

SENATE BILL REPORT

SB 6549

As Reported by Senate Committee On:
Health & Long Term Care, February 1, 2018

Title: An act relating to expanding the access to baby and child dentistry program to serve children with disabilities.

Brief Description: Expanding the access to baby and child dentistry program to serve children with disabilities.

Sponsors: Senators Rolfes, Cleveland, Conway, Saldaña and Sheldon.

Brief History:

Committee Activity: Health & Long Term Care: 1/30/18, 2/01/18 [DP-WM].

Brief Summary of Bill

- The Health Care Authority (Authority) must expand the Access to Baby and Child Dentistry (ABCD) to include children with disabilities as eligible clients through age 12.

SENATE COMMITTEE ON HEALTH & LONG TERM CARE

Majority Report: Do pass and be referred to Committee on Ways & Means.

Signed by Senators Cleveland, Chair; Kuderer, Vice Chair; Rivers, Ranking Member; Bailey, Becker, Conway, Fain, Keiser, Mullet and Van De Wege.

Staff: Evan Klein (786-7483)

Background: The Authority administers the Medicaid program which is a state-federal program that pays for health care for low-income state residents who meet certain eligibility criteria. Benefits under the program vary according to a person's eligibility category which is determined by several factors, including income, age, health condition, and disability status. Dental services for Medicaid clients are provided through a fee-for-service arrangement in which the dentist bills the Authority directly.

Children under six years old who are enrolled in Medicaid may participate in the ABCD program at the Authority which provides enhanced fees to participating health care providers

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who provide additional services to participating children. The Washington Dental Service Foundation provides management services, funding, technical assistance, and provider recruitment and training for the ABCD program. The objective of the ABCD program is to identify and remove obstacles related to early preventive treatment. The additional services include family oral health education, application of fluoride, oral evaluations, restorations, therapeutic pulpotomies, amalgam and resin restoration on primary teeth, and services related to crowns. Participating providers include ABCD program-certified dental providers and other health care providers who have been approved by the Authority, including physicians, osteopathic physicians, advanced registered nurse practitioners, physician assistants, and osteopathic physician assistants.

Summary of Bill: The Authority must expand the ABCD program to include children with disabilities as eligible clients through age 12. Dentists must complete a course on treating children with disabilities in order to receive the enhanced ABCD fee for providing services to eligible children with disabilities.

Appropriation: None.

Fiscal Note: Requested on January 24, 2018.

Creates Committee/Commission/Task Force that includes Legislative members: No.

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

Staff Summary of Public Testimony: PRO: Dental hygienists practice in community settings, including clinics, group homes, and other facilities that treat children with disabilities, and would be an appropriate provider to be added to this bill. The ABCD program has increased utilization and ABCD patients are more likely to seek care before problems arise. The focus on prevention has made the ABCD program cost effective. This population has special care needs and the support in the program will ensure practitioners with adequate training are available to support the population. The ABCD model is nationally recognized, and it makes sense to build on this model to provide access to dentists for other vulnerable populations in the state.

Persons Testifying: PRO: Melissa Johnson, Washington Dental Hygienists Association; John Gibbons, DMD, Washington State Dental Association, Washington State Academy of Pediatric Dentistry; Emily Lovell, Washington State Dental Association; Alison Mondri, Arcora Foundation.

Persons Signed In To Testify But Not Testifying: No one.