Commission on Dental Accreditation

At its Summer 2017 meeting, the Commission on Dental Accreditation directed that proposed revisions to Definition of Terms and Standard 2-1 and 2-24 of the Accreditation Standards for Dental Hygiene Education Programs be distributed to the communities of interest for review and comment, with comments due June 1, 2018. Comments will additionally be accepted at a hearing conducted at the American Dental Hygienists’ Association (ADHA) June 2018 Annual Session. Comments will be considered at the Summer 2018 Commission meeting.

Written comments can be directed to smithmi@ada.org or mailed to:

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211 E. Chicago Avenue, 19th Floor
Chicago, IL 60611

Additions are Underlined; Deletions are Stricken

Accreditation Standards for Dental Hygiene Education Programs
STANDARD 2 - EDUCATIONAL PROGRAM

Instruction

2-1 The curriculum must include at least two academic years of full-time instruction or its equivalent at the postsecondary college-level. The scope and depth of the curriculum must reflect the objectives and philosophy of higher education. The college catalog must list the degree awarded and course titles and descriptions.

In a two-year college setting, the graduates of the program must be awarded an associate degree. In a four-year college or university, graduates of the program must be awarded an associate or comparable degree, post-degree certificate, or baccalaureate degree.

Intent:
The dental hygiene curriculum is comprehensive in scope and depth and requires a minimum of two years of academic preparation. The curriculum should include additional coursework and experiences, as appropriate, to develop competent oral health care providers who can deliver optimal patient care within a variety of practice settings and meet the needs of the evolving healthcare environment.

In a four-year college setting that awards a certificate, admissions criteria should require a minimum of an associate degree. Institutions should provide students with opportunities to continue their formal education through affiliations with institutions of higher education that allow for transfer of course work. Affiliations should include safeguards to maximize credit transfer with minimal loss of time and/or duplication of learning experiences.

General education, social science and biomedical science courses included in associate degree dental hygiene curricula should parallel those offered in four-year colleges and universities. In baccalaureate degree curricula, attention is given to requirements for admission to graduate programs to establish a balance between professional and nonprofessional credit allocations.

Examples of evidence to demonstrate compliance may include:
• copies of articulation agreements
• curriculum documents
• course evaluation forms and summaries
• records of competency examinations
• college catalog
Curriculum Management

2-24 The dental hygiene program must have a formal, written curriculum management plan, which includes:

a) an ongoing curriculum review and evaluation process with input from faculty, students, administration and other appropriate sources;
b) evaluation of the effectiveness of all courses as they support the program’s goals and competencies;
c) a defined mechanism for coordinating instruction among dental hygiene program faculty;
d) a defined mechanism to calibrate dental hygiene faculty for student clinical evaluation.

Intent:
To assure the incorporation of emerging information and achievement of appropriate sequencing, the elimination of unwarranted repetition, and the attainment of student competence, a formal curriculum review process should be conducted on an ongoing and regular basis. Periodic workshops and in-service sessions should be held for the dissemination of curriculum information and modifications.

Examples of evidence to demonstrate compliance may include:

- competencies documentation demonstrating relationship of course content to defined competencies of the program
- documentation of ongoing curriculum review and evaluation
- minutes of meetings documenting curriculum review and evaluation
- student evaluation of instruction
- curriculum management plan
- documentation of calibration exercises