

2019 Oregon Action for Dental Health Dentists Making a Difference

HB 2220: Dentists and Vaccines: Integrating Dentistry into Primary Care

Dentists are an integral part of delivering primary health care services to Oregonians. As Oregon moves to a more integrated health care delivery system, the opportunity for dentists to screen for basic health conditions, and to provide preventive services such as vaccines, makes increasingly more sense. As highly trained medical practitioners, dentists are well-positioned to administer a broad range of vaccines, including vaccines for the flu and for HPV, a primary cause of oropharyngeal cancer. HB 2220 would allow dentists to administer vaccines.

SB 824: Licensure Reform

The ODA has a bill to clarify that the Oregon Board of Dentistry may accept alternative examinations (such as the OSCE: objective structured clinic examination) as minimum requirements for licensure. The goal is to move away from live patient exams that present ethical issues and are not necessarily the best test of competency.

SB 834: Improving Patient and Provider Transparency

To ensure transparency and communication between patients and providers, the ODA will work to extend current provisions afforded to licensees under the Oregon Medical Board, allowing the expression of regret or error without the threat of that disclosure being used against the provider in court. In simple terms, this would allow an Oregon Board of Dentistry licensee to explain an error to a patient without the threat of that conversation being used against them in court. Apology laws do not limit the patient's rights to pursue legal action against the provider.

SB 836: Patient Protections in Dental Pilot Projects

The ODA believes patients served within Dental Pilot Projects deserve the same standard and quality of care that Oregonians would receive from any other dental practitioner in the state. To ensure this safety, this bill would allow the Board of Dentistry, established by the state to regulate dental professionals and promote high-quality oral health care, to review patient charts within a pilot project and share any concerns with the Oregon Health Authority, which would maintain complete statutory authority over the projects.

Oral Health School Screenings

The ODA plans to introduce legislation in 2019 to improve and clarify current statute requiring oral health school screenings for students entering public school for the first time. Increased data will allow oral health stakeholders and policy makers to better direct limited resources to the areas most in need of dental care.

For Additional Information
Please contact ODA Director of Government Affairs, Jen Lewis-Goff
JLewis-goff@oregondental.org; 503-218-2010