documentation to Council as an application of registration. The cost of registration is currently $357.78 and the annual practice certificate is $343.41.

Pathway 2.
This is for candidates who undertake the NZAO Orthodontic Auxiliary Training Program (NZAO OATP) pathway which leads to the NZAO Certificate of Orthodontic Assisting (NZAO COA). This certificate is then submitted to the Dental Council for registration as an Orthodontic Auxiliary; Individuals who have no formal dental qualification can enter this pathway.

The Admission Criteria for the NZAO COA are:

(a) Admission to the programme for Certificate of Orthodontic Auxiliary shall be subject to the approval and support of the employing specialist Orthodontist who is a full member of NZAO.

(b) All applicants will either be enrolled in the New Zealand Dental Assistants Programme and have completed the Cross Infection Control module or have obtained a previous dental qualification; either as a Dental Assistant, Therapist or Hygienist, or be a trained dentist.
(c) All applicants must know their immune status for Hepatitis B. Applicants who have never been infected or vaccinated will be required to complete a vaccination procedure. If applicants have been infected with Hepatitis B they will be required to undergo further specialised tests. If these tests show the applicant has detectable blood levels of Hepatitis B viral that exceed the current specified level the applicant will not be admitted to the programme.

(d) All applicants will have a current First Aid Certificate. This certificate should meet at least the NZQA standard 6401 or level 3 COR

(e) All applicants whose first language is not English and who have not completed a minimum of three year secondary education schooling in English, will be advised they will be required to satisfy the English language requirements of the Dental Council of New Zealand prior to obtaining registration in the Scope for Orthodontic Auxiliary Practice.

To undertake this training pathway the candidate must:

- Make sure the orthodontic practice is eligible to train an Orthodontic Auxiliary. The employing orthodontist must be a registered specialist member of the NZAO and satisfactorily complete the requirements of a modified first stage of the NZAO Practice Accreditation Program, referred to as the “Orthodontic Auxiliary Trainers Accreditation Program”. The NZAO Executive Administrator co-ordinates all aspects of this and currently there is no fee for this

- Complete the NZDA Dental Assistants Program. Depending on timing, the minimum prerequisite is the module ‘Introduction to Dental Assisting’, with the entire program to be done at the next intake. This module ‘Introduction to Dental Assisting” covers the important aspects of Cross Infection and must be satisfactorily completed before enrolling your staff member on the NZAO Orthodontic Auxiliary Training Program. The entire NZDA Dental Assisting Program must be completed before completing the NZAO Certificate of Orthodontic Assisting. The current costs associated with this are $950

- The employing orthodontist must register the candidate on the NZAO Orthodontic Auxiliary Training Program (NZAO OATP). This currently costs $400. Successful completion of this program will result in the issuing of the NZAO Certificate of Orthodontic Assisting (NZAO COA). (Please contact the NZAO executive administrator admin@orthodontists.org.nz for details)

- The OA001 is NOT required for candidates undertaking pathway 2 and who are enrolled on the NZAO OATP. Please note that the candidate will need to register with the Dental Council as an Orthodontic Auxiliary Trainee _ (form OA0001 from the DC website) ONLY if they are undertaking pathway 1. This currently costs $71.55

- Be trained by the orthodontist “in house”. The curriculum and log of what they need to do is all supplied in the NZAO OATP manual distributed by the NZAO Executive Administrator. Remember that the orthodontist will need to be onsite at all times to advise, guide, monitor, participate or intervene in all procedures undertaken by candidate and that patients are aware that the person providing the orthodontic auxiliary care is under training and appropriate patient consent is obtained

- Successfully complete the Trapezio on-line course. This currently costs $1,200 USD with a discount applied for multiple staff members – see www.trapezio.com
• Successfully complete the two day NZAO hands-on course. (Please contact the NZAO Executive Administrator admin@orthodontists.org.nz for details) Currently this costs $800 for full NZAO members

• Once the NZAO COA has been obtained, then email the Dental Council requesting a copy of the registration application form (REG001) and confirming the receipt of the NZAO COA. It is important that in addition to completing the REG001 applicants also submit a certified copy of the NZAO Orthodontic Auxiliary Training Programme: Certificate of Orthodontic Assisting qualification along with the other required material required in the REG 001 form. This registration application currently costs $357.78.

• Once registration has been granted, then the Annual Practice Certificate fee is $343.41

Please note: The NZAO COA qualification has not been published against any of the additional scopes for OA’s. They therefore are not currently allowed to be granted those add-on scopes. However this may well change with the recent submissions on the Councils consultation document recommending that all additional scopes for orthodontic auxiliaries be incorporated into the general scope.

Currently to train and register an orthodontic auxiliary using pathway 2 has direct costs of approximately $4,500. This does not include the indirect costs associated with the training and subsequent registration (CPR training, Blood tests and vaccination if indicated, CPD and travel, accommodation and wages to attend the two day hands on course etc)

For those individuals who commenced their orthodontic auxiliary training before March 2010 (when the NZAO OATP was formally gazetted), please contact Matt Williams who will advise you on your registration process, which differs slightly from the above, depending upon individual circumstances

If you decide you do NOT want to register your staff member as an Orthodontic Auxiliary, then your chair side assistant can still carry out the tasks listed in the NZAO newsletter volume 24, No2, June 2010. I hope this helps to clarify the training pathways available for Orthodontic Auxiliaries. For further information please contact Jean, our Executive Administrator, in the first instance or visit www.orthodontists.org.nz

Peter Fowler