



DENTAL TEAM, TASKS AND RESPONSIBILITIES:

Top quality for patient safety and oral health care

1. PREAMBLE

Dentistry is a complex medical science with high standards, which encompasses the prevention, diagnosis and rehabilitation treatment of whole Masticator System, the hard and soft tissues of mouth, the salivary glands, the nerves, the muscles and the jaws, recognising oral symptoms of the systemic diseases, including oral cancer, malformations and lesions of the teeth, mouth and jaws, as well as the replacement of missing teeth and restoration of functional oral health.

Such treatment calls for medical knowledge, acquired with at least 5 years of University education, according to the European directives in force. This is an education level not reached by the other members of the dental team.

The dental team, led by the dentist, is essential in the prevention of oral diseases and in ensuring the best possible quality of oral health care. All members of the dental team shall have the education and training appropriated for their competencies and be legally be allowed to participate in the delivery of oral health care always under supervision and responsibility of a dentist. The roles and responsibilities of all team members should be specified and defined by the regulatory official authorities and professional dental organisations. Professional dental qualifications should provide confirmation to dental authorities, to the public and to patients, of a dentist's professional competence and entitlement to practise.

Whilst it must be for the national competent authority to decide upon the legal requirements and restrictions applicable, non-dental qualifications could be misleading both to patients and to the public by implying the attainment of a specialist or other higher diploma. A dentist and all the other member of the dental team should use only those qualifications or titles which are approved for recognition by the competent dental authority in that country (legislation in the establishment country, place of work, country where they practice).

2. WORKING RELATIONSHIP

When a dental treatment involves collaboration between a dentist and a dental laboratory technician and with the view to providing the best possible oral health care to the population, the dentist should work together with a duly qualified dental laboratory technician and make consistent efforts to develop and maintain the best possible working relationship.

3. TASKS

The dentist should:

- Provide top patient safety and quality assurance of oral health care.
- Comply with all legal responsibilities in the performance of all clinical procedures.
- Be solely responsible for both the diagnosis and the follow -up actions thereby ensuring the continuing care of the patient.
- Require the dental laboratory technician and the dental team to provide the highest quality of service.
 - Assume the legal responsibilities and claims in relation to the patient for both the clinical treatments and for the prostheses received and accepted from the dental laboratory technician and for all treatments delegated to other duly qualified members of the dental team.
 - Provide to the dental technician, by means of the prescription, the written specification and the three-dimensional registers necessary to comply with the dentist's instructions.
- Ensure that all members of the dental team at all times have the appropriate competence and training for the tasks that are delegated to them.
- Monitor and supervise the performance of the dental team with the purpose of ensuring optimal quality of the oral health care delivered.
- Be responsible for the disinfection and sterilization control in the entire dental practice, as well as protection from radiation.
 - Update his/her knowledge and training attending continuing education courses, scientific and professional evolution, according to evidence based dentistry.
 - Protect, as well as all the other members of dental team, all data in relation to the patient and his/her dental treatments, according to the country's legislation.

The dental laboratory technician should:

- Accept and follow the directions and specifications provided by the dentist including protecting the data of the prosthetics of the patient.
- Guarantee the conformity with the prescription of the dentist of the working procedure and the utilised material.
- Never be allowed to work in the mouth of the patient.

The other member/s of the dental team should:

- Carry out only the delegated tasks, for which he/she is duly legally qualified or trained within the authorised practice of the country, but not tasks for which no such qualification or training have been completed.
- Carry out these tasks solely under the supervision of the dentist who shall be present in the dental practice.
- Refer back to the dentist any condition or task, which is outside the competence and training of the team member.
- Accept and follow the directions and specifications provided by the dentist including protecting the all data of the patient.
- Be trained on rules and code of behaviour towards the patients and the relationship inside the Team itself.**

CONCLUSIONS

The dental team shall

Practice according to evidence based dentistry and to the principles of humanity.

Safeguard the oral health of patients, irrespective of their individual status.

Prevent ethically and legally illegal dental practice.

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After approval, all member countries should communicate this statement to the public and to the government.