

College of Southern Nevada - Dental Assisting Program Essential Functions and Technical Standards

Introduction Dental Assisting is an intellectually, physically, and psychologically demanding profession. The following information is provided to assist students in better understanding the demands of the Dental Assisting program and profession and the abilities needed to successfully and safely complete the curriculum's classroom, laboratory (competency), and clinical requirements.

Essential Functions

Communication

The student must communicate effectively and professionally through speech, language, reading, writing, and computer literacy. Essential communication skills include:

- The ability to read, write, see, speak, hear, and interpret written and verbal communication.
- The ability to perceive and interpret non-verbal communication.
- The ability to communicate respectfully, effectively, and professionally with faculty, patients, families, caregivers, dental team members, and the public.
- The ability to complete documentation and forms accurately and in a timely manner.
- The ability to conduct patient education, explain procedures, and provide instructions clearly and professionally.

Motor Skills and Physical Endurance

The student must possess adequate physical strength, dexterity, and coordination to perform essential dental assisting tasks, including:

- The ability to sit, stand, and move for prolonged periods.
- The ability to assist in patient transfers, including lifting and positioning patients.
- The ability to manipulate small instruments and materials with precision.
- The ability to operate dental equipment, including suction devices, handpieces, and x-ray machines.
- Sufficient hand-eye coordination and fine motor skills to perform tasks such as mixing dental materials, passing instruments, and assisting chairside.
- The ability to remain continuously on task while performing repetitive motions such as suctioning, polishing, and assembling trays.

Observation and Visual Ability

Students must have the sensory skills necessary to observe and assess patients, instruments, and procedures, including:

- The ability to visually recognize changes in a patient's condition, including signs of distress.
- The ability to observe proper instrument placement and dental procedures up close and from a distance.
- The ability to hear and recognize equipment alarms, patient distress sounds, and verbal instructions from faculty and dental professionals.
- The ability to detect tactile changes in oral tissues through palpation.
- Normal or corrected vision sufficient to read dental charts, radiographs, and written instructions.

Intellectual and Analytical Skills

Students must possess sufficient intellectual and cognitive abilities to perform dental assisting functions effectively and safely. These include:

- The ability to measure, calculate, reason, analyze, and synthesize complex information in a timely manner.
- The ability to problem-solve and exercise sound judgment in a fast-paced environment.
- The ability to apply theoretical knowledge to clinical situations.
- The ability to comprehend spatial relationships within the oral cavity and dental procedures.
- Proficiency in using computers for patient records, charting, and searching dental-related information.
- The ability to accurately identify and interpret patient records and procedural data.

Behavioral and Social Attributes

Students must function effectively under stress and in dynamic clinical and educational environments. Essential behavioral and social attributes include:

- The ability to remain professional, ethical, and respectful in all interactions.
- The ability to adapt to changing environments and work under pressure.
- The ability to maintain composure and professionalism when interacting with patients in distress.
- The ability to demonstrate integrity, compassion, and cultural sensitivity.
- The ability to work collaboratively in a team setting and accept constructive feedback.
- The ability to follow the American Dental Assistants Association (ADAA) Code of Ethics and adhere to HIPAA regulations at all times.

Professional Attitude and Adaptability

- The ability to work in a healthcare environment is constantly and rapidly changing.
- The ability to manage multiple tasks simultaneously, including day-to-day objectives and special projects.
- The ability to maintain physical and mental health and emotional stability under demanding conditions.
- The ability to interact professionally with diverse populations, including individuals, families, and groups from various social and cultural backgrounds.

By signing below, students acknowledge that they have read and understand the Essential Functions and Technical Standards required for the College of Southern Nevada Dental Assisting program.

Student Signature: _____ **Date:** _____