Scope of Practice for Dentistry

June 2011

Health Regulation Department

Dubai Health Authority
Introduction

The Health Regulation Department is responsible for regulating dentistry practice in the Emirate of Dubai, United Arab Emirates. Scope of Practice (SOP) refers to the activities that dentist are educated, authorized and competent to perform as well as their decision making capacity. Such activities are established through the legislated definition of licensed Dentist practice, complemented by standards, limits, conditions and education and influenced by setting, environment and health needs of the population.

The Scope of Practice for Dentistry involves the maintenance of health through assessment, diagnosis, management, treatment and prevention of any disease, disorder or condition of the orofacial complex and associated structures.

The Scope of Practice for a licensed dentist is endorsed by the Health Regulation Department and should be read in conjunction with the Health Regulation Department Code of Conduct and Ethics for Health Professionals.

*The Health Regulation Department upholds that no dentist should be directed or compelled to undertake any practice that falls short of The Health Regulation Department standards or code of conduct requirements.*

The Scope of practices for each specialty is neither comprehensive nor exhaustive but rather provides guidelines of scope of practice.
1. **Dentist**

**Definition**

Dentistry is defined as the evaluation, diagnosis, prevention and/or treatment (nonsurgical, surgical or related procedures) of diseases, disorders and/or conditions of the oral cavity, maxillofacial area and/or the adjacent and associated structures and their impact on the human body; provided by a dentist, within the scope of his/her education, training and experience, in accordance with the ethics of the profession and applicable law.

**Scope of Practice:**

1. Diagnosis of orofacial conditions and the provision of appropriate information to patients of diagnosis, treatment or management options and their consequences.
2. Removing tooth tissue and/or placing materials for the purpose of either the temporary or permanent restoration or replacement of tooth structure or the rehabilitation of the dentition.
3. Performing procedures on the orofacial complex, teeth, and the hard and soft tissues surrounding or supporting the teeth.
4. Extracting teeth (exodontia).
5. Administration of local analgesia and/or drugs in connection with procedures on the teeth, jaws and the soft tissues surrounding or supporting the teeth, which is restricted by law to designated health practitioners.
6. Prescribing medicines appropriate to the scope of practice of which is restricted by law to prescription by designated health practitioners.
8. Using ionizing radiation, for diagnostic purposes, in the course of the practice of dentistry.
9. Performing procedures on any person preparatory to, or for the purpose of, the construction, fitting, adjustment, repair, or renewal of artificial dentures or restorative or corrective dental appliances.
10. Using of computer aided design/computer aided manufacture (CAD/CAM) direct and Indirect Restorations

Practice in this context goes wider than clinical dentistry to include teaching, research, and management, given that such roles influence clinical practice and public safety. Areas of dental practice which were not included in a practitioner’s training should not be undertaken unless the practitioner has completed appropriate training and practices to the standards required by the relevant Code of Practice.
2. **Specialist Scope of Practice (s):**

A. **Dental Public Health**

**Definition:**

Dental public health is the science and art of preventing and controlling dental diseases and promoting dental health through organized community efforts. It is that form of dental practice which serves the community as a patient rather than the individual. It is concerned with the dental health education of the public, with applied dental research, and with the administration of group dental care programs as well as the prevention and control of dental diseases on a community basis.

**Scope:**

1. Establish and support partnerships and alliances among dental, other health care professionals, and public health organizations, as well as business and social service groups, in order to address common goals to improve oral health address the oral health needs of the public.
2. Strengthen and expand dentistry's research and education capabilities.
3. Ensure the development of a responsive, competent, diverse, and "elastic" workforce.
4. Develop strategies to address the fiscal needs of the practice, education and research sectors of dentistry to ensure their viability and vitality.
5. Utilize the combined resources of the dental profession and dental industry; emphasis should be placed on the development of highly targeted, collaborative marketing and public relations initiatives.

B. **Endodontics**

**Definition:**

Endodontics is the branch of dentistry which is concerned with the morphology, physiology and pathology of the human dental pulp and periradicular tissues. Its study and practice encompass the basic and clinical sciences including biology of the normal pulp, the etiology, diagnosis, prevention and treatment of diseases and injuries of the pulp and associated periradicular conditions.

**Scope:**

The scope of Endodontics includes:

1. The differential diagnosis and treatment of oral pains of pulpal and/or periapical origin.
2. Vital pulp therapy such as pulp capping and pulpotomy.
3. Nonsurgical treatment of root canal systems with or without periradicular pathosis of pulpal origin, and the obturation of these root canal systems.
4. Selective surgical removal of pathological tissues resulting from pulpal pathosis.
5. Intentional replantation and replantation of avulsed teeth.
6. Surgical removal of tooth structure such as root-end resection, hemisection and root resection.
7. Bleaching of discoloured dentin and enamel (teeth).
8. Retreatment of teeth previously treated endodontically and treatment procedures related to coronal restorations by means of post and/or cores involving the root canal space.

C. Oral & Maxillofacial Pathology

Definition:

Oral pathology is the specialty of dentistry and discipline of pathology that deals with the nature, identification, and management of diseases affecting the oral and maxillofacial regions. It is a science that investigates the causes, processes, and effects of these diseases. The practice of oral pathology includes research and diagnosis of diseases using clinical, radiographic, microscopic, biochemical, or other examinations.

Scope:

1. Determines nature and extent of oral diseases and abnormal growths.
2. Diagnosis of microscopic slides of diseases or lesions of the head and neck region, including exfoliative and fine needle aspiration cytology.
3. Determines types of tests or examinations and evaluates results to diagnose the nature and progress of diseases.
4. Diagnosis of disease using clinical, radiographic, biochemical, microscopic, molecular or other examinations like histochemistry, immunochemistry, cytology, and electron microscopy.
5. Forensic pathology.

D. Oral and Maxillofacial Radiology

Definition:

Oral and maxillofacial radiology is the specialty of dentistry and discipline of radiology concerned with the production and interpretation of images and data produced by all modalities of radiant energy that are used for the diagnosis and management of diseases, disorders and conditions of the oral and maxillofacial region.

Scope:

1. Image production with interpretation of disease, combining radiology with oral pathology, diagnosis, and medicine.
2. Responsible for establishing policies regarding radiographic selection criteria, radiation safety, and quality assurance
3. Make decisions regarding the use of films and film-screen combinations, processing techniques, and other aspects of clinical operation.
4. Utilize traditional x-rays, digital imaging of structures within the mouth and outside of the mouth, computed tomography (CT) scans of the head and neck, MRI (magnetic resonance imaging), as well as ultrasonography (ultrasound imaging).
5. Perform tomographic evaluation of the TMJ or prospective implant sites.

E. Oral & Maxillofacial Surgery

Definition:

Oral and maxillofacial surgery is the specialty of dentistry which includes the diagnosis, surgical and adjunctive treatment of diseases, injuries and defects involving both the functional and esthetic aspects of the hard and soft tissues of the oral and maxillofacial region.

Scope:

1. Diagnosing diseases or disorders of the oral-facial complex.
2. Performing a procedure on tissue of the oral-facial complex below the dermis, below the surface of a mucous membrane or in or below the surfaces of the teeth.
3. Harvesting tissue for the purpose of surgery on the oral-facial complex.
4. Setting a fracture of a bone of the oral-facial complex or setting a dislocation of a joint of the oral-facial complex.
5. Prescribing of drugs necessary for the above purpose.
6. Fitting or dispensing a dental prosthesis, appliance or a device used inside the mouth to protect oral-facial complex from abnormal functioning.

F. Oral Surgery

Definition:

Oral surgery is the specialty of dentistry which includes the diagnosis, surgical and adjunctive treatment of diseases, injuries and defects involving both the functional and esthetic aspects of the hard and soft tissues of the oral region.

Scope:

1. Diagnosing diseases or disorders of the oral-facial complex.
2. Performing a procedure on tissue of the oral-facial complex below the surface of a mucous membrane or in or below the surfaces of the teeth.
3. IntraOral Harvesting tissue for the purpose of surgery on the oral complex.
4. Setting a fracture of a bone of the oral complex or setting a dislocation of a joint of the oral-facial complex.
5. Prescribing of drugs necessary for the above purpose.
6. Fitting or dispensing a dental prosthesis, appliance or a device used inside the mouth to protect oral-facial complex from abnormal functioning.

G. Orthodontics

Definition:

Orthodontics and dentofacial orthopedics is the dental specialty that includes the diagnosis, prevention, interception, and correction of malocclusion, as well as neuromuscular and skeletal abnormalities of the developing or mature orofacial structures.

Scope:

1. Diagnose and prepare treatment plan for dento-facial anomalies and tooth/arc discrepancy, with coordination and close follow up with other specialties.
2. Correct and prevent disharmonies of growth between the upper and lower jaws.
3. Guide the development and ultimate position of the teeth.
4. Eliminate any impairment of chewing ability caused by the malocclusion.
5. Reduce the susceptibility to dental decay and gum disease caused by crowding of the teeth.
7. Improve appearance of the face and mouth area.
8. Correct occlusion abnormalities.
9. Redirect the growth of, and repositioning, the jaws.

H. Paediatric Dentistry

Definition:

Paediatric Dentistry is an age-defined specialty that provides both primary and comprehensive preventive and therapeutic oral health care for infants and children through adolescence, including those with special health care needs.

Scope:

1. To educate and guide the child and parent to accept and practice oral health care with preventive concepts a foundation of clinical practice.
2. Perform restorative procedures in primary and young permanent teeth required to treat children and adolescents
3. Be able to diagnose certain pathologies related to paediatrics, oral pathology, and perform oral surgical procedures applicable to the child dental patient.
4. Diagnose and treat traumatized and carious primary and young permanent teeth to maintain the teeth, pulp tissues and periodontium in a healthy state.
5. Provide comprehensive oral health care for medically, emotionally, mentally, or physically handicapped patients.
6. Provide treatment aimed at allowing optimal development of the stomatognathic system and the ability through the use of psychological methods including provision of dental care in the health facilities.
7. Provide pharmacological sedation.
8. Implement of individual and community prevention programs aiming at dental and systemic diseases and traumatic injuries.
9. Manage a contemporary paediatric dental practice relative to practice administration, efficient auxiliary utilization, and marketing.

I. Periodontics

Definition:

Periodontics is that specialty of dentistry which encompasses the prevention, diagnosis and treatment of diseases of the supporting and surrounding tissues of the teeth or their substitutes and the maintenance of the health, function and esthetics of these structures and tissues.

Scope:

1. Open flap debridement with or without osseous surgery
2. Crown lengthening procedures
3. Soft tissue grafting
4. Root resection
5. Bone augmentation and Guided tissue regeneration (GTR) procedures
6. Aesthetic periodontal surgery
7. Implant and Peri-implant surgery procedures

J. Prosthodontics

Definition:

Prosthodontics is the dental specialty pertaining to the diagnosis, treatment planning, rehabilitation and maintenance of the oral function, comfort, appearance and health of patients with clinical conditions associated with missing or deficient teeth and/or oral and maxillofacial tissues using biocompatible substitutes.

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1 Refer to the Health Regulation Department Dental Sedation Guideline
2 Refer to the Health Regulation Department Dental Implant Guideline
Scope:

1. Replacement of teeth and contiguous structures for edentulous or partially edentulous patients by artificial substitutes that are removable from the mouth. (Removable Prosthodontics).
2. Replacement and/or restoration of teeth by artificial substitutes that are not removable from the mouth. (Fixed Prosthodontics).
3. Replacement of teeth and contiguous structures by artificial substitutes partially or completely supported and/or retained by alloplastic implants. (Implant Prosthodontics).
4. Restoration and/or replacement of stomatognathic and associated facial structures by artificial substitutes that may or may not be removed. (Maxillofacial Prosthodontics).

K. Restorative Dentistry

Definition:

Specialists practice in the branch of dentistry that is concerned with the diagnosis and treatment of diseases and disorders of the teeth and their supporting structures, including their repair and replacement. It includes the disciplines of operative, endodontic, periodontic and prosthodontics. Specialist Restorative Dentistry is undertaken by a dental practitioner who possesses additional postgraduate.

Scope:

Endodontics: The diagnosis and management of diseases of the dental pulp resulting from dental disease and trauma.

Periodontics: The diagnosis and management of diseases of the supporting structures of the teeth gum and bone.

Prosthodontics: The provision of complete and partial dentures, and more complex restorations such as crowns, bridges and veneers. Dental implants may be used to support crowns and bridges or to retain removable dentures. Restorative dentistry, therefore, encompasses much of the dental treatment provided in primary dental care – general dental practice and the community dental service.

Much of cosmetic dentistry falls within the scope restorative dentistry. Patients frequently require complex restorative dental treatment after surgery for dental and facial trauma.

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3 Refer to the Health Regulation Department Dental Implant Guideline
Dentistry Scope of Practice Page 9 of 12 Ref. no. HRD/HRS/PRU/009
Version 1.0
L. Oral Medicine

Definition

Oral Medicine Specialists practice in the branch of dentistry that is concerned with the oral health care of patients with chronic and medically related disorders of the oral and maxillofacial region, and with their diagnosis with non surgical management.

Scope:

1. Medical diagnosis and management of oral maxillofacial region pathology and disorders including: salivary glands dysfunction, oral mucosal lesions. Bacterial, viral & fungal infectious conditions.
2. Medical management of chronic pain conditions of the orofacial region and TMJ disorders.
GLOSSARY OF TERMS

**Computer-Aided Design (CAD)** is the use of computer technology to aid in the design and particularly the drafting (technical drawing and engineering drawing) of a part or product. It is both a visual (or drawing) and symbol-based method of communication whose conventions are particular to a specific technical field.

**Computer-aided manufacturing (CAM)** is the use of computer-based software tools that assist in manufacturing or prototyping product components. CAM is a programming tool that makes it possible to manufacture physical models using computer-aided design (CAD) programs

**Exodontia**: removal of teeth.

**Guided tissue regeneration**: A technique of excluding certain tissue during surgical healing so other desired tissues may have time to form

**Orofacial conditions**: conditions related to the face and oral cavity

**Oral-facial complex**: structures of the face and oral cavity, inclusive of muscles, bone and soft tissue

**Stomatognathic structure**: The combination of all the structures involved in speech and the reception, mastication, and deglutition of food. The system is composed of the teeth, jaws, muscles of mastication, epithelium, and temporomandibular joints and nerves that control these structures.
REFERENCES

American Dental Association [www.ada.org](http://www.ada.org)


Alberta Society of Dental Specialist [http://www.albertadentalspecialists.ca/pages/home/default.aspx](http://www.albertadentalspecialists.ca/pages/home/default.aspx)


American association of orthodontics [www.braces.org](http://www.braces.org)