

WSR 23-22-058
PREPROPOSAL STATEMENT OF INQUIRY
DEPARTMENT OF HEALTH

[Filed October 25, 2023, 9:47 a.m.]

Subject of Possible Rule Making: Dental therapist; the department of health (department) is considering establishing new chapter 246-819 WAC for the dental therapist profession in order to implement ESHB 1678 (chapter 460, Laws of 2023).

Statutes Authorizing the Agency to Adopt Rules on this Subject: ESHB 1678; RCW 18.265.020, 18.265.800, 43.70.250, and 43.70.280.

Reasons Why Rules on this Subject may be Needed and What They Might Accomplish: In 2023, ESHB 1678 established the new profession of dental therapy. ESHB 1678 authorizes the department to adopt rules in order to implement this legislation.

Dental therapists are considered mid-level dental providers who work in collaboration with a licensed dentist. This legislation authorizes dental therapists to practice in federally qualified health centers, tribal federally qualified health centers, and federally qualified health center look-a-likes.

The legislature finds that good oral health is an integral piece of overall health and well-being. Dental related issues are a leading reason that Washingtonians seek care in hospital emergency departments. The intent of this legislation is to expand access to oral health care by addressing racial and ethnic disparities in health and rural health care access gaps by providing care in local communities through dental therapists.

Other Federal and State Agencies that Regulate this Subject and the Process Coordinating the Rule with These Agencies: Washington state health care authority.

Process for Developing New Rule: Collaborative rule making.

Interested parties can participate in the decision to adopt the new rule and formulation of the proposed rule before publication by contacting Bruce Bronoske, Jr., P.O. Box 47852, Olympia, WA 98504-7852, phone 360-236-4843, fax 360-236-2901, TTY 711, email bruce.bronoske@doh.wa.gov, website www.doh.wa.gov.

Additional comments: Interested parties can participate in the drafting of the proposed rules. The department will be conducting rules workshops with interested parties and subject matter experts. The department will use existing GovDelivery lists and other known contact information to inform interested parties of opportunities to provide input on proposed rule language. To find out more information about our rule making, visit www.doh.wa.gov. To subscribe to GovDelivery, please visit www.doh.wa.gov and select the "sign up for updates from DOH" button at the bottom of the page. After signing in, please click open the box labeled "Health Systems Quality Assurance." Next, click open the box labeled "Health Professions" and then click on "Dental Therapy." You may also check the box next to one or more of the other professions listed to receive information related to that specific profession.

October 24, 2023
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