

REVENUE: No revenue impact

FISCAL: No fiscal impact

Action: Do Pass as Amended and Be Printed Engrossed
Vote: 8 - 0 - 1
Yeas: Bonamici, Cannon, Flores, Gelsner, Kotek, Maurer, Richardson, Greenlick
Nays: 0
Exc.: Bruun
Prepared By: Sandy Thiele-Cirka, Administrator
Meeting Dates: 3/15 (policy sub), 3/27 (policy sub), 3/28 (full)

WHAT THE MEASURE DOES: Modifies current definition of dental hygiene to include the diagnosis and treatment planning for dental services and the application of dental sealants and fluoride. Reduces the educational requirement of 5,000 hours of supervised dental hygienist clinical practice within the previous five years for obtaining permit as limited access permit dental hygienist to 2,500 supervised hours. Specifies that a dental hygienist, under the supervision of a dentist can practice in a public institution, health care facility, or health maintenance organization. Directs the Board of Dentistry to adopt rules specifying other locations where dental hygienists may work and the degree of supervision required by a dentist. Declares an emergency, effective on passage.

ISSUES DISCUSSED:

- The need to expand preventive health services in communities
- Legal concern with limited access permit (LAP) hygienists to apply dental sealants in school-based clinics and other public health clinics
- Current hours of supervised clinical practice
- Review of current LAP requirements
- Positive results of sealant applications in children
- Proposed amendments
- Number of hours requirement

EFFECT OF COMMITTEE AMENDMENT: Clarifies definition of dental hygiene. Adds 2,500 hours of supervised dental hygiene practice as a LAP requirement. Specifies that a dental hygienist can, under the supervision of a dentist, practice in a public institution, health care facility, or health maintenance organization. Directs the Board of Dentistry to adopt rules specifying other locations where dental hygienists may work and the degree of supervision required by a dentist.

BACKGROUND: Dental hygienists remove soft and hard deposits from teeth, teach patients how to practice good oral hygiene, and provide other preventive dental care. Hygienists examine patients' teeth and gums, recording the presence of diseases or abnormalities. Additionally, they remove calculus, stains, and plaque from teeth, perform root planing as a periodontal therapy, take and develop dental x rays, and apply cavity-preventive agents such as fluorides and pit and fissure sealants. Although hygienists may not diagnose diseases, they can prepare clinical and laboratory diagnostic tests for the dentist to interpret and work chairside with the dentist during treatments.

In Oregon, most dental hygienists work under the general supervision of a licensed dentist. General supervision means that the dentist has authorized the procedures to be performed for a patient, but does not require that a dentist be present when the procedures are performed. Also, the authorized procedures may be performed at a place other than the usual place of practice of the dentist. The statute regulating Dental Hygiene is ORS 680.010 - 680.205 and the administrative rules are found in OAR 818, Division 35.

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This summary has not been adopted or officially endorsed by action of the committee.