

STAFF MEASURE SUMMARY

Senate Committee On Health Care

Fiscal: No Fiscal Impact
Revenue: No Revenue Impact

Action Date: 04/20/15

Action: Do Pass With Amendments. (Printed A-Eng.)

Meeting Dates: 03/16, 04/15, 04/20

Vote:

Yeas: 5 - Knopp, Kruse, Monnes Anderson, Shields, Steiner Hayward

Prepared By: Zena Rockowitz, Committee Administrator

WHAT THE MEASURE DOES:

Requires Oregon Health Authority (OHA) to appoint dental director. Permits dental director to be in good standing with the dental board in another state if not licensed by Oregon Board of Dentistry. Requires dental director to oversee oral health programs under OHA. Directs dental director to provide recommendations and guidance with focus on underserved populations, make recommendations for Legislative Assembly and monitor, study and appraise needs and resources. Requires report to Legislative Assembly no later than March 2016. Declares emergency, effective on passage.

ISSUES DISCUSSED:

- Evidence-based approach to oral health
- Role of dental director
- Newness of dental director position
- Dental director ability to elevate oral health
- Previous lack of leadership and comprehensive funding

EFFECT OF COMMITTEE AMENDMENT:

Eliminates office of oral health. Creates licensure requirements for dental director. Modifies duties of dental director and requires report to Legislative Assembly. Declares emergency, effective on passage.

BACKGROUND:

Oral health is vital for sustaining overall health, getting good nutrition and communicating with others. Oral disease often brings disabling pain which can worsen heart and respiratory conditions and auto-immune diseases. One study in Oregon found that dental pain is a more frequent cause of emergency room visits than headache, fever and asthma. Racial, economic and geographic factors influence access to timely dental care prevention and dental treatment.

The 2014-2020 Strategic Plan for Oral Health in Oregon, attended by 141 people, recommends implementing the most potent and cost-effective strategies to improve oral health, while reducing disparities in access and quality. Key recommendations included creating a dental director position to establish clinical, fiscal and policy priorities for oral disease prevention and care.