PREPARING FOR PUBLIC HEALTH DENTAL HYGIENIST CERTIFICATION

1. DETERMINE QUALIFICATIONS TO BECOME A PUBLIC HEALTH DENTAL HYGIENIST (PHDH)
   - A desire to provide dental hygiene services in a public health setting.
   - Two years of dental hygiene work experience or equivalent of 4,000 hours as a dental hygienist.

2. COMPLETE TRAINING REQUIREMENTS (42 hours of continuing education credit)
   - A total of 29 continuing education (CE) hours in medical emergencies in the dental office, pediatric dentistry, pharmacology, medical record keeping, oral pathology and geriatric dentistry.
   - A total of five CE hours of your choice of geriatric dentistry, cultural competency, nutrition for geriatric and special needs patients, communication techniques with non-English speaking patients, and teledentistry.
   - Eight hour in-person review course and PHDH certification exam.
     Additional information at IDHA

3. PREPARING FOR PRACTICE AS A PHDH
   - PHDH certificate on file at supervising dentist’s office and with the PHDH certificate available to the Illinois Department of Public Health (IDPH) upon request.
   - Execute a PHDH supervision agreement between supervising dentist(s) and PHDH.
     ✓ Request template agreement from Illinois Primary Health Care Association (IPHCA).
   - Both parties sign agreement.
AFTER CERTIFICATION
WHAT NEXT?

Develop the Public Health Supervision Agreement

1. DEVELOP POLICY GUIDELINES AND/OR STANDING ORDERS
   - What will be considered standard provision of care?
   - What populations will be served?
   - If multiple locations, are standing orders the same?
   - How will referrals for dental emergencies be handled?
   - How are referrals and follow-up care managed?

2. DEVELOP COMMUNICATION AND CONSULTATION PROTOCOLS
   - How will the PHDH and DDS/DMD communicate?
   - How will immediate concerns be managed?
   - How often will DDS/DMD and PHDH meet to discuss cases?
     ✓ Illinois Practice Act mandates there be at minimum quarterly meetings scheduled to discuss cases.
     ✓ When might more frequent meetings be expected?

3. DEVELOP PROTOCOL FOR PATIENT DOCUMENTATION AND DENTAL RECORD MAINTENANCE
   - How will patient dental records be accessed?
   - What is the process for dental record storage?
   - Is there protocol for documentation?
     ✓ Consent form signed – documentation that patient was informed of care provided by PHDH.
     ✓ Documentation that the patient was informed that the dentist will not see the patient and that PHDH care would not be provided if other options were available.
     ✓ Treatment provided is appropriately documented.
     ✓ Documentation for dentist referral and/or need for follow-up care
     ✓ Patient provided information sheet at end of appointment and said action documented in dental record.

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4. DEVELOP SITE SPECIFIC MEDICAL EMERGENCY PROTOCOLS
   • Who are the responsible staff for each site and what are their roles?
   • Who gets informed of medical emergencies?
   • How is the incident documented?

5. EXECUTE PHDH SUPERVISION AGREEMENT BETWEEN PHDH SUPERVISING DENTIST(S) AND PHDH
   • Signed PHDH Supervision Agreement kept on file with availability to supervising dentist and PHDH.
   • Copy of PHDH agreement is submitted to IPHCA.

Follow PHDH Certification Requirements

1. PHDH REPORT TO ILLINOIS DEPARTMENT OF PUBLIC HEALTH
   • At the completion of a project or minimally, once a year, complete and submit the Annual Report of PHDH Services and Location of Work to IDPH.

2. COMPLETE REQUIRED ANNUAL CE CREDIT CLASSES
   • PHDHs are required to complete four hours of CE credit courses related to public health per year in addition to completion of the required CE credit hours for relicensure.

Roles of the Public Health Dental Hygienist

1. ORAL HEALTH EDUCATOR
   • Patient oral health care instructions
   • Group oral health instructions
     ✓ Diabetic patients
     ✓ Older adults
     ✓ Pregnant women
     ✓ New parents
   • Nutrition counseling related to oral health
   • School-based oral health instructions
2. PATIENT MANAGEMENT

- Referrals
- Consultations
- Management of follow-up care

3. CLINICIAN

- Patient screenings and assessments
- Oral prophylactic procedures
- Radiographs
- Sealant placement
- Fluoride application

4. INTERPROFESSIONAL COLLABORATIVE PRACTICE

- Screening and assessment for medical patients.
- Manage referrals for preventive and restorative care.
- Fluoride varnish or silver diamine fluoride applications for pediatric patients.