

**NHTI – CONCORD’S COMMUNITY COLLEGE  
DENTAL HYGIENE PROGRAM**

**Mission, Goals, and Competencies**

**Mission**

**The mission of the NHTI, Concord’s Community College’s Dental Hygiene Program is to advance the mission of the college by providing a learning environment in which each dental hygiene graduate is instilled with the knowledge, skills, and values to provide comprehensive educational, preventive, and therapeutic services reflecting the competencies vital to the profession of dental hygiene.**

**Goals**

The NHTI’s Dental Hygiene Program will:

1. Provide a curriculum that integrates general education, biomedical sciences, dental sciences and the knowledge of current dental hygiene theory, practice, and the provision of dental hygiene care.
2. Prepare a competent, entry level dental hygienist to provide quality client-centered comprehensive care to diverse populations within the community.
3. Prepare students to plan, implement, and evaluate intervention strategies that will promote and maintain oral health including oral self care behaviors in public health, private practice, and other alternative settings.
4. Prepare students to apply the principles of professional and ethical behavior in providing care.
5. Foster an appreciation for professional growth and lifelong learning through self-assessment, accessing relevant literature, and critically analyzing current evidence based research.

**Competencies**

The NHTI Dental Hygiene Program has identified and organized the knowledge, skills, and values required for entry into the dental hygiene profession. In order to successfully complete the program and graduate, students must demonstrate an accepted level of performance of professional activities, which illustrate intellectual, affective, and psychomotor abilities. Competencies are used to define the relevant core content of the curriculum and to provide a guideline for faculty decision-making in regards to course content, sequencing, and teaching methodologies. Competencies for the dental hygiene graduate are organized in three domains: Professionalism, Health Promotion and Disease Prevention, and Client Care. These are delineated into major competencies, supporting competencies, and foundational knowledge. Major competencies refer to the more complex tasks, which require multiple abilities and the development of critical thinking

skills. These multiple abilities are reflected in supporting competencies, which require a specific level of mastery and foundational knowledge. Foundational knowledge, a prerequisite for supporting competencies, is a result of didactic and laboratory instruction. The foundational knowledge provides a foundation matrix for the entire dental hygiene process and is defined in the specific objectives in individual course outlines.

## **Professionalism**

In the rapidly changing health care environment, the dental hygienist must be able to discern ethical issues and problems in dental hygiene practice, utilize critical thinking skills and sound judgment, and communicate with other professionals.

### **1. Ethics. The new dental hygiene graduate must be able to discern and manage the ethical issues facing dental hygiene practice in a rapidly changing environment.**

Specifically, the new dental hygiene graduate must be able to:

- 1.1. Apply ethical principles relevant to dental hygiene
- 1.2. Integrate the ADHA Code of Ethics in all dental hygiene endeavors
- 1.3. Value every client's right to dental hygiene care consistently provided at the current standard of care
- 1.4. Adhere to local, state, and federal laws, recommendations, and regulations for the practice of dental hygiene

### **2. Information Processing. The new dental hygiene graduate must be able to acquire and synthesize information in a critical, scientific, and effective manner.**

Specifically, the new dental hygiene graduate must be able to:

- 2.1 Critically analyze evidence based oral health research
- 2.2 Apply evidence based decision making to dental hygiene practice
- 2.3 Evaluate the safety and efficacy of oral health care products, interventions, and treatments
- 2.4 Communicate professional knowledge in verbal and written form, using the principles of scientific writing

### **3. Professional Identity. The new dental hygiene graduate must contribute to improving the knowledge, skills, and values of the profession.**

Specifically, the new dental hygiene graduate must be able to:

- 3.1 Advance the profession through leadership, service activities, and affiliation with professional organizations

- 3.2 Assume the roles of the professional dental hygienist including clinician, educator, researcher, change agent, consumer advocate, and administrator
- 3.3 Promote the value and mission of the profession to the community and other stakeholders
- 3.4 Accept responsibility and accountability for self-evaluation of dental hygiene practice
- 3.5 Assume responsibility and value professional growth through continued life- long learning

### **Health Promotion and Disease Prevention**

The dental hygienist serves the community in private and public health settings. Utilizing an interdisciplinary approach, the focus in the public health setting is the promotion of health and disease prevention through organized community efforts. In the practice setting, the dental hygienist is instrumental in promoting optimal oral health and its relationship to general health. Therefore, the dental hygienist must be competent in the performance and delivery of oral health promotion and disease prevention services in the public health, private practice, and other alternative settings.

#### **4. The Individual. The new dental hygiene graduate must provide planned educational services using appropriate interpersonal communication skills and educational strategies to promote optimal health.**

Specifically, the dental hygiene graduate must:

- 4.1 Promote preventive health behaviors by personally maintaining optimal oral and overall health
- 4.2 Incorporate a wellness philosophy that promotes healthy lifestyles for staff and clients
- 4.3 Identify the oral health needs of individuals and assist them in the development of appropriate and individualized oral self-care plans
- 4.4 Encourage clients to accept responsibility for their health and promote adherence to self-care plans

#### **5. The Community. The new dental hygiene graduate must be able to initiate and assume responsibility for health promotion and disease prevention activities for diverse populations in a variety of settings.**

Specifically, the dental hygiene graduate must be able to:

- 5.1 Critically analyze and identify services that promote oral health and prevent oral diseases and related conditions
- 5.2 Provide dental hygiene services in a variety of settings
- 5.3 Assess community oral health needs and available resources for health improvement and access to the healthcare system

- 5.4 Participate in the assessment, planning, implementation, and evaluation of community based oral health programs
- 5.5 Use screening, education, and referral to introduce consumers to the healthcare system
- 5.6 Value the diversity of the population and address the challenges to the access to care

## **Client Care**

The dental hygienist is a licensed preventive oral health professional who provides educational and clinical services in the support of optimal health. The dental hygiene process of care applies principles from biomedical, clinical, and behavioral sciences to diverse populations. The dental hygienist must be able to apply those principles in the diagnosis, risk assessment, delivery of client-centered care, and evaluation.

- 6. Assessment. The new dental hygiene graduate must be able to systematically collect, correlate, critically analyze, and record data on the general, oral, and psychosocial health status of a variety of clients using methods consistent with medico-legal-ethical principles.**

Specifically, the dental hygiene graduate must be able to:

- 6.1 Obtain, review, and update a comprehensive medical, dental, nutrition, family, and social history (including the obtaining, interpreting, and monitoring of) of vital signs
- 6.2 Identify conditions that require special precautions or considerations for dental hygiene care
- 6.3 Perform an extraoral and intraoral examination and accurately document the findings
- 6.4 Perform and document an examination of the hard tissue including dental charting, occlusion, and assessment of hard and soft deposits.
- 6.5 Perform and document an examination of the periodontium
- 6.6 Assess the need for radiographs, radiographically distinguish normal from abnormal radiographic findings, and correlate with clinical examination
- 6.7 Expose radiographs of diagnostic quality
- 6.8 Evaluate client risk factors for oral diseases and conditions
- 6.9 Assess the need for and obtain intraoral photographs
- 6.10 Take impressions and fabricate study models
- 6.11 Assess the need for client pain and anxiety management
- 6.12 Determine the need for consultation or referral to appropriate health care professionals
- 6.13 Identify clients at risk for nutritional conditions using assessment information
- 6.14 Identify clients at risk for medical emergencies and take appropriate precautions to minimize the risks

- 6.15 Analyze and interpret the data, obtain consultations when appropriate, and formulate a dental hygiene diagnosis based on client needs as related to oral health
- 7. Planning. The new dental hygiene graduate must be able to formulate a comprehensive dental hygiene care plan that is evidence-based and client centered.**

Specifically, the dental hygiene graduate must be able to:

- 7.1 Prioritize client needs and establish oral health goals with the client, family, or guardian as an active participant
  - 7.2 Plan treatments that reflect the influence of behavioral, social, and cultural differences in the provision of dental health care
  - 7.3 Formulate an individualized comprehensive dental hygiene care plan that is based on all relevant diagnostic data and develop alternative plans as appropriate
  - 7.4 Establish a planned sequence of educational, preventive, and clinical dental hygiene services collaboratively with the client based on the dental hygiene diagnosis
  - 7.5 Communicate the plan to the dentist or other interdisciplinary health team members to determine its congruence with the overall plan for oral health care
  - 7.6 Obtain informed consent after an thorough case presentation
  - 7.7 Value the importance of client centered care and concepts of health promotion
- 8 Implementation. The new dental hygiene graduate must be able to provide specialized care that includes educational, preventive, and therapeutic services designed to assist the client in achieving and maintaining oral health goals.**

Specifically, the dental hygiene graduate must be able to:

- 8.1 Practice accepted infection control procedures
- 8.2 Apply the principles of dental hygiene instrumentation to remove deposits without trauma to hard and soft tissues
- 8.3 Utilize radiographs of diagnostic quality
- 8.4 Control pain and anxiety during treatment through the use of accepted clinical techniques and appropriate behavioral management strategies
- 8.5 Select and administer appropriate chemotherapeutic agents within the scope of dental hygiene practice
- 8.6 Provide care for oral prostheses
- 8.7 Manage medical emergencies in the client care environment
- 8.8 Provide dental hygiene interventions to prevent or control oral disease
- 8.9 Educate clients to prevent and control risk factors that contribute to oral disease and systemic conditions

**9 Evaluation. The new dental hygiene graduate must be able to critically evaluate the effectiveness of implemented educational, preventive, and therapeutic service and make modifications if necessary.**

Specifically, the dental hygiene graduate must be able to:

- 9.1 Evaluate and document the outcomes of preventive and/or therapeutic dental hygiene interventions in achieving care plan goals
- 9.2 Assess and value client satisfaction with dental hygiene care and the oral health status achieved
- 9.3 Recommend an appropriate continuing supportive care plan
- 9.4 Value the importance of evaluation in monitoring client oral health
- 9.5 Recommend referral for additional assessment and/or treatment