

SENATE BILL 1287

By Southerland

AN ACT to amend Tennessee Code Annotated, Section 63-5-108, relative to dental hygienists.

BE IT ENACTED BY THE GENERAL ASSEMBLY OF THE STATE OF TENNESSEE:

SECTION 1. Tennessee Code Annotated, Section 63-5-108(c), is amended by deleting the subsection in its entirety and by substituting instead the following:

(c)

(1) A dental hygienist is an individual who has graduated from a dental hygiene program accredited by the American Dental Association's Commission on Dental Accreditation (CODA) and is licensed under this chapter to practice dental hygiene.

(2) The practice of dental hygiene means the performance of preventive, educational, and therapeutic services including the removal of all hard and soft deposits and the stain from the human teeth to the depth of the gingival sulcus, polishing natural and restored surfaces of teeth, performing clinical examination of teeth and surrounding tissues for diagnosis by the dentist, and performing other procedures that may be delegated by the dentist, under the supervision of a licensed dentist.

(3) No person shall practice dental hygiene in a manner that is separate or independent from a supervising dentist, or establish or maintain an office or a practice that is primarily devoted to the provision of dental hygiene services.

(4) A dental hygienist shall perform, under direct supervision only, root planing, subgingival curettage, administering nitrous oxide, and local anesthesia.

(5) Under general supervision a dental hygienist may provide to patients, for not more than fifteen (15) consecutive business days, all other dental hygiene services not otherwise limited to direct supervision by this chapter or rules adopted by the board, if all of the following requirements are met:

(A) The dental hygienist has at least one (1) year, full-time, or an equivalent amount of experience practicing dental hygiene;

(B) The dental hygienist complies with written protocols for emergencies that the supervising dentist establishes;

(C) The supervising dentist examined the patient not more than seven (7) months prior to the date the dental hygienist provides the dental hygiene services;

(D) The dental hygienist provides dental hygiene services to the patient in accordance with a written treatment plan developed by the supervising dentist for the patient; and

(E) The patient is notified in advance of the appointment that the supervising dentist will be absent from the location and that the dental hygienist cannot diagnose the patient's dental health care status.

SECTION 2. This act shall take effect upon becoming a law, the public welfare requiring it.