
**Health Care & Wellness
Committee**

HB 1298

Brief Description: Regarding dental hygienist employment by health care facilities and sealant programs in schools.

Sponsors: Representatives Green, Campbell, Cody, Morrell, Moeller and Conway.

Brief Summary of Bill

- Allows experienced licensed dental hygienists to perform certain services without dental supervision at centers where seniors congregate.
- Allows certain licenced dental hygienists performing services for low-income, rural, and at-risk populations also to remove deposits and stains from the surfaces of teeth.

Hearing Date: 2/13/07

Staff: Chris Cordes (786-7103).

Background:

Dental hygienists must be licensed by the Department of Health (DOH) to perform specified services under a licensed dentist's supervision. These basic services include removing deposits and stains from the surfaces of the teeth, applying topical preventive agents, polishing and smoothing restorations, and performing root planing and soft-tissue curettage. A licensed dentist may also delegate other services to dental hygienists, but certain services may not be delegated, such as surgical removal of oral cavity tissue and prescribing prescription drugs.

Under a statutory exception, experienced dental hygienists may perform the basic services without dental supervision. These dental hygienists may be employed to perform these services for patients, students, and residents of health care facilities, including hospitals, nursing homes, and certain public facilities and institutions. To participate, the dental hygienist must have had, within the last five year, two years of practical clinical experience with a licensed dentist.

This analysis was prepared by non-partisan legislative staff for the use of legislative members in their deliberations. This analysis is not a part of the legislation nor does it constitute a statement of legislative intent.

Licensed dental hygienists are also permitted to assess for and apply sealants and fluoride varnishes for low-income, rural, and other at-risk populations in community-based sealant programs carried out at schools. Dental hygienists who participate in these programs must be school sealant endorsed under a program created by the DOH. However, dental hygienists who were licensed before April 19, 2001, may participate in the school sealant program without attending the school sealant endorsement program.

Summary of Bill:

The list of health care facilities that may employ experienced licensed dental hygienists to perform basic services without dental supervision is expanded to include centers where seniors congregate.

The services that licensed dental hygienists who are school sealant endorsed may perform for low-income, rural, and at-risk populations are expanded to allow the removal of deposits and stains from the surfaces of teeth.

Appropriation: None.

Fiscal Note: Not requested.

Effective Date: The bill takes effect 90 days after adjournment of session in which bill is passed.