

## Competencies for Registered Dental Assistants in Saskatchewan

Only individuals registered and currently licensed with the Saskatchewan Dental Assistants' Association can use the title "Dental Assistant", "Registered Dental Assistant" or designation, abbreviated or otherwise, to imply that they are a member of the Saskatchewan Dental Assistants' Association and eligible to practice dental assisting in Saskatchewan. Competencies may only be performed by members who have completed formal education in dental assisting theory and practice at an approved program, registered with the SDAA, and hold a practice licence.

The SDAA office has a competency list for every dental assistant registered in Saskatchewan. A copy is available on request. Dental assistants are advised to review their list for discrepancies. Verification of additional training must be forwarded immediately to SDAA. A competency list must be current to ensure the RDA's professional liability protection.

A dental assistant who holds a **Full Practice** licence has at minimum all of the following core competencies:

- ◆ *Chairside Dental Assisting*
- ◆ *Dental Radiographs, Expose, Process and Mount*
- ◆ *Dental Dam, Place and Remove*
- ◆ *Impressions and Bite Registration*
- ◆ *Treatment Liners, Place (liners, bases, varnishes and bonding systems) in teeth which do not have pulpal exposures*
- ◆ *Matrix Bands and Wedges, Place and Remove*
- ◆ *Rubber Cup Polish*
- ◆ *Anti-cariogenic Agent Application, Topical*
- ◆ *Oral Hygiene Instructions*
- ◆ *Dietary Counseling*

### Additional Competencies:

The following intraoral competencies may be included in the scope of practice for dental assistants provided that formal training has been completed and the competency is listed on the member's personal list:

- ◆ *Pit and Fissure Sealants and Acid Etching, Application*
- ◆ *Topical Anaesthetic, Application*
- ◆ *Sutures, Surgical Dressings and Retraction Cord, Remove*
- ◆ *Desensitizing Agents, Application*
- ◆ *Pulp Vitality Testing \*\*\* (Offered Post-Graduate)*
- ◆ *Provisional Crowns, Fabricate*
- ◆ *Provisional Crowns, Cement and Remove*
- ◆ *Amalgam Insertion and Carving \*\*\* (Offered Post-Graduate)*
- ◆ *Appropriate Medical Emergency Procedures, Perform*
- ◆ *Orthodontic Module \*\*\* (Offered Post Graduate)*
- ◆ *Provisional Restorations, Place \*\*\* (Offered Post-Graduate)*
- ◆ *Plaque Indices, Take*
- ◆ *Elastic Separators, Place \*\*\* (Offered Post-Graduate)*
- ◆ *Dental Implant Prosthetics \*\*\* (Offered Post-Graduate)*
- ◆ *Gingival Retraction Cord/Paste, Place & Remove \*\*\* (Offered Post-Graduate)*
- ◆ *Coronal Whitening [trays and in-office]*
- ◆ *Atraumatic Restorative Therapy / Interim Stabilization Therapy \*\*\* (will be offered Post-Graduate)*

\*\*\* Available as post-graduate extension course and may not be included in the core curriculum of any DA program.

Although not on the competency list; the following procedures are considered part of the standard training:

- ◆ *Organizes armamentarium, attends to patient comfort, maintains patient record, provides patient with treatment information and assists with all dentistry procedures*
- ◆ *Take & record vital signs (including blood pressure measurement)*
- ◆ *Serve as an infection control officer; implementing infection control and prevention standards as well as preparing and sterilizing instruments and equipment*
- ◆ *Fabricates study models, mouth guards, and occlusal rims*
- ◆ *Public health screening, assessing and recording oral health status*

### **Transfer of Knowledge:**

- ◆ Dental assistants holding a practice licence may **remove gingival retraction cord, remove surgical dressing, and perform a soft tissue reline, simple amalgam restoration adjustment, perform velescope screening, digital scanning and CAD-CAM operation.** The knowledge required to perform each of these competencies and/or prepare the associated materials is transferable from competencies taught through dental assisting education courses. These competencies may be performed at the discretion of the employer.
- ◆ **Final polishing of composite restorations** with slow-speed handpiece utilizing cups, points or discs is considered a transfer of knowledge or RDAs having successfully completed a 'Fabricate, Cement and Remove Provisional Crown' course provided that the final occlusion and / or esthetics be the responsibility of the dentist.
- ◆ **The inclusion of any additional competencies is the decision of the SDAA Council.**

### **Amalgam Insertion and Carving:**

On successful completion of the Saskatchewan Polytechnic Amalgam Insertion and Carving Course the student will be able to justify and demonstrate competency in the following procedures:

- ◆ *Restoration of preparations in primary and permanent teeth using amalgam (amalgam to be handled in a manner that will optimize its physical properties).*
- ◆ *Relationship of restorative procedures to the biology of the pulp, the periodontium, and the occlusion.*
- ◆ *The use of appropriate precautions in dealing with the occupational hazards present in the current practice of restorative dentistry.*
- ◆ *The application of the common types of matrices.*

Qualification in Amalgam Insertion and Carving **does not** qualify the dental assistant to placement and/or finishing of composite restorations.

### **Place Provisional Restorations:**

On successful completion of an approved Provisional Restoration Course the student will be able to justify and demonstrate competency in the following procedures:

- ◆ *Place and finish provisional restorative materials in all classes of cavity preparations*
- ◆ *Evaluate margins*
- ◆ *Evaluate occlusion*

### **Orthodontics for Allied Dental Personnel:**

The Orthodontic Course offered at Saskatchewan Polytechnic is based on the following outcomes. If you have taken an alternate orthodontic assisting course (out of province), and wish to "legally" perform these procedures, your course must be evaluated and approved. An upgrade module may be required for out of provinces graduates.

- ◆ *Take cephalometric radiographs and locate anatomical landmarks for cephalometric tracings*
- ◆ *Fabricate study models (as taught in dental assistant program)*
- ◆ *Expose intraoral and facial photographs*
- ◆ *Place and remove separators*
- ◆ *Select, fit and remove bands*
- ◆ *Cement bands*
- ◆ *Place bonded brackets & attachments*
- ◆ *Place and remove archwires, ligature ties, and accessories such as springs and elastics*
- ◆ *Remove brackets, bands and attachments from teeth using hand instruments*
- ◆ *Remove supragingival bulk cement from teeth by use of hand and ultrasonic scaler*
- ◆ *Remove excess bonding resin from teeth by use of band removing pliers, low speed hand-piece/discs and hand scaler*
- ◆ *Place removable orthodontic appliances*
- ◆ *Provide client education*

### **Elastic Separators, Place:**

This competency is taught in the Orthodontic Module but is also available as a post graduate module.

### **Dental Implant Treatment Planning and Surgery:**

The course is designed to increase the knowledge and understanding of surgical procedures in dental implant surgery. You will focus on the role of the clinical dental assistant throughout various stages of implant therapy, treatment consultation and the responsibilities associated with surgical implant procedures. You will examine indications and contraindications for implants, presenting implant cases to clients, assisting in the surgical dental implant appointment, recognizing various dental implant components, and maintaining proper dental implant records.

- ◆ Describe the rationale for dental implants
- ◆ Describe the treatment sequence for implant supported reconstructions.
- ◆ Develop terminology used to present dental implant treatment to clients.
- ◆ Describe types of surgical procedures for dental implants.
- ◆ Identify armamentarium and biomaterials for dental implant surgery.
- ◆ Describe a dental implant surgery appointment.
- ◆ Describe dental implant healing.
- ◆ Review infection prevention and control standards for dental implant procedures.
- ◆ Describe dental implant treatment documentation.
- ◆ Describe dental implant inventory control.

### **Dental Implant Prosthetics:**

In this course you will become familiar with prosthetic procedures in single tooth, partially edentulous and fully edentulous implant situations. You will review restorative implant components, preliminary and final impression techniques and provisional restorations for implants and how CAD/CAM technology is used in implant dentistry. You will follow the guidelines and processes as indicated by the Saskatchewan Oral Health Profession's authority and implant companies to outline infection prevention and control processes for implant restoration. You will explain the importance of documentation and record keeping as essential elements of professional practice and client care. All skills taught in this course are in accordance with the Saskatchewan Dental Assistants' Scope of Practice.

- ◆ Describe the components of an implant system.
- ◆ Describe digital technology used in implant dentistry.
- ◆ Describe the provisional restoration(s) of an implant(s).
- ◆ Describe final implant supported restorations.
- ◆ Describe the prosthetic procedure for an implant retained restoration.
- ◆ Describe the maintenance of dental implants.
- ◆ Describe record retention and storage of implant cases.
- ◆ Review infection prevention and control standards in implant dentistry.
- ◆ Perform selected dental assisting skills in a dental implant prosthetic procedure.

### **Restricted Practice:**

A dental assistant who holds a Restricted Practice licence may have a restriction applied through an order of the Discipline Committee or may be missing some of the core competencies. Members holding a restricted practice licence require supervision.

### **Restricted (Temporary) Licence:**

A Temporary licence may be available for applicants who do not as yet meet all of the registration requirements such as successful completion of the Written Examination and/or Clinical Practice Evaluation available through the National Dental Assisting Examining Board. Applicants who are in the process of acquiring their intra oral competencies may qualify for this licence. Members holding a restricted practice licence require supervision. This licence will have an expiry date and may authorize at minimum one competency.

### **Ethics:**

A dental assistant licensed in Saskatchewan is legally bound to practice in an ethical manner. A dental assistant must only perform competencies for which they have been formally trained or assessed, are listed with the licensing body and are assigned by a dentist. It is generally understood that dental assistants should not perform competencies for which they do not feel competent. If training was received some time ago and the task has not been practiced recently, the dental assistant may consider reviewing the competency with the support of a licensed and qualified co-worker or take a course through an approved training facility.

**Supervision:**

The SDAA Regulatory Bylaws are silent on supervision. If an RDA is practising according to their formal training and licensure and the procedure has been authorized by the dentist there is no need for supervision. It is within the right and responsibility of the employer to impose any supervision requirements they determine necessary. Dental assistants holding a restricted licence must work within a supervised environment.

**Non Practice Membership:**

A dental assistant not employed as a RDA may wish to purchase a non-practice licence. This type of membership offers no mal-practice insurance.

Members can hold non-practice status for 4 years and retain their eligibility to return to practice status without retraining. During the fourth year of non-practice status the member is required to acquire fifteen (15) professional development credits of which one course MUST be related to infection control. During the fifth year, in order to maintain eligibility to practice, the member MUST hold practice status and again obtain fifteen (15) professional development credits. A dental assistant holding non practice status for longer than five years will be required to hold the NDAEB certificate and successfully complete a Clinical Practice Evaluation or Re-Entry course prior to qualifying for practice status.

Dental assistants employed in a dental office who are not providing intra oral client services are still advised to hold a practice licence in order to ensure that they are covered by professional liability insurance.

*Note: a dental assistant in practice and in good standing in another dentally related profession or province can hold non practice status indefinitely.*

**Professional Development:**

A dental assistant licensed at a practice status is required to attain 15 professional development credit hours annually. Those licensed after the mid point in the year are required to obtain 9 credits.

**Mandatory CPR:**

CPR training is mandatory once every three years for members holding practice status.

**Lapsed Members:**

A dental assistant who fails to renew their annual licence is considered lapsed. All lapsed members must reinstate within three years and pay their annual fee, a reinstatement fee and must meet all current registration standards (i.e. hold the National Dental Assisting Examining Board Certificate).

**Scaling:**

Dental assistants in Saskatchewan cannot perform scaling, as of the proclamation of the Dental Disciplines Act in 1998. The “scaling” function has been protected for dentists and “debridement of supragingival and subgingival deposits” has been protected for dental hygienists.

**Periodontal Screening:**

Dental assistants in Saskatchewan cannot perform periodontal screening. This competency is reserved for dental hygienists.

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