

Oregon Dental Hygienists' Association
SB 302 Fix Prescriptive Authority
For Dentists and Dental Hygienists
March 4, 2015

My name is Alec Shebiel and I represent the Oregon Dental Hygienists' Association (ODHA). Thank you for allowing me the opportunity to speak on SB 302 clarifying prescriptive authority for dentists and dental hygienists. We support SB 302 and urge you to do the same.

SB 302 clarifies for dentists and dental hygienists that they can prescribe, dispense, and administer appropriate prescription drugs. For many years by administrative rule, dental hygienists have been authorized to prescribe, dispense and administer fluorides and antimicrobial solutions.

A recent Assistant Attorney General letter opinion concluded that the Oregon Dental Practice Act does not expressly authorize dental hygienists to prescribe drugs that were otherwise allowed to be prescribed by rule. The opinion also stated that dentists do not have clear statutory authority to prescribe.

As a result of the opinion, the Board of Dentistry's rules for hygienists were amended to delete the authority for dental hygienists to prescribe fluoride, fluoride varnish, antimicrobial solutions used for mouth rinsing and other non-systemic antimicrobial agents.

This has negatively impacted dentists, hygienists and, most importantly, patients, who as a result of the legal opinion and subsequent rule change, have fewer options to obtain fluorides and antimicrobial solutions that can prevent dental disease. It has also resulted in great confusion amongst providers, changing their long standing and clinically appropriate practices.

After this legal opinion was issued, the Oregon Dental Hygienists' Association immediately worked with the Board of Dentistry and the Oregon Dental Association to draft SB 302, which expressly adds prescriptive authority for dental hygienists and dentists to the Oregon Dental Practice Act. The Board of Dentistry is prepared to promulgate temporary emergency rules to implement this legislation when it passes and becomes law.

All these parties agree that this problem should be fixed as soon as possible to restore long standing and clinically appropriate practices. We urge you to support and vote yes on SB 302.

Oregon Dental Hygienists' Association

Contact: Alec J. Shebiel

Cell: 503.750.1019

ashebiel@lindsayhart.com