

**CENTRAL COMMUNITY COLLEGE
DENTAL HYGIENE PROGRAM
CRITERIA FOR DENTAL OFFICE OBSERVATION**

One of the admissions requirements for the Central Community College Dental Hygiene Program is a minimum of forty (40) hours of observation in a dental office. The goal of this requirement in a dental office is to realistically acquaint you with the profession of dental hygiene. It is felt this is a valuable and necessary avenue of career exploration. This requirement is meant to assist you in affirming your commitment to your education and the profession. Therefore, you are strongly encouraged to complete your observation in an office where a dental hygienist is employed.

During your observation the following criteria should be met. Use this criteria as a checklist as you complete your dental office observation requirement.

CRITERIA CHECKLIST FOR OFFICE OBSERVATION

1. Observe the dental hygienist/dentist performing the following procedures and discuss each with him/her:
 - a. Recording and evaluating a patient medical/dental history
 - b. Examination of the oral cavity
 - c. Scaling and polishing teeth (oral prophylaxis)
 - d. Application of topical fluoride to teeth
 - e. Exposing, developing, and mounting x-rays (radiographs)
 - f. Patient education
2. Observe office personnel perform sterilization and disinfection procedures and discuss reasons for performing these procedures.
3. Discuss the need for radiation (x-ray) safety with office personnel. Through questioning, determine precautions taken during x-ray exposure.
4. Acquaint yourself with the instruments, equipment, and materials utilized by a dental hygienist.
5. Through observation of and discussion with all office personnel determine duties and responsibilities of the –
 - a. dental hygienist
 - b. dentist
 - c. dental assistant
 - d. receptionist/office manager
 - e. dental laboratory technician
6. Discuss procedures and reasons for –
 - a. recall system
 - b. appointment control (scheduling appointments)

c. inventory

7. Observe procedures for seating and dismissal of patients.
8. Observe attire worn by office personnel.
9. Observe interaction among office personnel and question them regarding their philosophies on teamwork.
10. Observe interaction between office personnel and patients. Discuss with office staff their philosophies regarding patient interaction.

As a result of your observation and questioning of and discussion with office personnel, you will be able to complete the following:

1. List the roles and responsibilities of a dental hygienist, dentist, dental assistant, and other office personnel.
2. Explain the need for sterilization and disinfection in the dental office.
3. Explain the need for radiation safety.
4. Define the duties a dental hygienist may perform.
5. Develop an awareness of and appreciation for the interactions among office personnel.
6. Develop an awareness of and appreciation for the interactions between office personnel and patients.
7. Begin to develop a philosophy regarding “professionalism”.
8. Discuss reasons why recall systems, appointment control, and inventory are important to office operations.