

Health Regulation Department



Scope of Practice and Core Competencies
for
Dental Clinical Support

- 2016 -

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Acknowledgment

Dubai Health Authority (DHA) is pleased to present the scope of practice and clinical responsibilities of Dental Clinical Support staff, which represents a milestone towards fulfilling the DHA's Strategic Objective to "Ensure continuous development of health and medical professionals and attract the highly qualified". This document places emphasis on the procedures that could be performed by the licensed Dental Clinical Support healthcare professionals in the Emirate of Dubai.

The Health Regulation Department (HRD) in collaboration with subject matter experts, whose contributions have been invaluable, developed this document. HRD would like to acknowledge these healthcare professionals and to thank them for their dedication to quality in healthcare and their commitment in undertaking such a complex task.

Health Regulation Department
Dubai Health Authority

1. Introduction

Dubai Health Authority (DHA) is responsible for regulating dental practices in the Emirate of Dubai in United Arab Emirates (UAE). Scope of Practice (SOP) refers to the activities that Dental Clinical Support healthcare professionals are educated, authorized and competent to perform. Such activities are established through the legislated definition of licensed Dental Clinical Support practice, complimented by standards, limits, conditions and education, and are influenced by setting, environment and health needs of the population.

Health Regulation Department (HRD) endorses the SOP for licensed Dental Clinical Support healthcare professionals. This document should be read in conjunction with the DHA Code of Ethics and Professional Conduct. The SOP for Dental Clinical Support is neither comprehensive nor exhaustive but rather provides guidelines for practice.

2. DHA licensing titles

As per the Healthcare Professionals Qualification Requirements (PQR), DHA issues Dental Clinical Support under the following licensing titles:

- 2.1. Dental Assistant
- 2.2. Dental Hygienist
- 2.3. Dental Laboratory Technician
- 2.4. Dental Laboratory Aide

3. Dental Assistant

3.1. Definition: Dental Assistants are licensed healthcare professionals who provide complete clinical and chair side support to increase the effectiveness and efficiency of dental services provided by dentists or hygienists during clinical or surgical procedures.

3.2. Core Competencies

As a Dental Assistant, the following can be undertaken if the healthcare professional is appropriately trained, competent and indemnified.

- 3.2.1. Prepare and maintain the clinical environment, including the equipment.

- 3.2.2. Carry out infection prevention and control procedures to prevent physical, chemical and microbiological contamination in the dental clinic or laboratory setting.
- 3.2.3. Record patient's medical history along with vital sign and pain assessment.
- 3.2.4. Prepare, mix and handle dental biomaterials.
- 3.2.5. Provide chairside support and assistance to dentist or dental hygienist during treatment.
- 3.2.6. Maintain patient treatment records.
- 3.2.7. Prepare equipment, materials and patients for dental radiography.
- 3.2.8. Develop and process intra/extra-oral dental radiographs (x-ray).
- 3.2.9. Educate patients on how to maintain oral health.
- 3.2.10. Monitor, support and reassure patients with appropriate patient advice.
- 3.2.11. Ensure appropriate disposal of chemical and hazardous waste.
- 3.2.12. Provide support to other dental healthcare professionals and patients in case of a medical emergency.
- 3.2.13. Clean and sterilize instruments and hand pieces.
- 3.2.14. Ability to interpret Material Safety Data Sheets (MSDS).
- 3.2.15. Conduct spore/biological indicator tests.
- 3.2.16. Help patients feel comfortable before, during and after dental treatment.
- 3.2.17. Perform intraoral and/or extra oral photography.

3.3. Additional skills under direct supervision

- 3.3.1. Assist in the treatment of patients who are under conscious sedation.
- 3.3.2. Further skills in assisting in the treatment of patients with special needs.
- 3.3.3. Further skills in assisting in the treatment of orthodontic patients.
- 3.3.4. Further skills in oral health education and oral health promotion.
- 3.3.5. Take Intra and extra-oral photography.
- 3.3.6. Pour casts and trimming study models.
- 3.3.7. Measure and record plaque indices.
- 3.3.8. Remove sutures, after the dentist has checked the wound.
- 3.3.9. Construct occlusal registration rims and special trays.

- 3.3.10. Apply topical anaesthetic to the prescription of a dentist.
- 3.3.11. Construct mouth guards and bleaching trays to the prescription of a dentist.
- 3.3.12. Construct vacuum formed retainers to the prescription of a dentist.

3.4. Dental Assistants DO NOT

- 3.4.1. Diagnose disease or plan treatment.

4. Dental Hygienist

Definition: Dental hygienists are licensed dental healthcare professionals who help patients maintain their oral health by preventing and treating certain periodontal disease and promoting good oral health practice. They carry out treatment direct to patients or under prescription from a dentist.

4.1. Core Competencies under general supervision

A Dental Hygienist, can be undertake the following, if appropriately trained, competent and indemnified.

- 4.1.1. Provide dental hygiene care to a wide range of patients.
- 4.1.2. Obtain a detailed dental history from patients and evaluate their medical history.
- 4.1.3. Carry out a clinical examination within their competence.
- 4.1.4. Complete periodontal examination and charting and use indices to screen and monitor periodontal disease.
- 4.1.5. Diagnose and treatment plan within their competence.
- 4.1.6. Prescribe radiographs when necessary.
- 4.1.7. Take process and interpret various film views used in general dental practice.
- 4.1.8. Plan the delivery of care for patients.
- 4.1.9. Give appropriate patient advice.
- 4.1.10. Provide preventive oral care to patients and liaise with dentists over the treatment of caries, periodontal disease and tooth wear.

- 4.1.11. Undertake supragingival and subgingival scaling and root surface debridement using manual and powered instruments.
- 4.1.12. Use appropriate anti-microbial therapy to manage plaque related diseases.
- 4.1.13. Adjust restored surfaces in relation to periodontal treatment.
- 4.1.14. Apply topical treatments, pits, and fissure sealants.
- 4.1.15. Provide health promotion and education including nutrition and tobacco cessation counseling.
- 4.1.16. Take intra and extra-oral photographs.
- 4.1.17. Place temporary dressings and re-cement crowns with temporary cement.
- 4.1.18. Place rubber dam.
- 4.1.19. Remove sutures after the dentist has checked the wound.
- 4.1.20. Take impressions, construct and fit mouth-guards and bleaching trays
- 4.1.21. Use non-laser (Light curing device) to activate bleaching agent
- 4.1.22. Care of implants and treatment of peri-implant tissues.
- 4.1.23. Identify anatomical features, recognize abnormalities and interpret common oral pathologies.
- 4.1.24. Carry out oral cancer screening.
- 4.1.25. If necessary, refer patients to other healthcare professionals.
- 4.1.26. Keep full, accurate and contemporaneous patient records and document patient record appropriately and as per Organization standards.
- 4.1.27. Carry out infection prevention and control procedures
- 4.1.28. Undertake instrument re-processing and process validation
- 4.1.29. Carry out community based oral health promotion activities

4.2. Additional skills under direct supervision

- 4.2.1. Assist in laser technology for dental treatment and bleaching procedures.
- 4.2.2. Administer local anesthesia infiltration.
- 4.2.3. Apply prescription preventive agents.

4.3. Dental Hygienist DO NOT

- 4.3.1. Restore teeth.
- 4.3.2. Carry out pulp treatments.
- 4.3.3. Adjust unrestored surfaces.
- 4.3.4. Extract teeth.

5. Dental Laboratory Technician

Definition: Dental technicians are licensed dental healthcare professionals who make dental devices to a prescription from a dentist or clinical dental technician. They are responsible for designing, fabricating, repairing and adjusting fixed and removable intra/extra-oral dental prosthetic appliances.

5.1. Core Competencies

A Dental Laboratory Technician can undertake the following if appropriately trained, competent and indemnified:

- 5.1.1. Review cases coming into the laboratory to decide how they should be progressed.
- 5.1.2. Work with the dentist on treatment planning and outline design.
- 5.1.3. Design, plan and make a range of custom-made dental devices according to a prescription.
- 5.1.4. Prepare plaster and stone models out of dental impressions.
- 5.1.5. Reline, repair and modify dental devices including dentures, orthodontic appliances, crowns and bridges according to a prescription.
- 5.1.6. Polish finished appliances.
- 5.1.7. Carry out infection prevention and control procedures to prevent physical, chemical and microbiological contamination in the laboratory.
- 5.1.8. Keep full and accurate laboratory records.
- 5.1.9. Supervise Dental Laboratory Aide professionals.
- 5.1.10. Verify and take responsibility for the quality and safety of devices leaving a laboratory.

5.2. Additional skills under direct supervision

- 5.2.1. Work with a dentist or a dental assistant in the clinic, assisting with treatment by, recording face bows, carrying out intra-oral and extra-oral tracing, carrying out implant frame assessments.
- 5.2.2. Take intra and extra-oral photographs.

5.3. Dental Technicians DO NOT

- 5.3.1. Work independently in the clinic to perform clinical procedures related to providing removable dental appliances, carry out independent clinical examinations, identify abnormal oral mucosa and related underlying structures or fit removable appliances.
- 5.3.2. Provide treatment for or give advice to patients as described under Dental Assistant or Dental Hygienists.

6. Dental Laboratory Aide

Definition: Dental Laboratory Aide is a licensed dental healthcare professional who assists the Dental Laboratory Technicians in preparing and fabricating various dental prosthetic appliances.

6.1. Core Competencies

A Dental Laboratory Aide can undertake the following if appropriately trained, competent and indemnified.

- 6.1.1. Fabricate custom impression trays.
- 6.1.2. Prepare plaster and stone models out of dental impressions.
- 6.1.3. Assist in constructing fixed and removable intra/extra-oral dental appliances.
- 6.1.4. Assist in relining, repairing or modifying dental appliances.
- 6.1.5. Polish finished appliances.
- 6.1.6. Maintain infection control methods throughout procedures to prevent any physical, chemical or microbiological contamination in the laboratory.

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