

Managing the Dental Team

ADA's Guidelines for Practice Success™ (GPS™)

SAMPLE JOB DESCRIPTION: DENTAL HYGIENIST

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

Dental Hygienist

Reports to: _____

PRIMARY RESPONSIBILITIES

Responsible for providing hygiene treatment to patients

SPECIFIC DUTIES

Patient Management

- Review daily schedule with the administrative assistant for hygiene patients
- Work with administrative assistant to schedule hygiene patients with efficiency
- Review patient health and dental history forms and update as necessary
- Accurately chart each patient's periodontal health
- Perform thorough and gentle prophylaxis for patients
- Perform scaling, root planing and selective polishing for patients as appropriate
- Polish restorations
- Administer local anesthetics, if allowed by dental practice act
- Place medicaments subgingivally for periodontal disease treatment
- Take radiographs of patients as prescribed by dentist
- Apply cavity-preventive agents, such as fluorides and sealants
- Communicate with patients in an understandable and professional way
- Check on patient comfort during treatment and help allay patient anxiety
- Accurately and appropriately record provided treatment
- Teach proper oral hygiene techniques to patients
- Counsel patients on oral health, including the role of nutrition
- Perform other tasks assigned by the dentist

Treatment Room Management and Sterilization

- Check treatment room for cleanliness and make necessary changes
- Check and turn on treatment room equipment
- Gather and review patient charts for the day
- Clean treatment room at the end of the day and turn off equipment
- Maintain a supply inventory for hygiene treatment
- Review, select and submit orders for patient education materials for the practice
- Submit supply orders to business manager once a month or as necessary
- Properly discard all disposable items from each visit
- Assemble soiled instruments and place in sterilization area
- Clean treatment room surfaces with disinfectant solution
- Pre-soak soiled instruments in a disinfectant
- Sort and package instruments by tray for proper sterilization
- Load, activate and vent the sterilization unit according to manufacturer's directions
- Store instruments and trays in appropriate places

Records Management

- Securely store and handle patient records in compliance with office policies and procedures and applicable legal requirements, such as HIPAA regulations
- Accurately record medical and dental histories
- Accurately file patient information
- Arrange patient charts
- Assist in the administration of the recall system

Office Participation

- Be an active participant in team meetings
- Promote team concept by interacting with others in the office

PERSONNEL REQUIREMENTS

Education/Experience

- Must be licensed to practice in state and meet other applicable state requirements
- Must have completed at least 2 years of post-secondary education from an accredited dental hygiene program
- Experience providing prophylaxis and taking X-rays

Interpersonal

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

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