



DENTAL ASSISTING, DENTAL THERAPY & ORAL HYGIENE NEWS



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ELEVATING DENTAL ASSISTING PROFESSION: DENTAL ASSISTANT ASSOCIATION OF SOUTH AFRICA

MS J MOTSHWANE

In the dynamic landscape of dental assisting profession, success is not about what you know, neither who you know and the resources at your disposal, that's where Dental Assistant Association of South Africa (DAASA) comes in, serving as the corner stone of networking, knowledge sharing, and a hub dental assisting advancement and professional growth. Dental assisting is a vital profession, which deals with the treatment of patients, allowing for the safe and effective delivery of oral healthcare. Being a member of DAASA is not just a smart career move but it is a strategic move towards dental assisting career excellence. DAASA plays a pivotal role in advocating for the interests of their members and shaping decisions that impact their profession. By engaging advocacy efforts, thought leadership initiatives and public campaigns it amplifies their voice, influence decision –makers and drive positive change on issues that matter most to its members.

WHY SHOULD YOU WAIT?

Join DAASSA to advance your career and gain access to a plethora of connections, chances, and possibilities.





WHY SHOULD YOU HAVE A WILL? WHY SHOULD YOU DO ESTATE PLANNING?

MR B CEBISA

WHAT IS ESTATE PLANNING?

Choosing an individual's post-death asset preservation, management, and distribution is known as estate planning. It also considers the management of an individual's properties and financial obligations if they become incapacitated.

WHAT IS A WILL?

A will also known as a testament, is a document in which a person sets out what must happen to their estate when they die. Additionally, a person can choose one or more people who will manage their estate after their passing.

WHAT HAPPENS IF I DIE WITHOUT A WILL?

If you die without leaving a valid will, your estate will devolve according to the Intestate Succession Act, 1987 (Act 81 of 1987). This means that your estate will be divided amongst your surviving spouse, children, parents, or siblings according to a set formula.

WHAT IS INTESTATE?

Intestate means to pass away without a formal will. When an individual passes away without leaving a will, a state probate court is responsible for allocating their assets. An estate may also be considered intestate if the court declared the will that was submitted was invalid.

WHAT OCCURS IF THE DECEASED PERSON'S ESTATE IS WORTH LESS THAN R250 000?

If the deceased person's estate is worth less than R250 000, an executor will be named. A letter of authorisation from the Master will attest to the representative's appointment.

WHAT IS AN AUTHORISATION LETTER FROM THE HIGH COURT'S MASTER?

With the use of letters of authority, the designated representative can manage the estate without having to adhere to all the guidelines provided by the Administration of Estates Act.

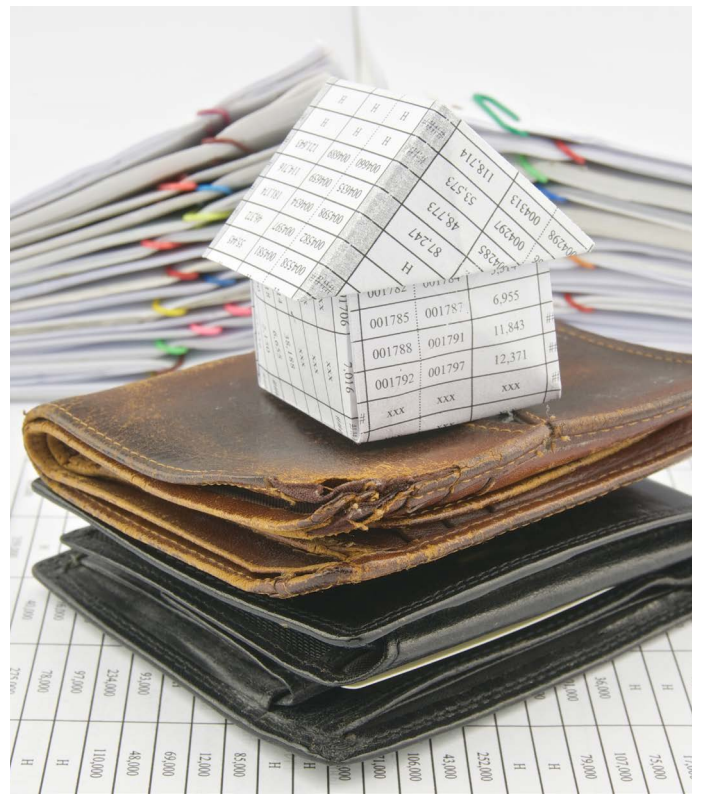
WHAT DOES AN ESTATE PLANNING LETTER OF EXECUTORSHIP MEAN?

Estates over R 250,000 are eligible to receive a Letter of Executorship.

For estates exceeding R 250,000, letters of executorship are granted, whilst letters of authority are granted for estates under R 250,000.

ON WHAT AMOUNT IS ESTATE DUTY PAYABLE?

Estate duty is calculated at 20% of the dutiable estate. For instance, the number being calculated is 20% times R1 million, which is dutiable estate of R1 million.



WHO IS AN EXECUTOR OF AN ESTATE?

The person in charge of managing a deceased person's estate is known as an executor. Usually, the testator names the executor before their passing, or the court appoints one. The main responsibility is to conduct the decedent's intentions in accordance with directives found in their trust or will.

WHAT HAPPENS IF AN EXECUTOR DIES SOUTH AFRICA?

The executor's term of office is terminated automatically if he/she dies, or when the Master, or a court, relieves him or her of the office.



ARE THERE ANY FEES PAYABLE TO THE EXECUTOR?

The fixed tariff that governs all executors' costs is 3.5% of the gross value of assets (VAT excluded) and 6% of any earnings received into the estate during the administration procedure. Therefore, the amount that an executor may charge for all money collected depends on how long the administration procedure takes.

ARE EXECUTOR FEES NEGOTIABLE?

It depends on your service provider, example the bank or the Attorneys firm that will administering your estate if the value of the estate is above R250 000.

Executor's fees are negotiable at his / her discretion however, the law does provide for the executor to charge the 3.5% of the estate value.



WHERE CAN I GET A WILL DRAFTED?

- At major banks
- Attorney's firms
- Legal Aid SA's Website

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1. *Source: Succession Act, 1987 (Act 81 of 1987*
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3. *Images obtained from Freepik*



WHAT TO DO WHEN A COLLEAGUE UNCOVERS A PERSONAL MENTAL HEALTH ISSUE

MR S MADONSELA

It's vital to remember that a colleague most likely had to overcome a lot of fear before talking to you about this topic. "The person has taken a tough and risky step by raising this matter. In most situations, the decision was made after much contemplation. Disclosure is a difficult decision that is influenced by the individual's personal condition, employment, and societal issues (Amy Gallo, 2021). So, how you handle these conversations is essential. The good news is that you can have fruitful interactions if you follow a few ideas.

APPRECIATE THEM FOR TELLING YOU:

- Begin by thanking the employee for sharing.
- Normalise the topic; avoid making it a big deal.
- Don't convey that it's a serious issue, as it may increase shame or fear.
- Be cautious about being overly emotional; focus on their experience.
- Respond based on your existing relationship.
- Treat the person and conversation as you have in the past.

Empathy and consistency matter in supporting mental health.



PAY CLOSE ATTENTION:

- Give the person space to express their needs regarding flexibility or accommodations.
- Listen actively without judgment, paying attention to nonverbal cues.
- Be open-minded and curious.
- Avoid bombarding them with excessive questions.
- Don't insist on knowing specific details (e.g., the name of their disability or its duration).
- Let them decide how much they want to share.

Empathy and consistency matter in supporting mental health.

EXPRESS YOU WANT TO HELP THEM BUT AVOID MAKING UNWARRANTED PROMISES:

- Avoid overpromising when an employee discloses mental health concerns.
- Don't assume they need immediate adjustments to workload or schedule.
- Express your intention to work together to find solutions.
- Reassure their value within the team and organisation.
- It's okay not to have all answers initially.
- Give yourself time to figure out possibilities.
- Say, "Thank you for sharing. Let me digest this and get back to you on X Day."
- Specify the date for the follow-up conversation.

Remember, thoughtful communication matters!

AVOID MAKING IT ABOUT YOU:

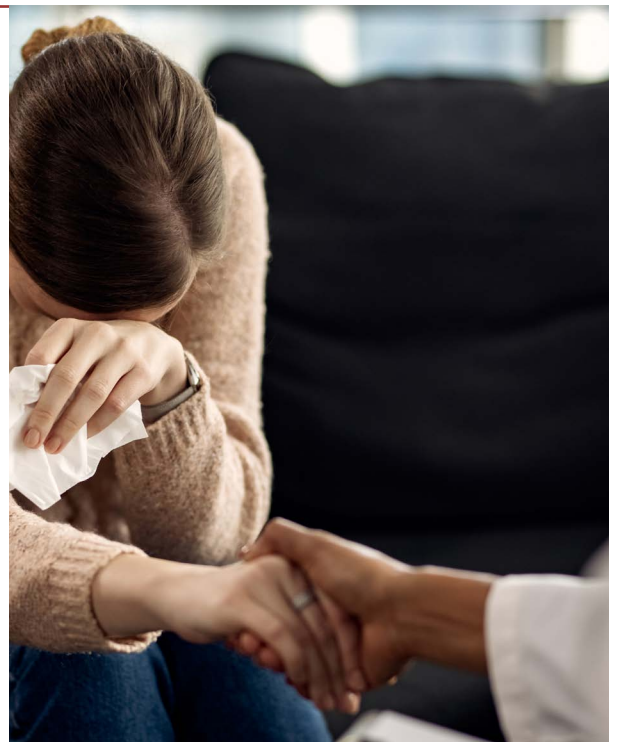
- Recognise that everyone's experience with mental health is unique.
- Avoid assuming you fully understand their situation or its impact on their work.
- While focusing on the employee, sharing a hopeful personal story can normalise the topic.
- Be cautious not to discuss negative outcomes or downplay their experience.
- Avoid making it about you or someone else's success.

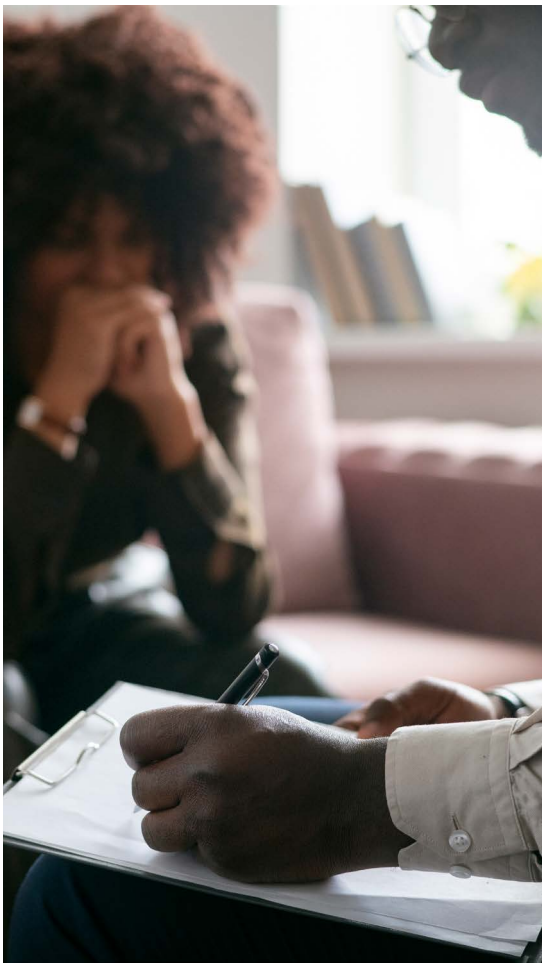
Empathy and sensitivity matter in supporting mental health!

KEEP MATTERS PRIVATE:

- Reassure the employee that you will honour confidentiality but may need to involve HR.
- If they are uncomfortable, explain that you can initially discuss in generalities without naming them.
- Ensure legal protections and access to company resources.
- Some locations require Human Resources notification after mental health disclosure, even without accommodation requests.
- Avoid discussing it with others unless the employee permits.
- If permission is granted, be clear in communication to avoid misunderstandings.

Remember, balancing confidentiality and support is crucial!





THINK OF THE ADJUSTMENTS YOU CAN MAKE:

- Employees may require various accommodations for their mental health, such as flexible hours, solo or group work, time off for medical appointments, or occasional “mental health” days.
- Whether you can grant these requests often depends on your company’s existing policies
- Formal exceptions to policies made for specific employees after disclosure.
- Proactive adjustments within company policies (e.g., flexible hours) applicable to everyone.
- When making accommodations, collaborate with Human Resources, who are knowledgeable about legal requirements.
- Changes to hours or workload may affect colleagues. Be transparent and address questions simply (e.g., “It’s an accommodation”).
- Discuss with the employee how they would like concerns from colleagues to be handled.

Remember, supporting mental health benefits everyone in the workplace!

MAKE YOURSELF “TELL-ABLE”

Creating a Supportive Environment for Mental Health at Work:

- We all wish to have managers with whom we can comfortably discuss work-life balance and mental health concerns.
- Unfortunately, not all managers are approachable in this regard.
- Increase the likelihood of people seeking your support by being open about these issues.
- Managers should openly discuss mental health, even if not their own. Share concerns about burnout or family challenges.
- Demonstrating vulnerability encourages others to share their experiences.
- If you are in a powerful role, sharing your mental health journey can normalise the discussion and inspire success despite challenges.

PRINCIPLES TO REMEMBER

Dos:

- Pay attention to what the person wants to share and go with their lead.
- Give some thought to the kind of flexibility you can provide them.
- Make it obvious that you might not be able to keep the talk private and that you might need to speak with Human Resources about the matter.

Avoid:

- Making a big deal out of the revelation; it’s crucial to normalise the discourse.
- Exaggerate the accommodations you can provide for the person until you have got a chance to consider it and with Human Resources.
- Keep your personal history of mental health issues a secret, particularly if you hold a senior leadership position.

Remember, your response matters. Show empathy, respect their privacy, and create a supportive environment for your colleague.

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1. *Schwenk TL, Gorenflo DW, Leja LM. A survey on the impact of being depressed on the professional status and mental health care of physicians 2008.*
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6. *Image obtained from Freepik*



MEDICAID FRAUD

LEGAL AND ETHICAL CONSIDERATIONS MEDICAL SCHEME FRAUD, WASTE AND ABUSE

DR J SMIT: COMMUNITY MEMBER

The Medical Schemes Act, 131 of 1998 among other things, provides for the establishment of the Council for Medical Schemes (CMS) and for the registration and control of certain activities of medical schemes, and to protect the interests of members of medical schemes.

Medical Schemes collect funds from their members to maintain its business to be financially sound. The Schemes spend funds paying health care providers rendering services to the members and lesser on administration of the Schemes.

In cases of improper or disgraceful conduct, whenever it appears to the CMS that the conduct of any person registered under any Act of Parliament which regulates the professional conduct of any healthcare supplier constitutes improper or disgraceful conduct relating to a medical scheme, the Council shall report this

matter to any body or organisation which has jurisdiction over the person concerned.

Fraud is the use of false representations to obtain unjust advantage. Medical Scheme fraud is knowingly submitting, or causing to be submitted, false claims or an intentional misrepresentation of facts to access payment or a benefit to which one would otherwise not have been entitled.

Waste is extravagant expenditure.

Abuse is misuse, unjust or corrupt practice.

Medical Scheme Waste and Abuse is claiming for health care treatment and services that are not medically necessary, including any form of over-servicing or over-charging of a patient, and that may objectively be considered unethical, unconscionable, or contrary to best practice principles.

Fraud, Waste and Abuse has been identified as one of the drivers of high medical scheme costs. It affects the medical scheme industry in a negative way. An estimated total amount of R22 billion was lost to fraud, waste, and abuse activities in 2017 (CMS Annual Report, 2018).

This is hard-earned money belonging to members of medical schemes, which could have been used to extend cover (benefits) for members and beneficiaries of medical schemes. Members of medical schemes are the people who feel the impact of the effects of fraud, waste and abuse the most, through rising contributions for their medical schemes.

In the Annual Financial Statements of Government Employees Medical Scheme (GEMS) for 2022 alone, indicated the Forensic Debt Recoveries as R 41 387 000. The Fraud Unit within a medical scheme would identify the fraud through their Fraud Hotline or looking into claims from health service providers.

In addition to medical schemes recoveries, the HPCSA fine for fraud is from R20 000 to R 70 000.

Ethics plays a significant role in this situation because it deals with standards of conduct, or how people ought to act in accordance with moral obligations and virtues that flow from the concepts of right and wrong.



REFERENCE

1. Images obtained from Google & Freepik



THE DUAL ROLES IN ORAL HYGIENE: A DENTAL HEALTH PROFESSIONAL AND A LECTURER

**MS TB MOKALE (ORAL HYGIENIST / LECTURER)
UNIVERSITY OF THE WITWATERSRAND**

In the field of healthcare, it is quite common for individuals to take on various responsibilities. For example, there is a fascinating overlap seen in someone who works as an oral hygienist as well as a lecturer in academia. This dynamic fusion of hands-on practice and educational instruction brings numerous advantages to both the professionals themselves and the students they teach.

1. THE ROLE OF AN ORAL HYGIENIST

The main responsibility of an Oral Hygienist is to offer preventive oral healthcare to patients. This includes tasks such as cleaning teeth, conducting examinations to detect signs of oral diseases like gingivitis, and providing various forms of preventive dental treatments. In addition to these clinical duties, Oral Hygienists also play a key role in educating patients about ways to enhance and sustain good oral health. As integral members of the healthcare team, Oral Hygienists are expected to interact with patients with empathy and professionalism, ensuring that every patient receives top-quality care. Oral Hygienists are dedicated to promoting good oral health and preventing oral diseases by providing comprehensive preventive care to patients. They meticulously clean teeth, perform thorough examinations to identify any potential issues,

and administer preventive dental treatments to safeguard patients' oral health. In addition to these clinical tasks, Oral Hygienists take time to educate patients on proper oral hygiene practices and lifestyle choices that can enhance their oral health. By doing so, they empower patients to take control of their oral health and well-being. As healthcare professionals, Oral Hygienists are held to the highest standards of care and conduct. They must approach each patient with compassion and respect, considering their individual needs and preferences. By interacting with patients with empathy and professionalism, Oral Hygienists create a supportive and welcoming environment that promotes trust and openness. This ensures that patients feel comfortable and confident in the care they receive, leading to better outcomes and overall satisfaction. In their role as Oral Hygienists, these healthcare professionals have a vital impact on the oral health and well-being of their patients. By providing preventive care and education, they help patients avoid oral health issues and maintain a healthy smile. By conducting thorough examinations and screenings, they can detect early signs of oral diseases and intervene before they progress. Through their dedication to excellence and patient-centred care, Oral Hygienists contribute to the overall health and happiness of their patients, promoting a lifetime of good oral health and well-being.

2. THE ROLE OF A LECTURER

Oral hygienists who take on the role of educators play a vital and impactful role in the dental field. They serve as a critical link between academic understanding and real-world implementation, thus molding the direction of oral health in the years to come.

• Spreading Accurate Information

The distribution of fact-based knowledge is essential in educating the public on various topics. Providing accurate information to the masses is crucial in promoting understanding and awareness in society. Disseminating factual knowledge helps combat misinformation and fake news that may spread easily. It is important to ensure that the information shared is based on evidence and reliable sources. Educating people with factual knowledge helps in making well-informed decisions and choices. Promoting the dissemination of accurate information can lead to a more knowledgeable and informed society. Accurate knowledge sharing contributes to the overall development of individuals and communities. Ensuring that factual information reaches a wide audience can promote critical thinking and analysis. Spreading factual knowledge can empower individuals to challenge false narratives and myths. Educating the public with accurate information can lead to a more informed and aware society. Focusing on disseminating factual knowledge can help

in promoting a culture of trust and credibility. The sharing of verified information can help in addressing various social issues and challenges. Promoting the dissemination of factual knowledge can contribute to a more transparent and open society. Spreading accurate information can lead to improved communication and understanding among individuals. Disseminating factual knowledge can help in building a foundation of trust and reliability in society. Educating the public with accurate information can promote a culture of lifelong learning and growth. Ensuring that factual knowledge is easily accessible to all can empower individuals to make informed choices. The distribution of factual information can have a positive impact on community development and progress. Promoting the dissemination of accurate knowledge can help in creating a more informed and enlightened society.

Oral Hygienists, in their role as educators, play a crucial role in sharing accurate information with their students. This involves not only imparting the most recent research discoveries but also teaching well-established oral health techniques and keeping them informed about the latest developments in the industry. By keeping abreast of the latest advancements and trends in oral health, they can ensure that their students are fully prepared to deliver top-quality care to their patients in the future.



- **Cultivating a mentality that values critical thinking and analytical reasoning.**

Encouraging individuals to approach problems and situations with a discerning and thoughtful mindset. Fostering a culture of questioning and challenging assumptions through the development of critical thinking skills. Promoting the ability to evaluate information and evidence objectively to form well-informed opinions. Nurturing a habit of examining issues from multiple perspectives and considering alternative viewpoints. Emphasising the importance of logic and reasoning in decision-making processes. Developing the capacity to identify biases and logical fallacies in arguments. Teaching individuals to analyse information critically before accepting it as truth. Encouraging skepticism towards information that lacks sufficient evidence or reasoning. Equipping individuals with the tools to navigate complex and ambiguous situations by using critical thinking skills. Instilling confidence in individuals to engage in thoughtful discourse and debates based on logical reasoning. Promoting a lifelong commitment to learning and improving critical thinking abilities. Engaging individuals in activities that challenge their cognitive abilities and foster analytical thinking. Empowering individuals to make informed and rational decisions by honing

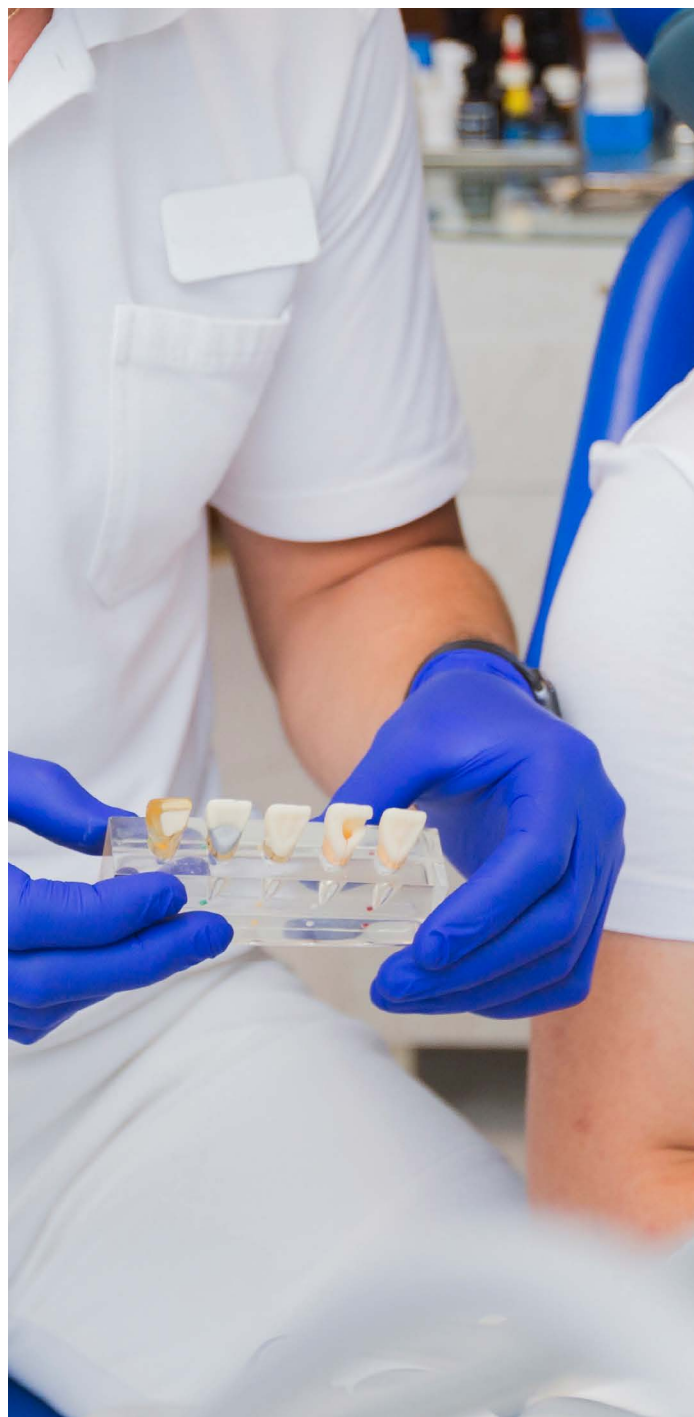
their critical thinking skills. Encouraging individuals to be proactive in seeking out information and verifying its credibility. Emphasising the role of critical thinking in problem-solving and decision-making in various aspects of life. Instigating a shift towards a more critical and analytical mindset in daily thinking and decision-making processes. Supporting individuals in developing a well-rounded and nuanced approach to analysing information and forming opinions. Fostering a community of critical thinkers who value evidence-based reasoning and logical argumentation. Challenging individuals to constantly question their assumptions and biases to enhance their critical thinking skills.

Teachers not only share information with students but also have a significant impact on shaping their critical thinking abilities. They motivate students to challenge conventional methods, delve into innovative concepts, and search for solutions supported by evidence. This analytical mindset is imperative in a subject area that is always changing, as it empowers students to adjust to emerging trends and make well-informed choices in their careers.



• Enhancing Hands-On Abilities

Enhancing practical skills involves further developing and honing the abilities that allow us to apply knowledge and perform tasks effectively in real-life situations. This process includes refining techniques, improving coordination, and increasing proficiency in various tasks. It also entails gaining practical experience and applying theoretical knowledge in a hands-on manner, leading to a better understanding and mastery of specific skills. This may involve repetitive actions, deliberate practice, and consistent efforts to enhance proficiency in specific areas. By paying attention to detail, seeking feedback, and incorporating new strategies, individuals can continuously refine their practical skills and elevate their performance to higher levels. Developing practical skills involves learning by doing, allowing individuals to gain valuable experience and hands-on knowledge in a particular field or activity. This hands-on approach enables individuals to apply theoretical concepts in real-world scenarios, test their understanding, and fine-tune their skills through trial and error. By actively engaging in practical tasks, individuals can build confidence, develop problem-solving abilities, and cultivate expertise in their chosen field. Refining practical skills requires dedication, perseverance, and a willingness to learn from mistakes. It involves taking risks, experimenting with new techniques, and pushing oneself beyond comfort zone to expand capabilities and achieve optimal results. By embracing challenges, seeking growth opportunities, and seeking continuous improvement, individuals can enhance their practical skills and reach new levels of competence. Practicing mindfulness and staying focused are essential aspects of refining practical skills, as they help individuals maintain concentration, stay present at the moment, and perform tasks with greater precision. By being attentive to details, staying aware of surroundings, and staying mindful of actions, individuals can enhance their performance, avoid errors, and produce high-quality results. Additionally, practicing mindfulness can improve decision-making, reduce stress, and enhance overall well-being. In summary, refining practical skills involves a deliberate and systematic approach to enhancing hands-on abilities for better performance and outcomes. By engaging



in focused practice, gaining practical experience, seeking feedback, and staying mindful, individuals can continue to improve their skills, fulfill their potential, and achieve success in their endeavors.

One of the essential aspects of being an Oral Hygienist is possessing practical skills. In addition to their role as educators, they are responsible for guiding students through hands-on training, overseeing their clinical practice, and providing valuable feedback. By doing so, Oral Hygienists assist students in honing their abilities and building self-assurance in their capabilities.

• Characteristics of a proficient educator:

One of the essential traits of a successful educator is the ability to effectively engage students in the learning process. This involves creating a stimulating and interactive environment that encourages active participation and collaboration among students. Another important trait of a successful educator is the ability to build strong relationships with students. This involves showing empathy, understanding, and respect towards students, as well as creating a supportive and inclusive classroom environment where every student feels valued and respected. Successful educators are also adept at utilising a variety of teaching methods to cater for the diverse learning styles and preferences of students. They understand that not all students learn in the same way and can adapt their teaching strategies to accommodate the individual needs of each student. Setting clear expectations and goals is another trait of a successful educator. By clearly outlining what is expected of students and what they need to achieve, educators help students stay focused and motivated, leading to better academic outcomes. Successful educators also provide constructive feedback to students to help them improve and grow academically. This involves offering specific and actionable feedback that identifies areas for improvement and provides guidance on how to address them effectively. Creating a positive and supportive learning environment is crucial for the success of educators. By fostering a sense of community, respect, and collaboration among students, educators can create an atmosphere where students feel safe, motivated, and eager to learn. Successful educators are committed to their professional development and continuously seek opportunities to improve their teaching skills and knowledge. By staying up-to-date on the latest educational trends and research, educators can enhance their teaching practice and better meet the needs of their students. Encouraging creativity and critical thinking is another trait of a successful educator. By challenging students to think critically, solve problems creatively, and explore new ideas, educators can help students develop essential skills that are crucial for success in the 21st century. Lastly, successful educators are passionate about their work and demonstrate a genuine love for teaching. This



passion is contagious and inspires students to engage with the material, participate actively in class, and strive for academic excellence.

Educators who excel in this field display a set of essential characteristics. One of these crucial traits is the ability to be well-prepared, ensuring that they come ready for each lesson with all the necessary materials. Additionally, punctuality is key for effective teaching, as they make a point to arrive on time for every class. Furthermore, a significant trait for successful educators in this field is patience, especially when it comes to explaining challenging concepts to students. In addition to being well-prepared, punctual, and patient, successful educators also work on creating an engaging learning environment for their students. They strive to foster a thirst for knowledge among their students, encouraging them to explore and inquire further into the subject matter. By cultivating an environment that promotes curiosity, educators can inspire their students to delve deeper into their studies and develop a passion for learning. Overall, effective educators in this field possess a unique combination of traits that set them apart. They demonstrate a commitment to preparedness, punctuality, and patience, while also fostering an atmosphere that encourages curiosity and a hunger for knowledge. Through their dedication and passion for teaching, they can inspire and motivate their students to excel academically.

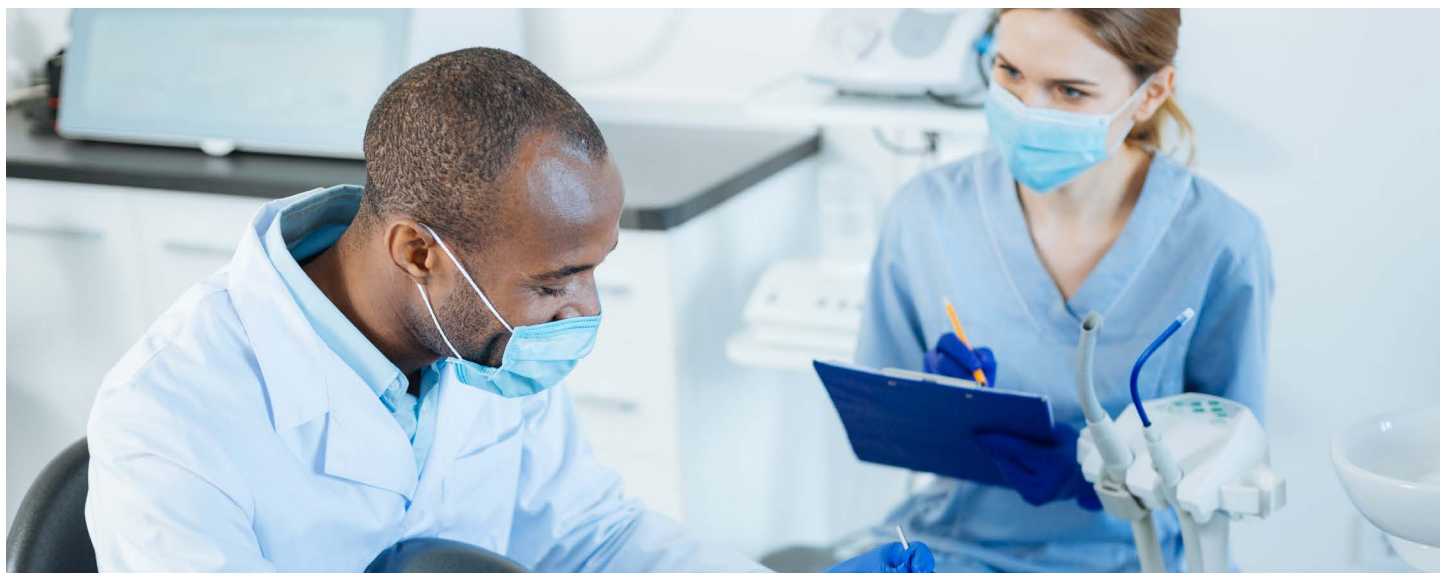
3. THE INTERSECTION OF BOTH ROLES

When oral hygienists take on the role of educators, they bring a unique blend of knowledge and experience to their teaching duties. Their practical experience in the field allows them to offer students more than just theoretical information. This dual role enables them to infuse real-life scenarios and industry insights into the academic curriculum, making the educational process more interactive and applicable to students' future careers. Additionally, by serving as lecturers, oral hygienists can stay up-to-date with the latest advancements in their field, benefiting both themselves and their students.

This symbiotic relationship ensures that both parties are constantly learning and evolving. By bridging the gap between theory and practice, these dual-role professionals play a critical role in preparing the next generation of oral health professionals. Their unique perspective, gained from simultaneously practising and teaching, allows them to impart practicality and relevance in their lessons, creating a well-rounded learning environment for students. With one foot in academia and the other in industry, these professionals are well-positioned to guide students toward success in their future careers. The combination of being both a practitioner and a lecturer offers a comprehensive and multifaceted approach to education in the field of oral hygiene. Through their dual role, oral hygienist-lecturers provide students with a wealth of knowledge and inspire them with their passion and dedication. The insights and perspectives

shared by these professionals contribute to a deeper understanding of the subject matter, enhancing the educational experience for all involved. Furthermore, their ability to adapt teaching methods to meet the evolving needs of students and the changing landscape of dentistry ensures that students are well-prepared to enter the workforce with the necessary skills and confidence to excel in the field of oral hygiene. In essence, the intersection of roles as oral hygienist and lecturer creates a dynamic and enriching educational experience for both educators and students. The integration of real-world experiences and practical applications into their teaching allows these professionals to effectively bridge the gap between theory and practice, ultimately equipping students with the tools they need to succeed in their careers.

Conclusively, pursuing a career as both an Oral Hygienist and a lecturer presents a complex yet fulfilling journey. This profession demands a harmonious blend of hands-on expertise, theoretical understanding, and a profound dedication to both patient well-being and student learning. Achieving success in this dual role necessitates a holistic approach to oral healthcare and academic instruction. It involves applying practical techniques, imparting theoretical knowledge, and fostering a nurturing environment for both patients and learners. The multifaceted responsibilities of an oral hygienist and lecturer require versatile skills and a passion for dental hygiene and education. The ability to effectively communicate complicated concepts to individuals with varying levels of understanding is crucial in this profession.





GENERAL INFORMATION

For any information or assistance from the Council direct your enquiries to the Call Centre

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Professional Board for Dental Assisting, Dental Therapy & Oral Hygiene Ethical Enquiries Scope of Practice and Policy matters

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