
SENATE BILL 6419

State of Washington 59th Legislature 2006 Regular Session

By Senators Thibaudeau, Deccio, Kastama, Benson, Keiser and McAuliffe

Read first time 01/12/2006. Referred to Committee on Health & Long-Term Care.

1 AN ACT Relating to pilot projects for dental hygienists; and
2 creating new sections.

3 BE IT ENACTED BY THE LEGISLATURE OF THE STATE OF WASHINGTON:

4 NEW SECTION. **Sec. 1.** The legislature recognizes that access to
5 preventive oral health care services by citizens of Washington state is
6 currently restricted by regulatory, financial, and geographic barriers.
7 The legislature finds that many citizens unnecessarily suffer from
8 dental disease. Access to preventive oral health care services can
9 reverse dental disease in many cases, thereby significantly reducing
10 costs of providing oral health care services. The legislature further
11 finds that dental hygienists licensed in Washington state have been
12 providing preventive oral health care services without the supervision
13 of a dentist to the most medically fragile patients in institutional
14 settings for over twenty years. The legislature also finds that access
15 to preventive oral health care services can be improved, and that the
16 cost of these services can be reduced when provided by dental
17 hygienists practicing independent of dentist supervision. It is the
18 intent of the legislature to address the problem of access to

1 preventive oral health care services by providing five pilot projects
2 that allow dental hygienists to practice within the current scope of
3 practice without the supervision of a dentist.

4 NEW SECTION. **Sec. 2.** The access to preventive care pilot projects
5 are established. The secretary of health is authorized to create five
6 pilot projects in dentally underserved areas of the state whereby
7 dental hygienists are authorized to practice within the current scope
8 of practice in RCW 18.29.050, without the supervision of a dentist.
9 These pilot projects are effective for three years after the effective
10 date of this section. The secretary of health, in consultation with
11 the dental hygiene examining committee, shall adopt rules to implement
12 this section.

- 13 (1) The goals of the pilot projects are to:
- 14 (a) Open access to preventive oral health care services delivered
15 by dental hygienists;
 - 16 (b) Collect data of patients treated by dental hygienists,
17 including age, treatments rendered, insurance coverage, if any, and
18 patient referral to dentists;
 - 19 (c) Evaluate independently managed dental hygiene practices in
20 increasing the patient flow to dentists, thereby improving dental care;
21 and
 - 22 (d) Examine the ways in which the pilot projects affect access to
23 preventive oral health care for underserved persons.

24 (2) The secretary of health, in consultation with the dental
25 hygiene examining committee, will:

- 26 (a) Create a registry in which dental hygienists can apply to be a
27 participant in the pilot projects; and
 - 28 (b) Select the participants of the five pilot projects.
- 29 (3) The secretary of health, in consultation with the Washington
30 state dental hygienists' association, shall provide a report to the
31 legislature by December 1, 2009, evaluating the outcome of the pilot
32 projects.

33 NEW SECTION. **Sec. 3.** Dental hygienists participating in the pilot
34 projects shall not perform injections of anesthetic agents, administer

1 nitrous oxide, or give a diagnosis for dental treatment.

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