

Legislative Analysis



DENTAL HYGIENISTS: CONTINUING ED. FOR PAIN & SYMPTOM MANAGEMENT

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House Bill 5025 as introduced
Sponsor: Rep. Dave Hildenbrand
Committee: Heath Policy

First Analysis (11-3-05)

BRIEF SUMMARY: The bill would require dental hygienists to complete continuing education in pain and symptom management.

FISCAL IMPACT: The bill may have a modest initial impact on the Department of Community Health's Bureau of Health Professions.

THE APPARENT PROBLEM:

When the completion of continuing education is required in order for a health professional to renew a license under Article 15 of the Public Health Code, the relevant licensing board must require the applicant to complete an appropriate number of hours or courses in pain and symptom management. Currently, this provision does not apply to persons licensed under Part 184 (sanitarians) or Part 185 (social workers), or to dental hygienists licensed under Part 166 (which covers dentists, dental assistants, and dental hygienists). Recent legislation now allows dental hygienists to administer local anesthesia and nitrous oxide analgesia. In light of this expanded scope of practice it has been suggested that dental hygienists should also be required to earn continuing education credits in pain and symptom management.

THE CONTENT OF THE BILL:

House Bill 5025 would amend the Public Health Code to eliminate the exemption for dental hygienists from a requirement that health professionals complete training in pain and symptom management as a condition of license renewal.

MCL 333.16204

BACKGROUND INFORMATION:

The bill is identical to House Bill 4700, which has passed the House, and Senate Bill 502, which has passed the Senate. For more information, see the analyses prepared by the House Fiscal Agency on House Bill 4700 dated 9-28-05 and Senate Bill 502 dated 9-13-05.

ARGUMENTS:

For:

According to members of the Michigan Dental Association, "pain management is part and parcel of what the dental hygienist is and does on a daily basis with every patient." Patients expect to receive quality care with a minimum of discomfort. In addition, now that dental hygienists, along with dentists and dental assistants, can administer local anesthesia and nitrous oxide analgesia, it is a natural progression that dental hygienists also be required to receive training in pain and symptom management as a condition of license renewal. The amount of continuing education in pain management will be determined by the Michigan Board of Dentistry.

POSITIONS:

The Michigan Dental Hygienists' Association supports the bill. (11-1-05)

A representative of the Department of Community Health indicated support for the bill. (11-1-05)

A representative of the Michigan Dental Association indicated support for the bill. (11-1-05)

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■ 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.