

Legislative Analysis



DENTAL ASS'T: ALLOW TO BE 2ND PAIR OF HANDS FOR HYGIENIST

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House Bill 4718 (Substitute H-2)
Sponsor: Rep. Eileen Kowall
Committee: Health Policy

Complete to 5-11-12

A SUMMARY OF HOUSE BILL 4718 AS REPORTED FROM COMMITTEE 4-26-12

The bill would allow a dental assistant to function as a "second pair of hands" for a dental hygienist under the supervision of a dentist.

A dental assistant or dental hygienist may only perform certain tasks under the direct delegation or supervision of a licensed dentist. Currently, a dental assistant or a dental hygienist may function as a "second pair of hands" for a dentist who is in the process of rendering dental services and treatment to a patient. As defined in R 338.11101 of the Administrative Code, the term "second pair of hands" refers to acts, tasks, functions, and procedures performed by a dental assistant, registered dental assistant, or registered dental hygienist at the direction of a dentist who is in the process of rendering dental services to a patient. The acts, tasks, etc. must be ancillary to the procedures being performed by the dentist and intended to provide help and assistance at the time the procedures are performed.

House Bill 4718 would add a new section to the Public Health Code to allow a dental hygienist to utilize a dental assistant to act as his or her second pair of hands. The bill would also allow a dental assistant to function as a second pair of hand for a dentist or dental hygienist if all of the following conditions were met:

- The dentist or dental hygienist was actively performing services in the mouth of a patient at the time the dental assistant was assisting the dentist or hygienist.
- If the dental assistant is assisting a dental hygienist, a supervising dentist has assigned the dental assistant to act as the dental hygienist's second pair of hands.

The bill would not require new or additional third party reimbursement or mandated worker's compensation benefits for services rendered by an individual licensed as a dental assistant or as a dental hygienist under Article 15 of the health code.

MCL 333.16626

FISCAL IMPACT:

The bill would have no fiscal impact on state or local units of government.

POSITIONS:

The following organizations or agencies testified or submitted testimony in support of, or indicated support for, the bill:

The Michigan Dental Hygienists' Association
The Michigan Dental Association
The Department of Community Health
The TraverseHealthClinic
Pediatric Oral Health for Detroit Health and Wellness Promotion
Wholesome Smiles Mobile Dental Hygiene Service
Coalition for Oral Health for the Aging
The Traveling Tooth Station

Legislative Analyst: Susan Stutzky
Fiscal Analyst: Paul Holland

■ This analysis was prepared by nonpartisan House staff for use by House members in their deliberations, and does not constitute an official statement of legislative intent.