

Study: Dental therapists worldwide offer safe care

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(AP) -- A new report says dental therapists worldwide including those in rural Alaska, offer safe, competent care in locations with rare access to dentists.

The report released Tuesday by the W.K. Kellogg Foundation details a review of more than 1,100 documents of care by dental therapists in 54 countries, including the United States.

Beside Alaska, Minnesota is the only U.S. state to allow midlevel providers to perform such work as extracting teeth and filling [cavities](#).

Foundation officials say more than a dozen other states are exploring the idea.

Dental therapists in Alaska and elsewhere have been controversial. Critics, including many dentists, say such complex procedures should be done only by licensed [dentists](#).

The Kellogg Foundation says the study found no evidence suggesting dental therapists weren't fit for the work.

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