

Department of Legislative Services
Maryland General Assembly
2007 Session

FISCAL AND POLICY NOTE

House Bill 751

(Delegate Oaks)

Health and Government Operations

Education, Health, and Environmental Affairs

Health Occupations - Supervised Practice - Dental Hygienist

This bill allows a dental hygienist who is authorized to practice under a licensed dentist's general supervision in a government-owned and operated facility or public health department to apply fluoride, mouth rinse, or varnish. The facility in which the dental hygienist is authorized to practice does not have to first satisfy existing statutory requirements related to the diagnosis and treatment of the patient.

Fiscal Summary

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

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

Small Business Effect: None.

Analysis

Current Law: A government-owned and operated dental facility or public health department in which a dental hygienist is authorized to practice under a licensed dentist's general supervision must ensure that the facility's supervising dentist and each dental hygienist hold an active general license to practice in Maryland; hold a current CPR certificate; and have at least two years of active clinical practice in direct patient care.

Before a dental hygienist practicing under a licensed dentist's general supervision can initially treat a patient, the supervising dentist, the patient's dentist, or the treating physician must evaluate the patient's medical history and determine its impact on the

patient's suitability to receive oral health treatment. The supervising dentist must diagnose the patient and approve the patient's treatment plan and authorize, on a patient-by-patient basis, a dental hygienist to practice under the licensed dentist's general supervision.

A dental hygienist practicing under a licensed dentist's general supervision must determine before treating a recall patient that there has been no change in the patient's medical history. If a patient's medical history has changed, the dental hygienist must consult with the supervising dentist, the patient's dentist, or a treating physician before proceeding with treatment. A recall patient must be scheduled for an oral examination every six months, or as otherwise recommended by the supervising dentist.

Additionally, the facility must have a medical emergency plan and must have adequate facilities and equipment available for delivering dental hygiene services other than fluoride rinse programs.

Other provisions apply to supervised practice in a private dental office.

Background: There are 2,712 active licensed dental hygienists in Maryland.

Additional Information

Prior Introductions: None.

Cross File: SB 568 (Senator Stoltzfus) – Education, Health, and Environmental Affairs.

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

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