

Department of Legislative Services
Maryland General Assembly
2005 Session

FISCAL AND POLICY NOTE
Revised

Senate Bill 608

(Senator Britt, *et al.*)

Education, Health, and Environmental Affairs

Health and Government Operations

Dental Hygiene - Administration of Anesthesia

This bill expands the scope of practice of a dental hygienist by allowing a dental hygienist to administer local anesthesia under specified conditions.

Fiscal Summary

State Effect: None. The change would not directly affect governmental finances.

Local Effect: None.

Small Business Effect: None.

Analysis

Bill Summary: The State Board of Dental Examiners may adopt regulations governing the administration of local anesthesia by a dental hygienist and setting the requirements for the training, education, and evaluation of a dental hygienist before the dental hygienist may administer local anesthesia.

A dental hygienist may only administer local anesthesia by infiltration for anesthetizing soft tissue to facilitate dental hygiene procedures under the direct supervision of a licensed dentist who is present in the office area where the anesthesia is administered. However, the dental hygienist must have first successfully completed any board-established educational requirements and a board-required written and clinical examination. The educational requirements must be obtained from an accredited dental hygiene program.

The bill adds, as a reason the board may take disciplinary action against a dentist, using any form of direct or indirect disciplinary or retaliatory action against a dental hygienist who refuses to administer local anesthesia. Similarly, a dental hygienist may be disciplined for attempting to coerce, intimidate, or compel a licensed dentist to authorize or permit the dental hygienist to administer local anesthesia.

Current Law: A licensed dental hygienist may not administer anesthesia, other than topical anesthesia. A licensed dental hygienist may: (1) perform a preliminary dental exam; (2) perform a complete prophylaxis; (3) polish a tooth or a restoration; (4) chart cavities, restorations, missing teeth, periodontal conditions, and other features observed during preliminary exam, prophylaxis, or polishing; (5) apply a medical agent to a tooth for a prophylactic purpose; (6) take a dental X ray; or (7) perform any other intraoral function that the board authorizes by a rule or regulation.

Background: In fiscal 2005, the State Board of Dental Examiners projects that more than 2,500 dental hygienists will hold a license.

Additional Information

Prior Introductions: None.

Cross File: None.

Information Source(s): Department of Health and Mental Hygiene, Department of Legislative Services

Fiscal Note History: First Reader - March 9, 2005
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