AAID files suit challenging how Texas recognizes dental specialties

The American Academy of Implant Dentistry (AAID) filed suit in Federal District Court in Austin, Texas, recently, challenging the constitutionality of a regulation promulgated by the Texas State Board of Dental Examiners that limits dentists from advertising to the public as “specialists.”

The flawed regulation delegates the authority to determine “specialties” and which dentists can call themselves “specialists” to the American Dental Association, a private trade association over which the Texas Board of Dental Examiners has no control. Specialty recognition is entirely determined within the ADA through a political process carried out by competitor dentists, with no opportunity for review or appeal by any licensed dentist in Texas. The offending regulation — Texas Administrative Code Sec. 108.54 — is available online.

The AAID was joined by three other organizations that issue bona fide credentials and certifications in various areas of dentistry, such as implant dentistry, dental anesthesia, orofacial pain and oral medicine. The plaintiff organizations are the American Academy of Implant Dentistry, the American Society of Dentist Anesthesiologists, the American Academy of Oral Medicine and the American Academy of Orofacial Pain. Five individual Texas licensed dentists are also plaintiffs in the lawsuit.

“Texas law violates several constitutional guarantees to Texas dentists, including the right to due process, equal protection under the law and the right to free speech. This regulation is similar to a Florida state statute that also deferred specialty recognition to the ADA, which was declared unconstitutional in 2009 (see DuCoin v. Viamonte Ross),” according to Frank Recker, DDS, JD, attorney for the AAID.

Academy recognizes Dr. David Vassos for ‘Lifetime Achievement’

David Vassos, DDS, of Edmonton, Alberta, Canada, will be honored for his achievements as an implant dentist at the American Academy of Implant Dentistry’s Western District meeting in San Francisco on April 11.

The academy is celebrating Vassos’ long and distinguished career in implant dentistry, which includes being a founding member of the Canadian Society of Oral Implantology.

Vassos received his DDS from the University of Alberta in 1963. He has practiced implant dentistry for 46 years, having decided to commit his career to placing and restoring implants in 1968. He achieved the status of fellow of the AAID in 1985 and was elected an honored fellow by the academy in 1993. Vassos became a diplomate with the American Board of Oral Implantology/Implant Dentistry in 1990. He has a long history of leadership in the academy, having given lectures at multiple AAID meetings and having served on the admission and credentials board, as well as the membership and ethics committees.

For more information about the AAID and its credentialed members, please visit the website at www.aaid.com or call the AAID at (312) 335-1550.