



PERFORMANCE STANDARDS FOR DENTAL HYGIENE

A candidate for the dental hygiene program must have abilities and skills in the areas of critical thinking, communication, mobility, and motor, tactile, visual, hearing, and behavioral function to perform as a dental hygienist. Reasonable accommodation can be made for some disabilities. However, a candidate is expected to perform in a reasonably independent manner.

Standard	Examples of Activities
Critical Thinking: Critical thinking ability sufficient for clinical judgment.	Identify cause-effect relationships in clinical situations, develop treatment plans.
Communication: Communication abilities sufficient for effective interaction with patients and other members of the health care team in verbal and written form.	Able to obtain information, explain treatment procedures, initiate health education training, describe patient situations, perceive non-verbal communications.
Mobility: Physical abilities (including standing, walking, bending, range of motion of extremities) to move from room to room and maneuver in small spaces.	Able to administer cardiopulmonary resuscitation; move around in patient treatment area.
Motor: Gross and fine motor function sufficient to provide safe and effective dental hygiene care.	Able to use dental instruments, manipulate various dental materials.
Hearing: Auditory ability sufficient to monitor and assess health needs.	Able to listen to breath and heart sounds. Able to hear equipment monitors, such as x-ray equipment and autoclave timers.
Visual: Visual ability sufficient to provide safe and effective dental hygiene care.	Able to observe patients and use instruments in the oral cavity. Adequate close vision to see small lesions and deposits on teeth.
Tactile: Tactile ability sufficient for physical assessment and scaling skills.	Able to perform palpation of a pulse, extraoral and intraoral structures and feel calculus deposits.
Behavioral: Emotional health sufficient to totally utilize his or her intellectual abilities. Able to function effectively during stressful situations.	Able to adapt to ever changing environments, displaying flexibility, appropriately interacting with others, learning to function in the case of uncertainty that is inherent in clinical situations involving patients.

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