
SENATE BILL 5504

State of Washington

57th Legislature

2001 Regular Session

By Senators Thibaudeau, Deccio, McAuliffe, Costa, Kohl-Welles, Fraser and Oke

Read first time 01/24/2001. Referred to Committee on Health & Long-Term Care.

1 AN ACT Relating to licensed dental hygienists; amending RCW
2 18.29.056; creating a new section; and declaring an emergency.

3 BE IT ENACTED BY THE LEGISLATURE OF THE STATE OF WASHINGTON:

4 NEW SECTION. **Sec. 1.** The legislature finds that access to
5 preventive oral health services for low-income children and
6 functionally disabled persons, which are provided by licensed dental
7 hygienists, is restricted by current practice settings.

8 It is the intent of the legislature to expand access to and reduce
9 the cost of preventive oral health services to children, elderly
10 individuals, and functionally disabled persons who currently have unmet
11 oral health needs. The legislature intends to broaden the allowable
12 practice settings in which licensed dental hygienists may provide
13 preventive services that are within their scope of unsupervised
14 practice.

15 **Sec. 2.** RCW 18.29.056 and 1997 c 37 s 2 are each amended to read
16 as follows:

17 (1) Dental hygienists licensed under this chapter with two years'
18 practical clinical experience with a licensed dentist within the

1 preceding five years may be employed or retained by health care
2 facilities and programs to perform authorized dental hygiene operations
3 and services without dental supervision, limited to removal of deposits
4 and stains from the surfaces of the teeth, application of topical
5 preventive or prophylactic agents, polishing and smoothing
6 restorations, and performance of root planing and soft-tissue
7 curettage, but shall not perform injections of anesthetic agents,
8 administration of nitrous oxide, or diagnosis for dental treatment.
9 The performance of dental hygiene operations and services in health
10 care facilities and programs shall be limited to patients, students,
11 and residents of the facilities and programs. For dental planning and
12 dental treatment, dental hygienists shall refer patients to licensed
13 dentists.

14 (2) For the purposes of this section, "health care facilities and
15 programs" are limited to hospitals; nursing homes; home health
16 agencies; group homes serving the elderly, handicapped, and juveniles;
17 state-operated institutions under the jurisdiction of the department of
18 social and health services or the department of corrections; home and
19 community services that provide services for functionally disabled
20 persons receiving long-term care, as those terms are defined in chapter
21 74.39A RCW; any sites used to carry out health care programs authorized
22 by federal, state, or local governments or tribal agencies; and
23 federal, state, and local public health facilities, state or federally
24 funded community and migrant health centers, and tribal clinics.

25 NEW SECTION. **Sec. 3.** If any provision of this act or its
26 application to any person or circumstance is held invalid, the
27 remainder of the act or the application of the provision to other
28 persons or circumstances is not affected.

29 NEW SECTION. **Sec. 4.** This act is necessary for the immediate
30 preservation of the public peace, health, or safety, or support of the
31 state government and its existing public institutions, and takes effect
32 immediately.

--- END ---