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Page 2: Your demographics

Q1 Your details

Name	Rylee Panui
Company/organisation	[Redacted]
City/town	[Redacted]
Email	[Redacted]

Q2 Your submission is in the capacity as **oral health therapist**

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**

Page 4: Your support

Consultation on the age limit for restorative activities in the oral health therapy scope of practice

Q4 Please describe why you support the proposal

Firstly, I think it is important to outline the current scope of practice for Oral Health Therapists in New Zealand. At current, it includes but does not limit to competencies such as obtaining and assessing medical and oral health histories, removing hard and soft deposits from all tooth surfaces, diagnosing dental caries for patients up to the age of 18 and restorative activities including; cavity preparations, extractions of primary teeth, performing pulpotomies on primary teeth and preparing primary teeth for stainless steel crowns, on patients up to the age of 18. I think it is interesting to note that majority of submissions thus far have been under the impression that we either cannot work on any patients over the age of 18 or that we cannot perform restorative work, which both are incorrect. It is clear that there is a deficit in understanding in this area which, moving forward should be addressed to deliver better outcomes for our patients.

As mentioned, Oral Health Therapists' scope of practice includes working with patients of all ages, medical conditions and medical histories. As students, we are also taught a good understanding of pharmacology, dental morphology and dental materials that, should the age restrictions be removed, will help when treating adult patients in restorative treatment. The 18-year-old age limit is an unnecessary restriction, which not only hinders professional practice but also effects accessibility and cost for patients. Allowing OHT's to diagnose caries and perform simple restorations (covered under the dental therapy scope of practice) will fill important gaps in New Zealand dental care whilst, enabling dentists to better focus their time on more complex cases.

There are many disparities within the New Zealand health sector, with dental care being one of the top issues. Over 50% of the population do not attend regular dental check-ups due to accessibility and affordability. It is not surprising then that we have an extremely high rate of tooth loss and decay in our adult patients and an even higher rate in our Maori and Pasifika patients. Allowing OHT's to practice their skills on all patients will increase access for the public, decrease the financial burden, whilst maintaining a high quality of care.

The Australian Dental and Oral Health Therapist Association noted in 2016 that New Zealand Legislation should have a bigger emphasis on "graduate's ability and scope of practice should rest on their educational preparation and competency for practice and not on artificially imposed age limits without evidence".

Page 5: Your concerns

Q5 Please describe your specific concern/s with the proposal

Respondent skipped this question

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? **No**

Page 7: Specific comments on the proposal

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

Respondent skipped this question

Page 8: Anything else

Q8 Do you have any further comments on the proposal?

No

Q9 Please provide us your feedback

Respondent skipped this question
