

1974 S.C. Op. Atty. Gen. 146 (S.C.A.G.), 1974 S.C. Op. Atty. Gen. No. 3769, 1974 WL 21283

Office of the Attorney General

State of South Carolina

Opinion No. 3769

May 7, 1974

***1 Since a dentist is not a ‘medical doctor’ as contemplated in Act R–1015, he may not use acupuncture in his dentistry practice.**

S. C. State Board of Dentistry

Columbia, S. C.

By recent letter you have inquired whether or not acupuncture can be lawfully used in the practice of dentistry.

Until recent months there were no laws in this State which expressly considered the legality of the practice of acupuncture. In an opinion issued by this office on January 4, 1974, it was determined that the practice of acupuncture constituted the practice of medicine and hence could only be practiced in accordance with the Medical Practice Act. However, since dentists are expressly exempted from the provisions of the Medical Practice Act, see Section 56–1372, *S. C. Code of Laws* (1962), that opinion did not restrict the use of acupuncture by dentists.

However, the practice of acupuncture in South Carolina is no longer uncontrolled. On March 15, 1974, the Governor signed into law Act R–1015 which provides as follows:

The practice of acupuncture shall be permitted in this State under the direct supervision of a licensed medical doctor in facilities approved by the Department of Health and Environmental Control.

In the opinion of this office a dentist is not a ‘medical doctor’ as contemplated in Act R–1015. Accordingly, I advise that acupuncture may not be used in the practice of dentistry unless it is practiced under the direct supervision of a licensed medical doctor, i.e., a physician or surgeon, and in facilities approved by the Department of Health and Environmental Control.

John B. Grimball

Assistant Attorney General

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