

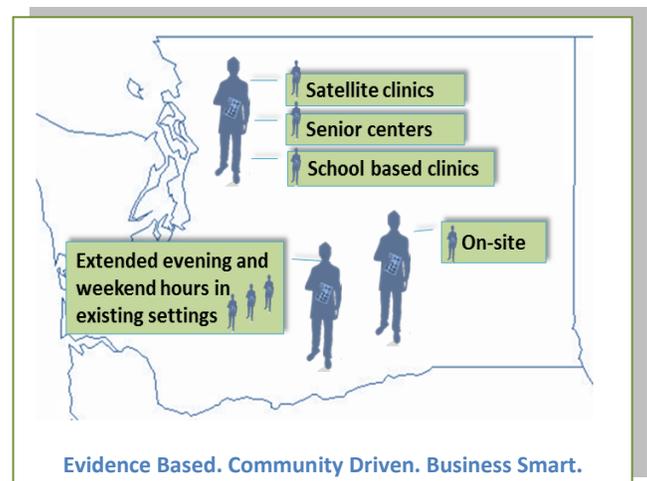


Mid-level Dental Providers: A Common Sense Solution

Legislation in Washington proposes a new “midlevel” dental practitioner as part of Washington’s solution to increasing access to oral health care. The legislation incorporates two pathways for the provider to join the dental care team: the equivalent to an associate’s degree based on curriculum from the University of Washington DENTEX and an accelerated path for Registered Dental Hygienists.

Dentist Supervised Care Where it is Needed Most

“Mid-level” dental practitioners are supervised by a dentist at all times. There are two types of supervision: on-site and off-site. The practitioners must work on-site until they have completed clinical hours with their supervising dentist. The supervising dentist can then use off-site supervision to extend care to settings where there is a gap in care, such as senior centers, schools or satellite clinics. Supervising dentists set protocols and limit practice settings or procedures through the Practice Plan Contract. This innovation is successfully and safely increasing access in other states.



Competency Based Education

The practitioners are trained by the same licensed dentists that teach dental students. The training programs include intensive, hands-on experience to master of a limited number of the most common procedures. The successful training program for the first U.S. based “mid-level” dental practitioners, known as dental therapists, is housed at the University of Washington DENTX program.

Long History of High Quality Care

Washington’s “mid-level” dental practitioners are based off dental therapists that have been working in over 50 countries for 90 years. Dental therapists are highly successful practitioners already working in Minnesota and Alaska. Decades of research show the practitioners provide safe, high-quality care.

Limited Scope of Practice

“Mid-level” dental practitioners in Washington will provide community outreach and oral health education; preventive treatments such as applying dental sealants and fluoride varnish; and routine dental procedures such as filling early stage cavities and limited simple extractions.