

Wisconsin Dental Association: Gov. Scott Walker signs Patient Records Protection Act

Posted on Friday, Dec 1, 2017

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WEST ALLIS, WIS., Dec. 1, 2017 – Gov. Scott Walker signed Senate Bill 258 yesterday into law. The new Patient Records Protection Act creates important protections for dental patients to ensure they have access to their records at all times, regardless of which dentist they see for care.

Wisconsin is one of several states that allows non-dentists to own dental practices. This can create occasional confusion over whether practice owners or employee dentists are responsible for certain processes. This is especially true for patient records.

The Patient Records Protection Act clarifies state law by requiring that, regardless of whether a dental practice is owned by a dentist or a non-dentist, the person having a controlling interest in the dental practice is responsible for turning over patient records if the patient requests them or if the Dentistry Examining Board requests them in the course of an investigation.

The law also bans the practice of quotas, whereby dentists and dental hygienists are required to see a certain number of patients within a specified period of time.

The new law is Act 116 and is the product of cooperation between the Wisconsin

Dental Association and the Association of Dental Support Organizations. The legislation was authored by state Rep. David Steffen (R-Green Bay) and state Sen. Van Wanggaard (R-Racine) and passed both the Assembly and Senate on a voice vote.