
Health Care & Wellness Committee

HB 2531

Brief Description: Protecting patients from certain unsafe dental practices.

Sponsors: Representatives Caldier, Leavitt, Harris, Cody and Davis.

Brief Summary of Bill

- Requires dentists to perform an in-person examination of a patient prior to the initial diagnosis and correction of malpositions of human teeth or the initial use of orthodontic appliances.
- Requires that a patient receiving dental services through telemedicine be provided the dentist's name, telephone number, practice address, and Washington license number.

Hearing Date: 1/24/20

Staff: Chris Blake (786-7392).

Background:

Practice of Dentistry.

The Dental Quality Assurance Commission regulates the practice of dentistry by establishing licensing standards, reviewing complaints of unprofessional conduct, and conducting disciplinary proceedings regarding licensed dentists. The practice of dentistry includes offering, undertaking, or representing oneself as able to diagnose, treat, remove stains and concretions from teeth, operate or prescribe for any disease, pain, injury, deficiency, deformity, or physical condition of the human teeth, alveolar process, gums, or jaw. The practice of dentistry also includes holding oneself out to the public as able to furnish, supply, construct, reproduce, or repair any prosthetic denture, bridge, appliance, or other structure to be worn in the human mouth. In addition, the practice of dentistry includes any of the practices in the curricula of recognized and approved dental schools or maintaining an office for the practice of dentistry.

Telemedicine.

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.

Telemedicine is the use of interactive audio, video, or electronic media for the purpose of diagnosis, consultation, or treatment of a patient at an originating site. An originating site for telemedicine includes a hospital, rural health clinic, federally qualified health center, health care provider's office, community mental health center, skilled nursing facility, renal dialysis center, or a home.

Summary of Bill:

Before an initial diagnosis and correction of malpositions of human teeth or the initial use of orthodontic appliances, the treating dentist must perform an in-person examination. The examination must include the review of the patient's most recent diagnostic radiographs or other equivalent bone imaging. New radiographs or other equivalent bone imaging must be ordered if the treating dentist finds it appropriate.

Patients who receive dental services through telemedicine must be provided the name, telephone number, practice address, and Washington license number of the dentist providing the services.

A provider of dental services may not require a patient to sign an agreement to limit the patient's ability to file a complaint with the Dental Quality Assurance Commission.

A violation of any of the established standards is considered unprofessional conduct.

Appropriation: None.

Fiscal Note: Not requested.

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