

**§5-1-8. Expanded duties of dental hygienists and dental assistants.**

8.1. General. Licensed dentists may assign to their employed dental hygienists or assistants intraoral tasks as set out in this section for dental hygienists or assistants, subject to the following conditions:

(a) The performance of intraoral tasks by dental hygienists or assistants shall be under the direct supervision of the employer-dentist;

(b) The following procedures may not be assigned to a dental hygienist or assistant or to any other person not licensed to practice dentistry:

(1) Diagnosis, treatment planning and prescription (including prescriptions for drugs and medicaments or authorizations for restorative, prosthodontic or orthodontic appliances); or

(2) Surgical procedures on hard and soft tissue within the oral cavity or any other intraoral procedure that contributes to or results in an irremediable alteration of the oral anatomy; and

(c) The licensed dentist assigning expanded duties to a dental hygienist or assistant is solely responsible for evaluating the dental hygienist or assistant to determine that he or she is competent to handle assigned duties. Further, no licensed dentist shall assign additional duties to a dental hygienist or assistant until he or she is assured that the dental hygienist or assistant is fully competent and completely qualified to perform the assigned expanded duty or duties.

8.2. **Expanded duties of dental assistants.** The following duties and/or intra-oral tasks may be assigned by a licensed dentist to a dental hygienist and/or assistant in the licensed dentist's employment, provided that under no circumstances can an assistant use a power-driven instrument of any type intra-orally except as specifically set forth hereinafter:

(a) Placing, exposing, developing, and mounting dental radiographs;

(b) Placing and removing rubber dams;

(c) Charting existing restorations and missing teeth;

(d) Holding and removing materials, trays, strips, and sutures previously placed in the patient's mouth by the dentist;

(e) Removing excess cement from coronal surfaces of teeth without the use of rotating, power-driven or scaling instruments;

(f) Taking impressions for study cast and pouring models;

(g) Recording medical and dental histories for interpretation by the supervising dentist;

(h) Providing pre- and post-treatment instructions;

(i) Viewing the oral cavity and reporting the symptoms/problems to the supervising

dentist;

(j) Performing pulp vitality testing (thermal or electrical) with a final evaluation by the supervising dentist;

(k) Inserting and adjusting athletic mouth guards and bleaching trays with a final evaluation by the supervising dentist;

(l) Removing periodontal dressings with a final evaluation by the supervising dentist;

(m) Placing and removing matrices after a final evaluation by the supervising dentist;

(n) Applying topical anesthetic agents with prior approval by the supervising dentist;

(o) Applying topical anticariogenic agents after successful completion of a board-approved course and examination and with prior approval of the supervising dentist;

(p) Applying pit and fissure sealants after successful completion of a board-approved course and examination and with a final evaluation by the supervising dentist;

(q) Applying cavity liners and bases with a final evaluation by the supervising dentist;

(r) Removing soft tissue dressings with a final evaluation by the supervising dentist;

(s) Fabricating and cementing temporary crowns and bridges with a final evaluation by the supervising dentist;

(t) Placing and removing temporary restorations by a non power-driven method with a final evaluation by the supervising dentist;

(u) Taking intra- and extra-oral photographs;

(v) Chemical conditioning of the tooth to accept a restoration and/or bracket by topical application after successful completion of a board-approved course and examination;

(w) Using a power-driven hand piece with rubber cup and/or brush only for preparing a tooth for accepting a restoration and/or appliance, which shall in no way be represented to the patient as a prophylaxis, after successful completion of a board-approved course and examination;

(x) Placing retraction cords for crown impressions after successful completion of a board-approved course and examination and with prior approval of the supervising dentist;

(y) Taking final impressions for fixed or removable prosthesis and/or appliance with a final evaluation by the supervising dentist;

(z) Checking for loose orthodontic appliances with a final evaluation by the supervising dentist;

(aa) Taking orthodontic measurements with a final evaluation by the supervising dentist;

(bb) Fitting bands and brackets prior to final cementation and/or bonding by the supervising dentist;

(cc) Bending archwires with a final evaluation by the supervising dentist at the time of placement;

(dd) Placing or removing temporary space maintainers, orthodontic separating devices, ligatures, brackets and bands with a final evaluation by the supervising dentist at the time of placement or removal, after completion of a board-approved course and examination;

(ee) Removing loose or broken bands, brackets or archwires when directed by the supervising dentist; and

(ff) Visually monitoring a nitrous oxide analgesia unit. A dental assistant or hygienist must successfully complete a board-approved course, and examination, and maintain current certification in accordance with the American Red Cross' or the American Heart Association's Cardio-Pulmonary Resuscitation (CPR) program to perform this duty.

(gg) A dental assistant who has completed two (2) years and at least three thousand (3,000) hours of clinical experience in a dental office, as attested to by the supervising dentist, and who has successfully completed either the restorative expanded duties course or orthodontic expanded duties course required by the West Virginia Board of Dental Examiners, may perform supragingival and coronal polishing on children under age 21 years of age using a slow speed hand piece with a rubber cup after successfully completing a course approved by the Board.

**8.3. Expanded duties of dental hygienists.** In addition to and including those duties set forth in subsection 8.2 of this section, the following duties and/or intraoral tasks may be assigned by a licensed dentist to a dental hygienist in the licensed dentist's employment:

(a) Supra - and subgingival scaling of teeth;

(b) Polishing of coronal and/or exposed surfaces of teeth;

(c) Dental health education;

(d) Nutritional counseling;

(e) Examining and recording periodontal findings;

(f) Scaling excessive cement from the surfaces of teeth and restorations;

(g) Performing clinical examinations and diagnostic tests of teeth and surrounding tissues and recording findings for interpretation by a supervising dentist ( including such procedures as restorative chartings, caries activity test, cytology smears, salivary analysis and smears, endodontic cultures, vitality test, etc.);

(h) Placing of subgingival medicaments, fibers, chips, etc.;

(i) Finishing and polishing restorations with a slow speed hand piece;

- (j) Debridement and/or root planing of teeth;
- (k) Applying bleaching agents after successful completion of a board-approved course;
- (l) Placing periodontal dressings with a final evaluation by the supervising dentist; and
- (m) Administration of infiltration and block anesthesia after successful completion of a board-approved course and of a regional board examination and under the direct supervision of a licensed dentist.

#### **8.4. General Supervision of Dental Hygienists.**

(a) A dental hygienist may provide, for not more than fifteen (15) consecutive business days or not more than three (3) consecutive weeks, preventive dental hygiene services to patients when the supervising dentist is not physically present at the location at which the services are provided if all of the following requirements are met;

(1) The dental hygienist shall apply to the Board of Dental Examiners for a general supervision permit. The application will be submitted on a form to be supplied by the Board. The application fee shall be equal to the fees charged for expanded duties certificates.

(2) The dental hygienist shall have two (2) years and three thousand (3,000) hours of clinical dental hygiene experience.

(3) The dental hygienist shall provide proof of successful completion of a three (3) hour course in the identification and prevention of medical emergencies as part of continuing education credits for licensure every two years.

(4) The supervising dentist shall have examined the patient, including medical history review, diagnosis and treatment planning, not more than twelve months prior to the date the dental hygienist provides the dental hygiene services to the patient. No patient may be treated two (2) consecutive times by a dental hygienist under general supervision without a licensed dentist conducting an examination.

(5) The dental hygienist shall comply with written protocols or written standing orders established by the supervising dentist, including an updated medical history, informs the patient or parent or guardian of a child and documents in the patient record that dental hygiene services were provided under general supervision.

(6) The dental hygienist shall consult with the supervising dentist or an attending physician if a significant change has occurred in the patient's medical history to determine that the patient is in a medically stable condition prior to receiving dental hygiene services.

(7) The supervising dentist shall not have more than three (3) dental hygienists treating patients under general supervision in dental offices or treatment facilities at any one time when the dentist is not physically present.

(b) The dental hygienist may practice under general supervision, consistent with conditions outlined above, in the following settings; private dental offices, hospitals, schools,

correctional facilities, jails, community clinics, long term care facilities, nursing homes, home health agencies, group homes, state institutions under the Department of Health and Human Resources, public health facilities, homebound settings and Accredited Dental Hygiene Education programs.

(1) Facilities utilized for oral prophylaxis, sealant placement, or both, shall have adequate lighting, suction and isolation of teeth.

(2) The dental hygienist shall submit an annual report to the West Virginia Board of Dental Examiners of services rendered while practicing under general supervision in all settings other than a private dental office or Accredited Dental Hygiene Education program. The supervising dentist shall review and sign this report.

(3) All applications and reporting forms shall be provided by the West Virginia Board of Dental Examiners.

(c) The following procedures may be performed by a dental hygienist when practicing under general supervision;

- (1) Placing, exposing, developing, and mounting dental radiographs;
- (2) Charting existing restorations and missing teeth;
- (3) Taking impressions for study cast and pouring models;
- (4) Recording medical and dental histories;
- (5) Applying topical anesthetic agents;
- (6) Applying topical anticariogenic agents;
- (7) Applying pit and fissure sealants following diagnosis within four (4) months by the supervising dentist;
- (8) Checking for and removal of loose orthodontic bands and loose brackets;
- (9) Taking intra- and extra-oral photographs;
- (10) Complete dental prophylaxis, which may include supra- and subgingival scaling of teeth and polishing of coronal and/or exposed surfaces of teeth;
- (11) Dental health education;
- (12) Nutritional counseling;
- (13) Examining and recording periodontal findings;
- (14) Scaling excessive cement from the surfaces of teeth and restorations;
- (15) Performing clinical examinations and diagnostic tests of teeth and surrounding tissues, including but not limited to restorative chartings, caries activity test, cytology

smears, salivary analysis and smears, endodontic cultures, vitality tests, and recording findings for interpretation by a supervising dentist;

(16) Placing of subgingival medicaments, fibers, chips, etc.;

(17) Finishing and polishing restorations with a slow speed hand piece;

(18) Debridement and/or root planing of teeth; and

(19) Applying bleaching agents after successful completion of a board-approved course.

8.5. The following procedures may be performed by a dental hygienist with no supervision of a licensed dentist:

(1) Dental health education;

(2) Nutritional counseling;

(3) Preparing a generalized oral screening with subsequent referral to a dentist; and

(4) Applying fluoride.

8.6 No person shall do any of the following:

(1) Practice dental hygiene in a manner that is separate or otherwise independent from a supervising dentist:

(2) Establish or maintain an office or practice that is primarily devoted to the provision of dental hygiene services; and

(3) Administer local anesthesia under general supervision.

**8.7. Public Health Practice of Dental Hygienists.** A dental hygienist may engage in public health practice rendering all services provided in subsection 8.4.(c) of this section allowed under General Supervision and as further defined below:

(a) The dental hygienist shall submit application to the West Virginia Board of Dental Examiners for Public Health Practice. The application fee shall be equal to the fees charged for expanded duties certificates.

(b) The dental hygienist shall have two (2) years and three thousand (3,000) hours of clinical dental hygiene experience.

(c) The dental hygienist shall, in addition to the twenty (20) hours required for dental hygiene licensure, complete six (6) hours of continuing education during each continuing education cycle which must include three (3) hours in medical emergencies and three (3) hours in general public health content.

(d) The dental hygienist and supervising dentist shall submit an annual report to the West Virginia Board of Dental Examiners of services rendered.

(e) The dental hygienist, in cooperation with the supervising dentist, shall have a written plan for referral, recording conditions that should be called to the attention of the dentist.

(f) A licensed dentist may not supervise more than four (4) dental hygienists engaged in public health practice.

(g) Facilities utilized for oral prophylaxis, sealant placement, or both, shall have adequate lighting, suction and isolation of teeth.

(h) The dental hygienist may engage in public health practice, consistent with conditions outlined above, in the following settings; hospitals, schools, correctional facilities, jails, community clinics, long term care facilities, nursing homes, home health agencies, group homes, state institutions under the Department of Health and Human Resources, public health facilities, homebound settings and Accredited Dental Hygiene Education programs.

(i) All applications and reporting forms shall be provided by the West Virginia Board of Dental Examiners.

(j) The following procedures may be performed by a dental hygienist with no supervision of a licensed dentist:

(1) Dental health education;

(2) Nutritional counseling;

(3) Preparing a generalized oral screening with subsequent referral to a dentist;

(4) Applying flouride;

(5) Charting existing restorations and missing teeth;

(6) Recording medical and dental histories;

(7) Examining and recording periodontal findings ; and

(8) Complete dental prophylaxis, which may include supra- and subgingival scaling of teeth and polishing of coronal and/or exposed surfaces of teeth. The dental hygienist and a licensed dentist shall attempt to reach a collaborative agreement regarding such treatment. If such an agreement cannot be reached then the dental hygienist shall have a written order from a licensed dentist prescribing such treatment.

(k) No person shall do any of the following:

(1) Practice dental hygiene in a manner that is separate or otherwise independent from a supervising dentist:

(2) Establish or maintain an office or practice that is primarily devoted to the

provision of dental hygiene services; and

(3) Administer local anesthesia under public health practice permit.