SERIES CONCEPT AND RESPONSIBILITIES

The DENTAL ASSISTANT, under the supervision of a licensed dentist, provides assistance to dentists, denturists, dental hygienists, or dental technicians.

Employees have clearly understood work instructions, work routines and close supervision. Choices can be made about the order of tasks however, cannot be made about whether to complete a task.

DISTINGUISHING FEATURES

This is a two level support classification series.

Level 1

The DENTAL ASSISTANT 1 is the first level of this support two level series. Detailed standard practices and instructions or immediately available assistance govern decisions. There is a variation of situations which require the application of different and related steps. Solutions are easily identified and clear.

Dental Assisting. Prepare patients, sterilize or disinfect instruments, set up instrument trays, prepare materials, or assist dentist during dental procedures. Provide postoperative instructions prescribed by dentist. Instruct patients in oral hygiene and plaque control programs. Pour, trim, and polish study casts. Clean and polish removable appliances. Apply protective coating of fluoride to teeth. Coordinates repair of equipment; performs minor equipment repairs. Applies topical anesthetic and desensitizing agents. Assist dentist in management of medical or dental emergencies. Expose and develop dental diagnostic x-rays.

Clerical. Record treatment information and file patient records. Under dentist’s supervision, take and record medical and dental histories and vital signs of patients. Schedule appointments, prepare bills and receive payment for dental services, complete insurance forms, and maintain records, manually or using computer.

Level 2

The DENTAL ASSISTANT 2 is the second level of this support two level series. This level is distinguished by the greater ambiguity in process and procedure requiring an assessment of precedents to make decisions. Situations will vary and solutions are easily identified and clear.

Performs dental assisting and clerical functions as described in Level 1.

Expanded Function Dental Assisting. The following duties are considered expanded function duties and may be performed only after the dental assistant complies with the requirements of the Oregon Board of Dentistry. Examples include, perform coronal polishing on patients if a licensed dentist or dental hygienist has determined the teeth are free of calculus. Remove temporary crowns and clean teeth for final cementation. Preliminary fit crowns to check contacts or to adjust occlusion outside the mouth. Recement a temporary crown or recement a permanent crown with temporary cement. Place and remove matrix retainers for alloy and composite restorations. Polish amalgam restorations with a slow speed hand piece. Remove excess supragingival cement from crowns, bridges, bands or brackets with hand instruments providing that the patient is checked by a dentist after the procedure is performed. Fabricate temporary crowns, and temporarily cement the temporary crown after it has been approved by the dentist. Make preliminary impressions for study casts and occlusal registrations for mounting study casts. Fabricate temporary restorations or custom impressions from preliminary impressions. Place temporary restorative material in teeth provided the patient is checked by a dentist before and after placement. Place temporary reline in a denture. Removes sutures placed during surgical procedure. May maintain orthodontic appliances and materials for patients, such as retainers, wires, or bands, if the dental assistant hold a valid Expanded Function Orthodontic Assistants (EFODA) certificate.
The responsibilities within the Concept and Distinguishing Features are characteristic of the type and level of work associated with this class. Individual positions may do all or some combination of the responsibilities listed as well as other related responsibilities.

MINIMUM QUALIFICATIONS AND SKILLS

Dental Assistant 1

Six (6) months of general support experience or equivalent training and experience AND a valid Cardiopulmonary Resuscitation card at the time of appointment. Must be able to obtain a Certification by the Oregon State Board of Dentistry for Radiological Proficiency within four months of appointment.

Knowledge and Skills:

Knowledge of clerical functions to maintain patient charts and schedule treatment.
Skill in active listening to give full attention to what other people are saying, taking time to understand the points being made, asking questions as appropriate, and not interrupting at inappropriate times.
Skill in reading comprehension to understand written sentences and paragraphs in work related documents.
Skill in speaking to others to convey information effectively.
Skill in service orientation to actively look for ways to help people.

Dental Assistant 2

One year of support experience (six months of which must be chairside dental assisting experience) OR a graduate of a dental assisting program AND a valid Cardiopulmonary Resuscitation card AND Certification for Radiological Proficiency AND Certification by the Oregon State Board of Dentistry for Expanded Function Dental Assistant (EFDA).

NOTE: Some positions may also require certification for expanded orthodontic functions (EFODA).

Knowledge and Skills: (in addition to those listed in level 1)

Knowledge of the equipment, materials, procedures, and terminology used in dentistry.
Knowledge of professional and legal standards required to work as a dental assistant.
Knowledge of sterile and aseptic technique.
Skill in critical thinking to use logic and reasoning to identify the strengths and weaknesses of alternative solutions, conclusions or approaches to problems.
Skill in active learning to understanding the implications of new information for both current and future problem-solving and decision-making.
Skill in social perceptiveness by being aware of others' reactions and understanding why they react as they do.

NOTE: The KNOWLEDGE and SKILLS (KS) are required for initial consideration. Some duties performed by positions in this class may require different KS. No attempt is made to describe every KS required for all positions in these classes. Additional KS requirements will be explained on the recruiting announcement.

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