

SENATE BILL REPORT

SB 5870

As of January 17, 1996

Title: An act relating to the provision of services by dental hygienists.

Brief Description: Modifying dental hygienist practice.

Sponsors: Senators Kohl, Prentice, Fairley, Moyer, Spanel, Quigley, C. Anderson, Franklin, Hochstatter and Rasmussen.

Brief History:

Committee Activity: Health & Long-Term Care: 2/1/96.

SENATE COMMITTEE ON HEALTH & LONG-TERM CARE

Staff: Rhoda Jones (786-7198)

Background: Under current law, dental hygienists licensed in the state are permitted to practice their dental hygiene services only under the supervision of a licensed dentist. They remove deposits and stains from the surfaces of teeth, apply topical preventive or prophylactic agents, polish and smooth restorations, perform root planing and soft tissue curettage, and other dental operations delegated to them by a licensed dentist.

Dental hygienists may work independently only if they are hired by a health care facility, and have worked directly under a licensed dentist for two years in the preceding five years.

Under no circumstances are they allowed to surgically remove tissue of the oral cavity, prescribe drugs or medications, make impressions of teeth or jaws, give anesthetic injections, administer nitrous oxide, or diagnose for dental treatment.

Summary of Bill: Dental hygienists may perform all of their currently permitted functions, plus administer injectable and topical anesthetics, without the supervision of a licensed dentist after receiving an "unsupervised endorsement" from the Secretary of Health. To receive such an endorsement hygienists must complete accredited training in anesthetic administration and have practiced it for at least two years. They must also demonstrate expertise in emergency and referral procedures. Dental hygienists must also complete a dental hygiene assessment and treatment plan for each patient.

The secretary is directed to adopt rules for dental hygienists purchasing and administering injectable and topical local anesthetics.

Appropriation: None.

Fiscal Note: Requested on January 17, 1996.

Effective Date: Ninety days after adjournment of session in which bill is passed.

