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## **U of M dental school hopes to train dental therapists**

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MINNEAPOLIS -- Rural and poor populations could see improved access to dental care under a plan to begin training dental therapists at the University of Minnesota.

The therapists would be licensed to take on some of the responsibilities that have been reserved for dentists. Significant portions of the training would be done alongside students in the university's doctor of dental surgery program.

Under the university's proposal, dental therapists could practice preventive care, such as applying sealants and fluoride, without a dentist on site. More complex procedures, such as pulling or drilling teeth, could be done by a therapist only under a dentist's supervision. And certain procedures would still be done only by dentists.

The bill has the backing of the Minnesota Dental Association.

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