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Bill Analysis
Legislative Service Commission

S.B. 244
126th General Assembly
(As Introduced)

Sens. Austria, Schuler, Schuring, Miller, Clancy

BILL SUMMARY

- Permits a dental assistant to apply pit and fissure sealants under certain circumstances.

CONTENT AND OPERATION

Background

A "pit and fissure sealant" is a resinous material designed for application to the occlusal surfaces of posterior teeth to seal the surface irregularities and prevent ingress of oral fluids, food, and debris.¹ According to the American Dental Association, sealants are applied through the following process:²

- (1) The teeth to be sealed are cleaned.
- (2) The chewing surfaces of the teeth to be sealed are roughened with an acid solution to help the sealant adhere to the teeth.
- (3) The sealant is "painted" onto the enamel of the teeth, where the sealant bonds directly to the teeth and hardens. A special curing light may be used to help the sealant harden.

¹ MOSBY'S DENTAL DICTIONARY 447 (1st ed. 1998).

² American Dental Association. "Frequently Asked Questions: Sealants" (visited January 13, 2006), accessible at <http://www.ada.org/public/topics/sealants_faq.asp>.

Application of sealants

Current law

(R.C. 4715.09, 4715.20, 4715.39, and 4715.99; O.A.C. 4715-3-01(N)(2), 4715-9-01(B)(2), and 4715-11-03(A)(1))

The placement of sealants is considered an "advanced remediable intra-oral dental task or procedure" under a rule adopted by the State Dental Board. Under current law and rules adopted by the Board, the individuals authorized to place sealants are limited to the following: (1) dentists, (2) dental hygienists, when supervised by a licensed dentist, and (3) expanded function dental auxiliaries, when "directly supervised" by a licensed dentist.

The bill

(R.C. 4715.39)

The bill permits a dental assistant to apply pit and fissure sealants if the following requirements are met:

(1) The application of sealant is performed only after a dentist has evaluated the patient and designated the teeth and surfaces that will benefit from the application.

(2) The dental assistant is certified by the Dental Assisting National Board or the Ohio Commission on Dental Assistant Certification (see **COMMENT**, below).

(3) The dental assistant has successfully completed a course in the application of sealants consisting of at least two hours of didactic instruction and two hours of clinical instruction through a program provided by an institution accredited by the American Dental Association Commission on Dental Accreditation or a program provided by a sponsor of continuing education approved by the State Dental Board.

(4) The dentist supervising the assistant has observed the assistant successfully apply at least six sealants.

COMMENT

Dental Assisting National Board

To be certified by the Dental Assisting National Board (DANB), a person must pass the certified dental assistant (CDA) examination administered by

DANB. To be eligible to sit for this examination, a person must meet the requirements of one of the following three pathways:³

(1) Pathway 1

- Graduate from a dental assisting or dental hygiene program that is accredited by the American Dental Association.
- Obtain a cardiopulmonary resuscitation (CPR) certificate from a DANB-accepted CPR course earned within two years prior to the examination date for which application is made.

(2) Pathway 2

- Graduate from high school or obtain a General Educational Development (GED) certificate.
- Work either (a) a minimum of two years, full-time (at least 3,500 hours accumulated over 24 months), as a dental assistant verified by a dentist-employer, or (b) work at least 3,500 hours, a combination of full- and part-time or part-time only, over a minimum of 24 months and a maximum of 48 months as a dental assistant verified by a dentist-employer.
- Obtain a CPR certificate from a DANB-accepted CPR course earned within two years prior to the examination date for which application is made.

(3) Pathway 3

- Meet one of the following three requirements:
 - Be a current or former DANB certified dental assistant;
 - Graduate from an ADA-accredited DDS or DMD program;
 - Graduate from a foreign dental degree program.

³ *Dental Assisting National Board (DANB). "2006 DANB Exam Candidate Guide" (visited January 13, 2006), accessible at <<http://www.dentalassisting.com/PDFs/CDAweb04.pdf>>.*

- Obtain a CPR certificate from a DANB-accepted CPR course earned within two years prior to the examination date for which application is made.

Ohio Commission on Dental Assistant Certification

To be certified by the Ohio Commission on Dental Assistant Certification, a person must pass the examination administered by the Commission. To be eligible to sit for this examination, a person must meet the following requirements:⁴

(1) Education

- Meet one of the following requirements:
 - Have a minimum of six months of continuous full-time work experience.
 - Be enrolled in the second year of a two-year dental assisting program.
 - Be enrolled in a post-high school dental assisting program.

(2) Other

- Provide proof of meeting the professional ethics requirement.
- File a correct and complete application prior to the application deadline.
- Pay the correct fee.
- Provide proof of a current CPR certificate.
- Submit two passport photographs.

⁴ *Ohio Dental Assistants Certification, Inc. "Guidelines for the Ohio Dental Assistants Certification Examination" (visited January 13, 2006), accessible at <<http://home.fuse.net/kspradlin/codainfo.htm>>.*

HISTORY

ACTION

DATE

Introduced

12-22-05

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