

SENATE BILL REPORT

HB 1554

As Reported by Senate Committee On:
Health & Long Term Care, March 29, 2019

Title: An act relating to dental hygienists.

Brief Description: Concerning dental hygienists.

Sponsors: Representatives Thai, Harris, Robinson, Stonier, Appleton, Gregerson, Jinkins, Slatter and Macri.

Brief History: Passed House: 3/04/19, 97-0.

Committee Activity: Health & Long Term Care: 3/25/19, 3/29/19 [DP].

Brief Summary of Bill

- Allows the holder of an initial limited dental hygiene license to obtain a temporary endorsement to administer nitrous oxide analgesia.
- Requires the holder of a limited dental hygiene license to complete education on the administration of local anesthesia and nitrous oxide analgesia to renew their limited license.
- Adds a dental hygienist member to the Dental Hygiene Examining Committee.

SENATE COMMITTEE ON HEALTH & LONG TERM CARE

Majority Report: Do pass.

Signed by Senators Cleveland, Chair; Randall, Vice Chair; O'Ban, Ranking Member; Bailey, Becker, Dhingra, Frockt, Keiser and Van De Wege.

Staff: Greg Attanasio (786-7410)

Background: To be licensed by the Department of Health (DOH), dental hygienists must complete an educational program, and pass an examination approved by the Dental Hygiene Examining Committee. A dental hygienist may remove deposits and stains from the surfaces of teeth, apply topical preventive or prophylactic agents, polish and smooth restorations,

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perform root planing and soft tissue curettage, and other operations and services delegated to them by a dentist. Generally, dental hygienists must be supervised by a licensed dentist.

A dental hygienist licensed and practicing in another state or a Canadian province may be temporarily licensed without examination if they provide DOH with certain documentation and information, demonstrate knowledge of Washington law pertaining to the practice of dental hygiene, pay required fees, and meet requirements for AIDS education. The procedures a dental hygienist with an initial limited license may perform are limited, although the initial limited license holder may obtain endorsements for local anesthesia and restorative procedures.

The initial limited license lasts 18 months and may be renewed if the applicant demonstrates:

- successful passage of a substantively equivalent dental hygiene patient evaluation and prophylaxis examination;
- successful passage of a substantively equivalent local anesthesia examination; and
- didactic and clinical competency in the administration of nitrous oxide analgesia.

A dental hygienist with a renewed limited license may additionally give injections of local anesthetic, perform soft tissue curettage, and administer nitrous oxide and oxygen analgesia.

A licensed dental hygienist may assess for and apply sealants and fluoride varnishes and remove deposits and stains from the surfaces of teeth, for low-income, rural, and other at-risk populations in community-based sealant programs carried out in schools. A dental hygienist participating in a community-based sealant program must either have been licensed prior to April 19, 2001, or be school-sealant endorsed under DOH's School Sealant Endorsement Program.

Summary of Bill: A person with an initial limited dental hygienist license may receive a temporary endorsement to administer nitrous oxide analgesia if they can demonstrate substantively equivalent licensing standards in administering nitrous oxide analgesia in the other state or Canadian province where they are licensed.

The requirements to renew a limited license are expanded to include the successful passage of an educational program on the administration of local anesthesia and nitrous oxide analgesia.

A dental hygienist in a community-based sealant program may apply fluoride, as opposed to fluoride varnishes.

One practicing dental hygienist is added to the Dental Hygiene Examining Committee.

Appropriation: None.

Fiscal Note: Available.

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: The bill would allow out-of-state license holders to provide more services within their scope of practice. The bill also removes outdated provisions and terminology from the statute.

Persons Testifying: PRO: Representative My-Linh Thai, Prime Sponsor; Jennifer Zbaraschuk, Washington Dental Hygienists Association.

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