
Health Care & Wellness Committee

HB 2176

Brief Description: Improving access to patient care by increasing preventive dental care.

Sponsors: Representatives Caldier and Reeves.

<p>Brief Summary of Bill</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Creates a new preventive dental assistant credential.

Hearing Date: 1/16/24

Staff: Jim Morishima (786-7191).

Background:

A dental assistant is a registered health professional authorized to apply topical anesthetic agents and perform other dental assisting services established by the Dental Quality Assurance Commission (DQAC). These services include oral inspection with no diagnosis, fluoride treatments, sealant application, taking vital signs, and placing, exposing, and processing radiographs. Dental services performed by a dental assistant must be under the close supervision of a dentist or dental therapist.

An expanded function dental auxiliary is a licensed professional authorized to perform the duties of a dental assistant and allowed to perform additional services, including placing and carving direct restorations and taking final impressions. Depending on the service involved, the expanded function dental auxiliary must be either under the close supervision or general supervision of a dentist or dental therapist.

Summary of Bill:

This analysis was prepared by non-partisan legislative staff for the use of legislative members in their deliberations. This analysis is not part of the legislation nor does it constitute a statement of legislative intent.

The Dental Quality Assurance Commission (DQAC) must issue a license to practice as a preventive dental assistant to an applicant who:

- demonstrates competency as a preventive dental assistant as determined by the DQAC;
- pays applicable fees; and
- submits the applicant's name, address, and other applicable information as determined by the Secretary of Health.

The DQAC is required to adopt rules relating to the scope of preventive dental services that a preventive dental assistant may perform under the supervision of a dentist. These services must include:

- the services a dental assistant may perform under the supervision of a dentist;
- dental prophylaxis for patients in a healthy oral state; and
- periodontal probing after initial probing by a dentist or dental hygienist and diagnosis by a dentist.

A dentist may not assign a preventive dental assistant to perform services until the preventive dental assistant has demonstrated skills necessary to competently perform all assigned duties and responsibilities.

The DQAC may adopt rules for renewal requirements for preventive dental assistants and expanded function dental auxiliary credentials, including continuing education requirements.

Appropriation: None.

Fiscal Note: Requested on January 11, 2024.

Effective Date: The bill takes effect 90 days after adjournment of the session in which the bill is passed.