

# RISK MANAGEMENT

## Advice line for dentists



### BACKGROUND

The Dentists Insurance Company (TDIC) offers the Risk Management Advice Line as a complimentary service to help dentists handle difficult situations. Some callers are in the midst of a crisis; others just need reassurance that they've done the right thing.

### CASE REPORT

A dentist called about a 36-year-old patient who required an examination and evaluation of her third molars. The dentist recommending pulling all 4 because their supereruption had created an anterior open bite after an occlusal guard was used. In the patient's medical history, she indicated she was taking magnesium supplements and had a history of benign ventricular contractions.

In light of these facts, the dentist consulted with the patient's physician before treatment. In addition, he held an informed consent discussion with the patient, who signed the consent form before any extractions were done.

Treatment was begun after the dentist checked the patient's vital signs. He used 5 carpules of mepivacaine, plain, and nitrous oxide. The extractions were considered simple and were accomplished with an elevator and extraction forceps. The treatment was accomplished without incident, and the patient was discharged with a pain medication prescription.

The dentist called later that evening, when the patient reported the extraction sites were still oozing. He made another call a few hours later and the bleeding had ceased. The next day, the patient's husband reported that the patient was snoring, but later had stopped breathing. Her husband had immediately called 911 and begun cardiopulmonary resuscitation (CPR). The patient's cardiologist told the dentist that he did not believe the incident was related to the dental treatment.

### ADVICE LINE CONSULTATION

The dentist called the Advice Line to voice his concerns. He was told that he followed proper protocol, but was also referred to an attorney to determine if he had to report the incident to the state dental board, which some states require. The attorney was able to reassure the dentist that such a report was not needed because the patient wasn't transported directly from the dental office to the hospital.

#### Clinical Significance

The dentist in this case did everything required and even beyond. Even in cases like this, something can happen, so it's better to be overly cautious than not cautious enough. The Advice Line not only provides answers for crisis situations but also provides confidential, one-on-one guidance on other issues. It's available at no cost to all members of the California Dental Association (CDA), American Dental Association (ADA), or any sponsoring dental association. Callers should ensure that they have the following:

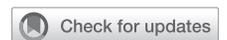
- Policy number or first and last name if you're a TDIC policy holder
- ADA number if you're not a policy holder
- Patient chart if the call concerns a patient issue
- Employee file if the call concerns an employment issue
- Details on previous calls to the line if the issue is ongoing or recurring
- Correspondence and other documentation in case the analyst has further questions

IDIC Risk Management Staff: In doubt about how to handle a situation? Err on the side of caution. *CDA J* 46:519-520, 2018

Reprints not available

# VALUE CHAIN

## Assessing support and primary activities



### BACKGROUND

The concept of a "value chain" was first proposed in Michael Porter's book, *Competitive Advantage*. The process involves looking at

the various links or tactics in the value chain individually, then assessing which processes and activities can be added, augmented, modified, or removed to create a more positive impact on the