

North Dakota Legislative Management  
Health Service Committee  
Roughrider room, State Capital

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Statement of the North Dakota Dental Assistants Association

Marsha Krumm, Immediate Past President

The North Dakota Dental Assistants Association appreciates the opportunity to comment on the Dental Services study as authorized by HB 1454 as follows:

1. The NDDAA believes that a large number of tasks included in the proposed scope of practice of dental therapists require the level of education, professional judgment and skill of a licensed dentist. Therefore being a public safety issue.
2. Currently there are at least 18 states that allow expanded function dental auxiliaries (EFDAs) or a similar level of dental auxiliary to perform restorative functions such as placing and finishing restorations while working under a dentist's direct supervision. Currently at least 16 out of the 30 duties included in the dental therapist's scope of practice as outlined in HB 1454 can be performed by EFDAs or a similar level of dental auxiliary in one or more of these states.
3. The implementation of an EFDA program would allow North Dakota to make use of the existing workforce to serve more patients. Potential benefits of an EFDA program, as compared to the dental therapist, include:

- a. History of success of EFDA models in other states means that North Dakota would be working within a well-tested framework
- b. Shorter lead time and lower cost to implement, given that existing curriculum and assessment tools are available
- c. Lower risk to patients, since EFDAs will work under a dentist's direct supervision

The NDDAA believes that by utilizing existing team members as EFDAs we have the ability to be more productive and flexible with our schedules. By freeing up the dentist, more care can be provided to our patients and in turn more patients can be treated. This would also make us able to accommodate emergencies without great interruption in the practices schedule.