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Page 2: Your demographics

**Q1** Your details

Name	Karen Boyce-Bacon
Company/organisation	[Redacted]
City/town	[Redacted]
Email	[Redacted]

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**Q2** Your submission is in the capacity as **dental therapist**

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Page 3: The proposal

**Q3** Do you agree or disagree with the proposal to remove the 18-year age limit for restorative activities from the OHT scope of practice including: accredited, gazetted programmes allowing oral health therapists to perform restorative treatment on patients 18 years and older an exclusion, such as "Restorative treatment on patients 18 years and older", being placed on oral health therapists' scopes of practice until they complete an accredited adult restorative programme which will allow them to apply to have the exclusion removed (noting that the activities registered oral health therapists can currently perform within their scope of practice remain unchanged).

**Strongly agree**

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Page 4: Your support

**Q4** Please describe why you support the proposal

Dental therapy skills are one of the subsets of oral health therapy; oral health therapists are already practising hygiene skills on over 18 years old and have the competency and capability to manage patients' basic restorative needs over the age of 18

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Page 5: Your concerns

**Q5** Please describe your specific concern/s with the proposal **Respondent skipped this question**

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Page 6: Details about OHT scope, qualifications and competencies

**Q6** Do you have any specific feedback on the proposed amendments to the OHT scope of practice, prescribed qualifications or competencies as set out in appendices 1 & 2? **Yes**

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Page 7: Specific comments on the proposal

**Q7** Please provide us specific comments related to the OHT scope, qualifications and competencies.

There are currently no age limits in restorative care being delivered by oral health therapists who have completed an approved course in Australia. Subsequently, Australia has not seen any adverse outcomes since it was established in 2009 in Victoria and in 2010 nationally. Graduates' ability and scope of practice should rest on their educational preparation and competency for practice and not on artificially imposed age limits without evidence.

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Page 8: Anything else

**Q8** Do you have any further comments on the proposal? **Yes**

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Page 10: Last thoughts

**Q9** Please provide us your feedback

People in New Zealand are living with chronic dental pain and the lack of access to oral health care is a key concern for the practitioners and public. Having a highly skilled workforce of oral health therapists' to assist in meeting the oral health needs of New Zealanders should also be taken into consideration when making the final decision on this consultation. I agree with Council that having this exclusion of scope removed for oral health therapists is a start to better access for primary dental health care for the general population. This will also help dental therapists who have completed an approved course be able to deliver primary health care as well in the future. Our population is ageing and it is evident that the needs of older New Zealanders will not be met by the existing workforce and current model of dental care for over the age of 18. The role of oral health therapists (and dental therapists) in addressing the unmet need in older adults would be vital for good oral health for all; for life.

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