



STATE OF WASHINGTON

DEPARTMENT OF HEALTH

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**NOTICE OF ADOPTION OF AN INTERPRETIVE STATEMENT
OR POLICY STATEMENT**

**Title of Interpretive or Policy Statement: Dentist Scope of Practice – Use of Botulinum
Toxin Injections / Dermal Fillers (IS-1)**

Issuing Entity: Dental Quality Assurance Commission

Subject Matter: Use of Botulinum Toxin Injections / Dermal Fillers by Dentists

Effective Date: July 26, 2013

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OFFICE OF THE CODE REVISER
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FILED

DATE: August 20, 2013

TIME: 11:04 AM

WSR 13-17-090

**Department of Health
Health Systems Quality Assurance
Interpretive Statement**

Title:	Dentist Scope of Practice – Use of Botulinum Toxin Injections / Dermal Fillers	Number: IS-1
Reference:	RCW 18.32.020	
Contact:	Jennifer Santiago, Program Manager	
Effective Date:	July 26, 2013	
Supersedes:		
Approved by:	Paul W. Bryan, D.M.D., Chair Dental Quality Assurance Commission	

The use of botulinum toxin injections or dermal fillers in the soft tissues throughout the face can be within the scope of practice of a dentist licensed under chapter 18.32 RCW when:

- Used to treat functional or esthetic dental conditions and their direct esthetic consequences, and
- The treating dentist has appropriate, verifiable training and experience.

The use of botulinum toxin injections or dermal fillers outside the treatment of dental related conditions for purely cosmetic purposes is not within the scope of practice of dentists not specialty trained as an oral and maxillofacial surgeon.

Background and Analysis

Definitions

Botulinum Toxin: An injected drug prepared from botulin used to temporarily paralyze muscle.

Dermal Filler: An injectable gel made from naturally-occurring substances, including collagen and hyaluronic acid, usually used to add volume to aging tissue.

Dentist: A dentist licensed in the state of Washington under chapter 18.32 RCW who does not have the requisite training to represent himself or herself as an oral/maxillofacial surgeon.

Description of Issue

Are botulinum toxin injections or dermal filler treatments within the scope of practice for dentistry?

Analysis

RCW 18.32.020 defines dentistry:

“A person practices dentistry, within the meaning of this chapter, who (1) represents himself or herself as being able to diagnose, treat, remove stains and concretions from teeth, operate or prescribe for any disease, pain, injury, deficiency, deformity, or physical condition of the human teeth, alveolar process, gums, or jaw, or (2) offers or undertakes by any means or methods to diagnose, treat, remove stains or concretions from teeth, operate or prescribe for any disease, pain, injury, deficiency, deformity, or physical condition of the same, or take impressions of the teeth or jaw, or (3) owns, maintains, or operates an office for the practice of dentistry, or (4) engages in any of the practices included in the curricula of recognized and approved dental schools or colleges, or (5) professes to the public by any method to furnish, supply, construct, reproduce, or repair any prosthetic denture, bridge, appliance, or other structure to be worn in the human mouth...

The practice of dentistry includes the performance of any dental or oral and maxillofacial surgery. "Oral and maxillofacial surgery" means the specialty of dentistry that includes the diagnosis and surgical and adjunctive treatment of diseases, injuries, and defects of the hard and soft tissues of the oral and maxillofacial region.”

RCW 18.32.020 defines the practice of dentistry as treatment on teeth, the alveolar process, gums or the jaw (oral and maxillofacial surgery excepted).

The definition of “dentistry” defines “oral and maxillofacial surgery” as a specialty of dentistry. Dentists in Washington State without approved training required to designate themselves as oral and maxillofacial surgeons may still practice some procedures associated with that specialty and within the facial regions of that specialty as long as they don’t misrepresent themselves as an oral and maxillofacial surgeon and it is a procedure the dentist has training to perform. Practice in this specialty allows for ‘...*diagnosis and surgical and adjunctive treatment of diseases, injuries, and defects of the hard and soft tissues of the oral and maxillofacial region.*”

RCW 18.32.020 (4) also allows for practices included in the curricula of “recognized and approved dental schools or colleges.”

Dental training recognizes the functional aspects and resulting esthetic ramifications of dental conditions and dental treatment. Dentists are trained in evaluation of the peri-oral soft tissue, the muscles of facial expression and the muscles of mastication. Dentists are also trained in treatment of functional conditions associated with these same soft tissues including but not limited to bruxism, tension headaches, temporomandibular joint problems, myofascial pain conditions, limited inter-dental papilla volume, hyperactive masseters, deficient and irregular lip and smile lines, maxillary gingival excess (gummy smile), maxillary gingival deficiency, and angular cheilitis. The use of botulinum toxin injections or dermal fillers for conditions like these is already treatment that is recognized and acceptable. What typically isn’t taught in dental schools, outside of oral and maxillofacial surgery training, is the use of botulinum toxin injections or dermal fillers for strictly the esthetic correction of fine lines and furrowing that results in the skin from the muscles of facial expression.

It is relevant to note that treatment of functional problems with botulinum toxin injections requires a practitioner to know and understand the functional AND esthetic consequences or effects of therapeutic botulinum toxin injections within the muscles of mastication and of expression covering the entire face.

Given the standard training and experience of dentists the use of botulinum toxin injections or dermal fillers in the soft tissues throughout the face can be within the scope of practice of a dentist when:

- Used to treat functional or esthetic dental conditions and their direct esthetic consequences, and
- The treating dentist has appropriate, verifiable training and experience.

The use of botulinum toxin injections or dermal fillers outside the treatment of dental related conditions for purely cosmetic purposes is not within the scope of practice of dentists not specialty trained as an oral and maxillofacial surgeon.