

SENATE BILL REPORT

SSB 5327

As Passed Senate, February 18, 2003

Title: An act relating to dental hygienists.

Brief Description: Clarifying the scope of practice of a dental hygienist.

Sponsors: Senate Committee on Health & Long-Term Care (originally sponsored by Senators Deccio, Thibaudeau and Parlette).

Brief History:

Committee Activity: Health & Long-Term Care: 1/29/03, 2/4/03 [DPS].
Passed Senate: 2/18/03, 49-0.

SENATE COMMITTEE ON HEALTH & LONG-TERM CARE

Majority Report: That Substitute Senate Bill No. 5327 be substituted therefor, and the substitute bill do pass.

Signed by Senators Deccio, Chair; Winsley, Vice Chair; Brandland, Franklin, Keiser, Parlette and Thibaudeau.

Staff: Tanya Karwaki (786-7447)

Background: Dental hygienists licensed in Washington may remove deposits and stains from the surfaces of teeth, apply topical agents, and perform other dental operations and services delegated to them by a licensed dentist.

There is concern that dental hygienists be able to continue applying antimicrobials, a practice not specified in their scope of practice.

Summary of Bill: Dental hygienists may apply antimicrobials, which are prescription drugs, under the authority of a dentist.

Appropriation: None.

Fiscal Note: Not requested.

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

Testimony For: Until recently, dental hygienists placed antimicrobials under the authority of a dentist. Antimicrobials are important in halting periodontal disease. This practice, however, was not in the dental hygienist's scope of practice. This bill would clarify that applying antimicrobials is within a dental hygienist's scope of practice. An amendment is needed because antimicrobials are legend drugs which only a practitioner can apply.

Testimony Against: None.

Testified: Melissa Johnson, Washington State Dental Hygienists Association (pro); Susan Savage, Washington State Dental Hygienists Association (pro); Linda Hull, Washington State Dental Association (pro).

House Amendment(s): The amendments make grammatical changes to the bill.