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FISCAL IMPACT REPORT

ORIGINAL DATE 2/9/07

SPONSOR Robinson LAST UPDATED _____ HB _____

SHORT TITLE Fluoride Treatments By Dental Hygienists SB 805

ANALYST C. Sanchez

APPROPRIATION (dollars in thousands)

Appropriation		Recurring or Non-Rec	Fund Affected
FY07	FY08		
	NFI		

(Parenthesis () Indicate Expenditure Decreases)

Relates to, HB 102, HB 242, SB 35, SB 173

SOURCES OF INFORMATION

LFC Files

Responses Received From

Regulation and Licensing Department (RLD)

Department of Health (DOH)

SUMMARY

Synopsis of Bill

Senate Bill 805 amends 61-5A-1 and 61-5A-4 NMSA 1978. The bill authorizes a Dental Hygienist to apply preventive topical fluorides and remineralization agents without supervision in public and community medical facilities, schools, hospitals, long-term care facilities and such other settings as the determine by board rule, so long as the dental hygienist's license is not restricted pursuant to the Impaired Dentists and Dental Hygienists Act

SIGNIFICANT ISSUES

Fluoride is a mineral that is effective in preventing and reversing the early signs of tooth decay. It makes the tooth structure stronger, so teeth are more resistant to acid attacks. Self-administered topical fluorides come in a variety of forms including toothpaste and rinses. Professionally applied fluoride treatments (e.g., varnish, gel and foam) are more concentrated than the self-applied fluorides, and therefore are not needed as frequently.

Currently, any person without a formal dental education in New Mexico can apply a topical fluoride at any time and in any place. However, at the same time, a licensed dental hygienist cannot do so, unless the patient has been examined by a dentist in the last year and the dental hygienist is working under the general supervision of a dentist. The intent of SB805 is to allow dental hygienists to apply topical fluorides and remineralization agents without supervision in public and community medical facilities, schools, hospitals, long-term care facilities and such other settings.

Expanding the scope of practice for a dental hygienist will bring New Mexico into parity with other states that allow the dental hygienist to apply fluoride varnish.

New Mexico has a serious shortage of dental providers throughout areas of the state. Most of the counties, either in specific populations or the entire county, have been designated as dental health professional shortage areas. The shortage is preventing the state from reaching low income and noninsured individuals who need dental treatment and preventive measures. Enabling the dental hygienist to apply fluoride varnish will increase the number of children who can receive this preventive agent and reduce the incidence of dental disease.

PERFORMANCE IMPLICATIONS

SB805 falls under the DOH Strategic Plan, Program Area 2, Public Health: Task 8: Improve access to preventive and restorative oral health services provided to children, low income rural populations and people with disabilities.

CONFLICT, DUPLICATION, COMPANIONSHIP, RELATIONSHIP

SB805 relates with HB 102, HB 242, SB 35 and SB 173, as they are concerned with New Mexico oral health issues including dental practice, oral health education, and access to dental services.

OTHER SUBSTANTIVE ISSUES

The 2000 New Mexico Children's Oral Health Survey has identified that 65% of New Mexico children have experienced tooth decay and 37% have untreated tooth decay.

WHAT WILL BE THE CONSEQUENCES OF NOT ENACTING THIS BILL

Dental Hygienist will continue to need supervision of a licensed dentist to apply preventative topical fluorides and remineralization agents.

CS/mt