

RCW 18.265.060 Supervising dentist—Practice plan contract—

Requirements. (Effective January 1, 2024.) (1) A dental therapist may only practice dental therapy under the supervision of a dentist and pursuant to a written practice plan contract with the supervising dentist. A dental therapist may not practice independently. In circumstances authorized by the supervising dentist in the written practice plan contract, a dental therapist may provide services under off-site supervision. The contract must, at a minimum, contain the following elements:

- (a) The level of supervision required and circumstances when the prior knowledge and consent of the supervising dentist is required;
- (b) Practice settings where services and procedures may be provided;
- (c) Any limitations on the services or procedures the dental therapist may provide;
- (d) Age and procedure-specific practice protocols, including case selection criteria, assessment guidelines, and imaging frequency;
- (e) Procedures for creating and maintaining dental records for patients treated by the dental therapist;
- (f) A plan to manage medical emergencies in each practice setting where the dental therapist provides care;
- (g) A quality assurance plan for monitoring care provided by the dental therapist or, including patient care review, referral follow-up, and a quality assurance chart review;
- (h) Protocols for administering and dispensing medications, including the specific circumstances under which the medications may be dispensed and administered;
- (i) Criteria relating to the provision of care to patients with specific medical conditions or complex medical histories, including requirements for consultation prior to the initiation of care; and
- (j) Specific written protocols governing situations where the dental therapist encounters a patient requiring treatment that exceeds the dental therapist's scope of practice or capabilities and protocols for referral of patients requiring evaluation and treatment by dentists, denturists, physicians, advanced registered nurse practitioners, or other health care providers.

(2) The dental therapist shall accept responsibility for all services and procedures provided by the dental therapist or any auxiliary dental providers the dental therapist is supervising pursuant to the practice plan contract.

(3) A supervising dentist licensed under chapter 18.32 RCW who knowingly permits a dental therapist to provide a service or procedure that is not authorized in the practice plan contract, or any dental therapist who provides a service or procedure that is not authorized in the practice plan contract, commits unprofessional conduct for purposes of chapter 18.130 RCW.

(4) A dentist who enters into a written practice plan contract with a dental therapist shall:

- (a) Directly provide or arrange for another dentist, denturist, or specialist to provide any necessary advanced procedures or services needed by the patient or any treatment that exceeds the dental therapist's scope of practice or capabilities;
- (b) Ensure that he or she or another dentist is available to the dental therapist for timely communication during treatment if needed.

(5) A dental therapist shall perform only those services authorized by the supervising dentist and written practice plan

contract and shall maintain an appropriate level of contact with the supervising dentist.

(6) A supervising dentist may supervise no more than a total of five dental therapists at any one time.

(7) Practice plan contracts must be signed and maintained by both the supervising dentist and the dental therapist.

(8) A dental therapist must submit a signed copy of the practice plan contract to the secretary at the time of licensure renewal. If the practice plan contract is revised in between license renewal, a signed copy of the revised practice plan contract must be submitted as soon as practicable after the revision is made. [2023 c 460 § 7.]

Effective date—2023 c 460 §§ 1-22: See note following RCW 18.265.005.