

Submitter: Lynn Murray  
On Behalf Of: Concerned Healthcare Providers of Oregon  
Committee: House Committee On Behavioral Health and Health Care  
Measure: HB2979

I attended and participated in the Committee Meeting on 2-13-23 and wanted to offer a rebuttal to what was said regarding bill 2979.

HB 2979 Rational of Supporters:

- Cost of existing training modules is a reason for the shortage of dental assistants as they are too expensive for potential dental assistants

Rebuttal: As mentioned during the meeting yesterday, there are existing excellent dental assisting training modules available to anyone for a low cost at DANB.org.

The dentists supporting this bill suggested that they are too expensive, and that people who would otherwise want to become dental assistants would not because of the expense of the modules. This is NOT the way it works.

As a dental assistant for 20 years I worked with assistants who were trained on the job and those who graduated from Dental Assisting programs. I have also trained dental assistants on the job in the dental practices in which I worked.

It is not that a person decides to become a dental assistant and looks to see how much the DALE Foundation courses cost and then decides not to become a dental assistant. If someone decides to become a dental assistant they research the Dental Assisting programs offered near them and contact faculty to find out more information.

How the on the job piece works is that a dentist finds someone they think would make a good dental assistant and asks them if they want to be trained on the job in their office. The training begins in office and the existing dental assistant trains them on all things about the office, materials, infection prevention, how to take x-rays, patient flow, etc. and the dentist shows them how they want the trainee to assist them during procedures. So this person has already been hired by the dentist. The modules for training in radiology as well as other aspects of dental assisting would then be purchased by the dentist for \$130.

Once the trainee is trained and ready to sit for the Radiation Health and Safety exam or the Expanded Functions exam, the dentist could purchase one of the books DANB lists as a resource, and would submit the fee of \$270. These fees are part of training an employee on the job and as so are tax deductible for the dentist/dental practice. They do not cost the assistant anything.

So you see, the cost of the existing modules are not preventing people from becoming dental assistants, and we do not need to spend \$2 million tax payer dollars to recreate what already exists.