

Competencies

Competencies For The Baccalaureate Degree In Dental Hygiene Program

This document is designed to direct the educational process for students as one step to assuring employers and the public of educated, competent dental hygienists who are capable of providing preventive, educational, and therapeutic oral health services in a variety of environments. These competencies define a standard of performance for a new graduate, rather than predict the higher level of performance that will be attained by baccalaureate level dental hygienists over their career lifetime. Implementation and evaluation of *Competencies for the Baccalaureate Degree in Dental Hygiene Program Graduate* rests with the faculty responsible for the educational programs within the School of Dental Hygiene at Old Dominion University. Ultimately, the true measure of the value of a competency-based education will be the quality of the graduates, the satisfaction of the employers, and the oral health status of the populations served.

I. Professionalism and Ethics

The dental hygiene graduate provides clinical care using evidence-based knowledge, professional judgment and skills. The dental hygienist is a licensed professional who must be capable of discerning and effectively managing ethical issues and problems in the workplace. As dental hygiene creates a unique identity for the professional and increases the knowledge base of the profession, the dental hygienist must be able to understand and apply rapidly changing, evidence-based information to a variety of roles in the employment environment. Therefore, critical thinking, problem solving, and decision-making skills are critical to possess.

1. Professional Behavior

The dental hygiene graduate exhibits professional behavior encompassing positive verbal and nonverbal communication, interpersonal skills, and attention to feedback, protocol adherence,

The dental hygiene graduate discerns and manages ethical issues in health care.

- 2.1. Integrate the ADHA code of ethics in all professional endeavors.
- 2.2. Adhere to local, state, and federal laws, recommendations, and regulations for dental hygiene actions and services.
- 2.3. Serve all patients without discrimination, appreciating the diversity of the population
- 2.4. Apply principles of risk management and quality assurance metrics to manage

6. Planning

The dental hygiene graduate, through collaboration with the patient and other health professionals, must formulate a comprehensive dental hygiene care plan delineating interventions that are evidence-based, patient-centered, culturally sensitive, and related to the identified human needs.

- 6.1. Formulate goals, expected outcomes and obtain informed consent related to the needs and desires of the patient and dental hygiene diagnosis using current technologies.
- 6.2. Make referrals to healthcare professionals as indicated by the care plan.

7. Implementation

The dental hygiene graduate provides specialized care that includes educational, preventive, and therapeutic services designed to assist the patient in achieving and maintaining oral health and wellness goals.

- promote health-related quality of life.
- 9.2. Present educational information to diverse patient populations and organizations in a variety of settings.
 - 9.3. Promote overall health and wellness for population-based health within and outside the profession.
 - 9.4. Evaluate the impact of oral disease on overall health to determine patient or community risk and identify intervention and prevention strategies to optimize positive health outcomes.
 - 9.5. Discuss metrics that evaluate the impact of health care interventions on overall health and wellness.
 - 9.6. Evaluate reimbursement mechanisms and their impact on patient access to oral health care.

10. Community Involvement

The dental hygiene graduate initiates and assumes responsibility for health promotion and disease prevention activities for diverse populations in a variety of settings.

- 10.1. Assess community oral health needs, risk, and available resources and evaluate outcomes for health improvement and access to the healthcare system.
- 10.2. Provide oral health promotion and disease prevention as part of interprofessional community health services in a variety of primary health care settings.
- 10.3. Advocate for effective access to oral health care for all populations.

IV. Professional Commitment and Advancement

The dental hygiene graduate provides and demonstrates professional behaviors consistent with dental hygiene parameters of care, legal regulations and the ADHA Code of Ethics. The dental hygiene graduate possesses the values and exhibits behaviors that embody service to the public, professional involvement, and lifelong learning.

11. Professional Commitment

The dental hygiene graduate improves the knowledge, skills and values of the profession.

- 11.1. Advance the values of the profession through leadership, service activities and affiliations with professional, community and global organizations.
- 11.2. Develop practice management and marketing strategies to be used in the delivery of oral health care.

12. Professional Advancement

The dental hygiene graduate pursues new knowledge on a continual basis due to the changing health care environment.

- 12.1. Assume responsibility for professional growth through lifelong learning.
- 12.2. Evaluate professional issues and scientific literature in order to make evidence-based decisions that advance the profession of dental hygiene.
- 12.3. Advocate for recognition and advancement of the dental hygiene profession.

References:

ADEA Competencies for Entry into the Allied Dental Professionals (As approved by the 2011 ADEA House of Delegates). *Journal of Dental Education* July 2011; 75(7): 941-948.

ADHA Benefits of Dental Hygiene-Based Oral Health Provider Models (April 2016).