

DENTAL HYGIENE PROGRAM COMPETENCIES

COMPETENCY 1 - The graduate must be competent in assessing dental hygiene treatment needs for the child, adolescent, adult, geriatric dental and special needs patient.

Supporting Competencies

The graduate must be competent to:

- **1.1** - Systematically collect, analyze and record data on the general, oral and psychosocial health status of clients using methods consistent with medico-legal and ethical principles.
- **1.2** - Obtain, review and/or update and interpret an accurate medical/dental history and vital signs, recognizing predisposing and etiological risk factors that require intervention to prevent and control disease and conditions that require special precautions or consideration prior to or during dental hygiene care.
- **1.3** - Perform an extraoral/intraoral examination accurately noting both normal and abnormal conditions present.
- **1.4** - Evaluate the periodontium and identify the conditions that compromise periodontal health and function and accurately records the results.
- **1.5** - Identify the need for radiographs, obtain diagnostically correct radiographs and distinguish normal from abnormal anatomical findings on the radiographs, accurately records the results.
- **1.6** - Analyze and interpret data to formulate a dental hygiene diagnosis related to and congruent with the diagnosis of the dentist and other health professionals.
- **1.7** - Plan a sequence of educational, preventive and therapeutic services with the patient and based on the dental hygiene diagnosis.
- **1.8** - Determine goals and establish expected outcomes related to the needs and desires of the patient and the dental hygiene diagnosis.

COMPETENCY 2 - The graduate must be competent in providing comprehensive dental hygiene care for a variety of patients.

Supporting Competencies

The graduate must be competent to:

- **2.1** - Provide comprehensive dental hygiene care by applying basic and advanced principles of dental hygiene.
- **2.2** - Obtain consultations and make referrals as appropriate and to the appropriate professionals.
- **2.3** - Educate patients to prevent and control risk factors that contribute to caries, periodontal disease and other oral conditions.
- **2.4** - Utilize accepted infection control procedures.
- **2.5** - Apply basic and advanced principles of dental hygiene instrumentation to remove deposits without trauma to hard or soft tissue.
- **2.6** - Control pain and anxiety through the use of accepted pharmacological and behavioral techniques.
- **2.7** - Develop and maintain a periodontal maintenance program.
- **2.8** - Evaluate the outcomes of dental hygiene interventions using indices, instruments, examination techniques, and patient self-report as specified in the patient goals.
- **2.9** - Compare actual outcomes to expected outcomes, reevaluating goals, diagnoses and services when expected outcomes are not achieved.
- **2.10** - Evaluate a patient's satisfaction with the oral healthcare received and the oral health status achieved.
- **2.11** - Document all required and appropriate information in the patient's record.

COMPETENCY 3 - The graduate must be competent to effectively communicate and interact with diverse population groups.

Supporting Competencies

The graduate must be competent to:

- **3.1** - Identify different populations' different needs and perspectives of needs.
- **3.2** - Communicate with a patient at that patient's level of understanding, tailoring instruction specifically to that patient's needs.
- **3.3** - Present educational information to diverse populations, in a variety of settings using appropriate teaching strategies.
- **3.4** - Educate patients and caregivers concerning the etiology and prevention of various oral diseases and conditions, including instruction in appropriate oral hygiene methods.
- **3.5** - Motivate and encourage patients to assume responsibility for their oral health.
- **3.6** - Identify factors which facilitate or impede behavioral change and compliance, and counsel to alter health-destructive patterns.
- **3.7** - Provide dietary counseling and nutritional education relevant to oral health.
- **3.8** - Develop individualized patient plans for health promotion, protection and disease prevention.
- **3.9** - Provide dental hygiene services in multiple settings.

COMPETENCY 4 - The graduate must be competent in providing dental hygiene care for all types of classifications of periodontal disease including patients who exhibit moderate to severe periodontal disease.

Supporting Competencies

The graduate must be competent to:

- **4.1** - Evaluate the periodontium, recognize etiologic factors, and formulate a plan of dental hygiene treatment.
- **4.2** - Perform a dental prophylaxis, scale, and root plane procedure.
- **4.3** - Evaluate patient progress utilizing indices and make appropriate referrals.
- **4.4** - Evaluate the results of periodontal treatment and establish and monitor an appropriate maintenance program within the scope of dental hygiene responsibilities.

COMPETENCY 5 - The graduate must be competent in applying ethical, legal and regulatory concepts to the provision and/or support of oral health care services.

Supporting Competencies

The graduate must be competent to:

- **5.1** - Apply the principles and laws of the Texas State Dental Practice Act and Rules and Regulations to the practice of dental hygiene.
- **5.2** - Apply the principles of ethical behavior and apply these principles in decision-making and interactions with patients, staff and colleagues, and in personal conduct.
- **5.3** - Provide humane and compassionate care to all patients, maintain honesty and confidentiality in interactions with patients, and serve patients and interact with colleagues and auxiliary personnel without discrimination.

COMPETENCY 6 - The graduate must be competent in providing appropriate life support measures for medical emergencies that may be encountered in dental hygiene practice.

Supporting Competencies

The graduate must be competent to:

- **6.1** - Determine medical conditions that require special precautions or consideration prior to or during dental hygiene treatment.
- **6.2** - Identify patients at risk for a medical emergency and assure that the appropriate precautions are taken to minimize those risks.
- **6.3** - Manage a medical emergency should it occur during an appointment.

COMPETENCY 7 - The graduate must be competent in assessing, planning, implementing and evaluating community-based oral health programs including, health promotion and disease prevention activities.

Supporting Competencies

The graduate must be competent to:

- **7.1** - Appreciate the evolving needs of all segments of society by conducting an assessment of oral health needs, risk and available resources for a specific population.
- **7.2** - Recognize legislative and regulatory processes that can result in the development of oral health policies in the community-at-large.
- **7.3** - Identify current trends in the provision and financing of oral health care.
- **7.4** - Use screening, referral and education to bring consumers into the healthcare delivery system.
- **7.5** - Teach dental health to community groups and participate in community-based healthcare programs.

COMPETENCY 8 - The graduate must be competent in the application of self-assessment skills to prepare them for life-long learning.

Supporting Competencies

The graduate must be competent to:

- **8.1** - Conduct ongoing self-assessment making a commitment to life-long learning.
- **8.2** - Possess knowledge and professional motivation to take an active part in professional organizations.
- **8.3** - Assume the role(s) of a dental hygienist professionally, clinically, as an educator, researcher and agent for change and an advocate for consumers.
- **8.4** - Recognize the importance of lifelong learning by seeking to maintain and improve professional competency through continuing education, evaluation of published clinical and scientific literature, and developing the ability to communicate effectively with other healthcare professionals.

COMPETENCY 9 - The graduate must be competent in the evaluation of current scientific literature.

Supporting Competencies

The graduate must be competent to:

- **9.1** - Apply knowledge of research design and methodology to review research.
- **9.2** - Critically evaluate scientific literature and incorporate evidence-based practices into patient care.
- **9.3** - Evaluate current scientific literature to promote and protect the health of the public.

COMPETENCY 10 - The graduate must be competent in problem solving strategies related to comprehensive patient care and management of patients.

Supporting Competencies

The graduate must be competent to:

- **10.1** - Solve problems and make decisions based on accepted scientific principles.
- **10.2** - Determine the complete oral health needs of patients and reflect those needs in the treatment plan.
- **10.3** - Communicate professional knowledge verbally and in writing to patients, colleagues and other professionals.
- **10.4** - Apply critical thinking skills to include developing the dental hygiene care plan.