Managing the Dental Team
ADA’s Guidelines for Practice Success™ (GPS™)

Sample Job Description: Dental Assistant

This information provided courtesy of The ADA Practical Guide to Creating and Updating an Employee Policy Manual, a publication of the American Dental Association.

Note: Content and expanded functions may vary in accordance with state dental practice acts.

Dental Assistant

Reports to: _______________________________________________________

PRIMARY RESPONSIBILITIES

Responsible for assisting the dentist in the clinical treatment of patients

SPECIFIC DUTIES

Patient Management

- Greet patients when they sign in and monitor arrival time
- Set up treatment rooms for procedures
- Escort patients to treatment room
- Seat patients in treatment rooms
- Show care and concern, and help patients feel comfortable
- Obtain and review health histories according to office protocol
- Ensure patients are always attended
- Anticipate and assist dentist’s needs
- Perform expanded functions and other tasks as assigned by the dentist
- Mix dental materials
- Ensure patients’ questions are answered thoroughly before they leave
- Chart patients and record date, service rendered and any charges
- Escort patients from the treatment room
- Ensure proper treatment notes are recorded in patient’s chart
- Perform clinical procedures as practice act allows and as directed by dentist
- Give patient instruction and demonstrate when necessary
- Monitor patient flow
- Notify Treatment Coordinator if a patient should be called in the evening after a difficult appointment

Treatment Room Management and Sterilization

- Keep dental units ready, stocked and clean
- Oversee cleanliness of the treatment room according to sterilization procedures
- Disinfect treatment rooms according to OSHA regulations
- Sterilize all instruments and handpieces according to OSHA regulations
- Keep trays, instruments and treatment room drawers organized
- Ensure that office sterilization procedures document is on display
- Promptly send out and monitor all dental laboratory cases
- Implement the preventative maintenance/cleaning schedule for dental equipment
- Maintain dental office emergency kits and nitrous and oxygen tanks
- Follow laboratory procedures according to office protocol

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**Records Management**

- Securely store and handle patient records in compliance with state and federal requirements, including the HIPAA privacy and security regulations
- Accurately file patient information
- Arrange patient charts and radiographs for next day’s appointments
- Track cases and referrals to and from other doctors
- Assist in the administration of the recall system

**Inventory Management**

- Monitor inventory and order dental office supplies as needed
- Ensure that treatment rooms are stocked at all times

**Office Participation**

- Help in other areas of the office when necessary (i.e., answering phones, unpacking supplies, completing insurance forms, moving former patient records, etc.)
- Be an active participant in team meetings
- Promote team concept by interacting with others in the office

**PERSONNEL REQUIREMENTS**

**Education/Experience**

- High school diploma or equivalent
- Graduate of accredited dental assisting program or dental assisting experience preferred
- Coursework in dental instruments and procedures
- Compliance with state dental practice requirements (e.g., x-ray requirements, OSHA training)
- Computer skills [list computer skills required and any specific dental software]
- Commitment to CE for career development

**Interpersonal**

- Good interpersonal skills to maintain effective rapport with patients, dentists, other staff members and community
- Effective verbal skills to communicate with patients and staff

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