

# Chapter 246-814 WAC

## ACCESS TO DENTAL CARE FOR CHILDREN

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**WAC 246-814-010 Purpose.** The purpose of this chapter is to implement RCW 18.29.220 and 18.32.226. These laws are intended to improve access to dental care for low-income, rural, and other at-risk children by enhancing the authority of dental hygienists and dental assistants to provide dental sealant and fluoride varnish treatments in school-based programs. The department of health encourages partnerships within geographical regions and among participants in the oral health care community in implementing this law.

[Statutory Authority: RCW 43.70.650. 02-21-128, § 246-814-010, filed 10/23/02, effective 11/23/02.]

**WAC 246-814-020 Practices authorized.** (1) **Dental hygienists.** Solely for purposes of providing services under this chapter, dental hygienists holding endorsements under this chapter may assess by determining the need for (i.e., the absence of gross carious lesions and sealants) and acceptability of dental sealant and/or fluoride varnish treatment for children in school-based programs and may apply dental sealants and fluoride varnish treatments, without the supervision of a licensed dentist. This determination does not include or involve diagnosing conditions or constitute a dental examination.

(2) **Dental assistants.** A dental assistant is currently defined by the Dental Quality Assurance Commission in WAC 246-817-510 as an unlicensed person working under the *close* supervision of a licensed dentist. Solely for purposes of this chapter, authorized dental assistants may apply dental sealants and fluoride varnish treatments to children in school-based programs under the *general* supervision of a Washington state licensed dentist, as described in this chapter.

(a) *Close supervision* requires the licensed supervising dentist to first determine the need for and acceptability of dental sealant and fluoride varnish treatments, refer the treatment and the dentist must be in the treatment facility when the treatment is provided.

(b) *General supervision* requires the licensed supervising dentist to first determine the need for and acceptability of dental sealant and fluoride varnish treatments, refer the treatment and the dentist does not have to be in the treatment facility when the treatment is provided.

(3) Dental assistants and their supervising dentists, as well as dental hygienists shall coordinate with local public health jurisdictions and local oral health coalitions prior to

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providing services under this chapter, consistent with RCW 18.29.220 and 18.32.226.

[Statutory Authority: RCW 43.70.650. 02-21-128, § 246-814-020, filed 10/23/02, effective 11/23/02.]

**WAC 246-814-030 Application process and documentation of training required to qualify for endorsement.** (1) The department of health has issued endorsements to all dental hygienists holding valid licenses on or before April 19, 2001, the effective date of RCW 18.29.220.

(2) Dental hygienists licensed after April 19, 2001, must obtain an endorsement to provide services under this chapter. Applicants must meet the additional requirements in RCW 18.29.220 and must submit the following to the department:

- (a) Application for endorsement;
- (b) Fee;
- (c) Information of having a valid Washington state dental hygiene license for reference; and
- (d) Proof of the completion of training that has incorporated the Washington state department of health sealant/fluoride varnish program guidelines as described in WAC 246-814-040(3).

(3) Dental assistants employed by a Washington state licensed dentist on or before April 19, 2001, are not required to obtain an endorsement but may voluntarily do so without having to meet the additional requirements in RCW 18.32.226.

(4) Dental assistants employed by a Washington state licensed dentist for two hundred hours after April 19, 2001, must obtain an endorsement to provide services under this chapter. Applicants must meet the additional requirements in RCW 18.32.226 and must submit the following to the department:

- (a) Application for endorsement;
- (b) Fee;
- (c) Proof of two hundred hours of employment as a dental assistant by a Washington state licensed dentist that has included theoretical and clinical training in the application of dental sealants and fluoride varnish treatments, verified by a declaration provided by the licensed dentist who provided the training; and
- (d) Proof of completion of training that has incorporated the Washington state department of health sealant/fluoride varnish program guidelines as described in WAC 246-814-040(3).

(5) Dental assistants and their supervising dentists, as well as dental hygienists should use the Washington state department of health sealant/fluoride varnish guidelines described in WAC 246-814-040 and other protocols that may be in place for the geographic region when coordinating with local public health jurisdictions. To assist the local public health jurisdictions and the practitioners in coordinating these services, a "letter of understanding" is recommended and

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would provide a means to address mutual concerns. It may include, but is not limited to:

- (a) Data collection requirements;
- (b) Delineation of responsibilities of the treatment providers and the local public health jurisdictions;
- (c) Quality assurance mechanisms; and
- (d) Communication with schools being served.
- (6) Dental assistants and their supervising dentists, as well as dental hygienists shall coordinate with the local oral health coalitions by participating in oral health coalition meetings that may be held in the geographical region.

[Statutory Authority: RCW 43.70.650. 02-21-128, § 246-814-030, filed 10/23/02, effective 11/23/02.]

**WAC 246-814-040 Training and the provision of services.** (1) The "Washington state department of health sealant/fluoride varnish program guidelines" have been developed, maintained and distributed by the department of health in partnership with the oral health community and health care practitioners. To obtain copies of the "guidelines" contact the department of health.

(2) The Washington state department of health sealant/fluoride varnish program guidelines are designed to assist the local public health jurisdictions and oral health care communities in the planning, implementation, and evaluation of school-based dental sealant and fluoride varnish programs. Every school-based dental sealant and fluoride varnish program should design their program to provide, at minimum, for the following:

- (a) Assessing and targeting the population.
- (b) Establishing community capacity and infrastructure.
- (c) Determining staffing needs and training.
- (d) Securing equipment and supplies.
- (e) Developing policies, procedures and data collection forms.
- (f) Scheduling schools/sites.
- (g) Preparing sites for implementation.
- (h) Providing services.
- (i) Evaluating the process and outcomes.

(3) The Washington state department of health sealant/fluoride varnish program guidelines also provides the training required for dental hygienists and dental assistants providing services under this chapter. Applicants for endorsement must obtain training as contained in these specific guidelines, which can be met through any one of the following methods:

- (a) Graduation from a dental assisting, dental hygiene or dental educational program, accredited by the American Dental Association, which has incorporated the Washington state department of health sealant/fluoride varnish program guidelines.
- (b) Continuing education courses which teach the Washington state department of health sealant/fluoride varnish program guidelines.
- (c) Individual training provided by a Washington licensed dentist, which has incorporated the Washington state department of health sealant/fluoride varnish program guidelines.

[Statutory Authority: RCW 43.70.650. 02-21-128, § 246-814-040, filed 10/23/02, effective 11/23/02.]

**WAC 246-814-990 Endorsement fees for dental assistants and dental hygienists, renewal of endorsement not required.** (1) Endorsements do not require renewal.

(2) Endorsement documents are issued to the qualified applicant, and are not the property of the employer or the supervisor.

(3) The following one-time, nonrefundable fee will be charged:

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| Dental assistant application/endorsement. . . . . | \$50 |
| Dental hygiene application/endorsement. . . . .   | \$50 |

[Statutory Authority: RCW 43.70.650. 02-21-128, § 246-814-990, filed 10/23/02, effective 11/23/02.]