

## **Dental Council of New Zealand**

### **Health Practitioners Competence Assurance Act 2003**

## **Notice of Scopes of Practice and Prescribed Qualifications**

**Issued by the Dental Council pursuant to sections 11 and 12 of the Health Practitioners Competence Assurance Act 2003**

### **Dental Hygienists and Auxiliaries**

#### ***Scope of General Dental Hygiene Practice***

The scope of practice for dental hygiene is set out in the documented “Detailed Scope of General Dental Hygiene Practice” produced and published from time to time by the Dental Council of New Zealand.

Dental hygiene practice is a subset of the practice of dentistry, and is commensurate with a dental hygienist’s approved education, training and competence.

A dental hygienist’s major role is in the provision of oral health education and the prevention of oral disease to promote healthy oral behaviours. A dental hygienist’s primary task is in prevention and non-surgical treatment of periodontal diseases. A dental hygienist guides patients’ personal care to maintain sound oral tissues as an integral part of their general health.

Dental hygienists practise in a team situation with clinical guidance provided by a practising dentist or dental specialist.<sup>1</sup>

#### ***Detailed Scope of Practice for General Dental Hygiene Practice***

The Dental Council of New Zealand defines the practice of dentistry as the maintenance of health through the assessment, diagnosis, management, treatment and prevention of any disease, disorder or condition of the orofacial complex and associated structures.

Dental hygiene practice is a subset of the practice of dentistry, and is commensurate with a dental hygienist’s approved education, training and competence.

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<sup>1</sup> Clinical guidance means the professional support and assistance provided to a dental hygienist by a practising dentist or dental specialist as part of the provision of overall integrated care to the patient group. Dental hygienists and dentists/specialists normally work from the same premises providing a team approach. Clinical guidance may be provided at a distance but appropriate access must be available to ensure that the dentist or specialist is able to provide guidance and advice, when required, and maintain general oversight of the clinical care outcomes of the patient group.

Dental hygienists are responsible and accountable for their own clinical practice within their scope of practice but the dentist or dental specialist is responsible and accountable for the clinical guidance provided.

Further detail on the working relationship between dental hygienists and dentists will be set out in the relevant Dental Council Code of Practice.

A dental hygienist's major role is in the provision of oral health education and the prevention of oral disease to promote healthy oral behaviours. A dental hygienist's primary task is in prevention and non-surgical treatment of periodontal diseases. A dental hygienist guides patients' personal care to maintain sound oral tissues as an integral part of their general health. Dental hygienists practise in a team situation with clinical guidance provided by a practising dentist or dental specialist.<sup>2</sup>

Dental hygiene practice includes teaching, research and management given that such roles influence clinical practice and public safety.

Dental hygiene practice involves:

- obtaining and reassessing medical and dental health histories
- examination of oral tissues and recognition of abnormalities
- assessing and provisionally diagnosing disease of periodontal tissues, and appropriate referral
- obtaining informed consent for dental hygiene care plans
- providing oral health education, information, promotion and counselling
- scaling, debridement and prophylaxis of supra and subgingival tooth surfaces
- applying prescription preventive agents under the direct clinical supervision of a dentist<sup>3</sup>
- applying and dispensing non-prescription preventive agents and fissure sealants
- applying and dispensing topical agents for the treatment of tooth surface sensitivity and tooth discolouration
- administering topical local anaesthetic
- taking impressions, recording occlusal relationships and making study models
- taking impressions, constructing and fitting mouthguards and bleaching trays
- taking intra and extraoral photographs
- performing postoperative procedures such as removal of sutures and placement and removal of periodontal dressings
- recontouring and polishing of restorations.

### **Prescribed Qualifications**

- Certificate in Dental Hygiene issued by Otago Polytechnic and approved experience in the provision of oral health services within the scope of dental hygiene practice; or
- New Zealand Defence Force training programme in Dental Hygiene and approved experience in the provision of oral health services within the scope of dental hygiene practice; or
- Diploma in Dental Hygiene issued by a New Zealand educational institution; or
- Bachelor of Health Science (Endorsement in Dental Hygiene), University of Otago; or
- Bachelor of Oral Health, University of Otago; or
- Bachelor of Health Science in Oral Health, Auckland University of Technology; or
- an undergraduate dental hygiene degree or diploma from an Australian Dental Council accredited educational institution; and registration with an Australian State licensing Board; or

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<sup>2</sup> Clinical guidance means the professional support and assistance provided to a dental hygienist by a practising dentist or dental specialist as part of the provision of overall integrated care to the patient group. Dental hygienists and dentists/specialists normally work from the same premises providing a team approach. Clinical guidance may be provided at a distance but appropriate access must be available to ensure that the dentist or specialist is able to provide guidance and advice, when required, and maintain general oversight of the clinical care outcomes of the patient group.

<sup>3</sup> Direct clinical supervision means the clinical supervision provided to a dental hygienist by a practising dentist or dental specialist when the dentist is present on the premises at the time the dental hygiene work is carried out.

- an undergraduate dental hygiene degree or diploma, or undergraduate dental degree; and a pass in the DCNZ Dental Hygiene Registration Examination; or
- an undergraduate dental hygiene degree or diploma or undergraduate dental degree and a pass in the USA National Board Dental Hygiene Examination or Canadian National Dental Hygiene Certification Examination and a pass in a USA or Canadian regional or state board dental hygiene clinical examination; and registration with a USA or Canadian dental authority; or
- a Commission on Dental Accreditation (CDA) accredited undergraduate dental hygiene degree or diploma; a pass in the USA National Board Dental Hygiene Examination or Canadian National Dental Hygiene Certification Examination; and registration with a USA or Canadian dental authority; or
- a General Dental Council (GDC) accredited undergraduate dental hygiene degree or diploma from the United Kingdom; and registration with the GDC; or
- a Certificate or Diploma in Dental Hygiene conferred by the GDC; and registration with the GDC.

***For applications received before 19 September 2004***

- New Zealand Dental Association Operating Auxiliaries Course and hold a prescribed qualification for the Scope of General Dental Therapy and a minimum of 600 clinical hours' experience subsequent to 1 July 2001 in the provision of oral health services within the scope of dental hygiene practice; or
- Bachelor of Dental Surgery, University of Otago and a minimum of 600 clinical hours' experience subsequent to 1 July 2001 in the provision of oral health services within the scope of dental hygiene practice.

## ***Scope of Dental Auxiliary Practice***

The scope of practice for dental auxiliaries is set out in the documented “Detailed Scope of Dental Auxiliary Practice” produced and published from time to time by the Dental Council of New Zealand.

Dental auxiliary practice is a subset of the practice of dental hygiene and is commensurate with the dental auxiliary’s approved training, experience and competence.

Dental auxiliary practice involves prevention of oral health disease through the application of non-prescription preventive agents to the teeth; oral health education and promotion; and treatment of oral health disease through the removal of plaque and calculus.

This interim scope has been gazetted to provide for non-hygiene qualified practitioners, who have been practising dental hygiene up until 18 September 2004, to continue to practise. The Dental Council intends to revoke this scope of practice by 18 September 2009.

## ***Detailed Scope of Practice for Dental Auxiliary Practice***

Dental auxiliary practice is a subset of the practice of dental hygiene and is commensurate with the dental auxiliary’s approved training, experience and competence.

Dental auxiliary practice involves prevention of oral health disease through the application of non-prescription preventive agents to the teeth; oral health education and promotion; and treatment of oral health disease through the removal of plaque and calculus.

Dental auxiliaries practise under the direct clinical supervision of a dentist who is present on the premises at which the work is carried out, who has completed an initial periodontal examination on the patient concerned and who is responsible for patient’s clinical care outcomes.<sup>4</sup>

Dental Auxiliary practice involves:

- recording medical and dental health histories
- examining and recording of oral tissues
- providing oral health education, information, promotion and counselling
- scaling and prophylaxis of supra and subgingival tooth surfaces
- applying and dispensing non-prescription preventive agents and fissure sealants
- applying and dispensing topical agents for the treatment of tooth surface sensitivity and tooth discolouration
- taking impressions, recording occlusal relationships and making study models
- taking impressions, constructing and fitting mouthguards and bleaching trays
- taking intra and extraoral photographs.

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<sup>4</sup> Further detail on the working relationship between dental auxiliaries and dentists will be set out in the relevant Dental Council Code of Practice.

## **Prescribed Qualifications**

### ***For applications received before 19 September 2004***

- A minimum of 600 clinical hours' experience subsequent to 1 July 2001 in the provision of oral health services within the scope of dental auxiliary practice, under the direction and supervision of a dentist or dental specialist who can attest to competency.

### ***Scope for Orthodontic Auxiliary Practice***

The scope of practice for orthodontic auxiliaries is set out in the documented "Detailed Scope of Orthodontic Auxiliary Practice" produced and published from time to time by the Dental Council of New Zealand.

Orthodontic auxiliary practice is a subset of the practice of dentistry, and is commensurate with an orthodontic auxiliary's approved training, experience and competence.

Orthodontic auxiliaries practise to a treatment plan prepared by a dentist or orthodontist for the patient concerned. Orthodontic auxiliaries practise under the direct supervision of a dentist or orthodontist who is present on the premises at which the work is carried out. The dentist or orthodontist is responsible for the patient's overall clinical care outcomes.<sup>5</sup>

Orthodontic auxiliaries assist the dentist or orthodontist in implementing orthodontic treatment through performing such orthodontic procedures as taking impressions and making study models, inserting and removing some orthodontic appliances, preparing teeth for bonding, removing bonding composite and banding cement and providing oral health education and advice on the care and maintenance of orthodontic appliances.

### ***Detailed Scope of Practice for Orthodontic Auxiliary Practice***

Orthodontic Auxiliary practice involves:

- Taking clinical photographs for records
- Taking impressions. Obtaining a record of occlusal relationships
- Tracing cephalometric radiographs
- Placing separators
- Sizing of metal bands and their cementation including loose bands during treatment
- Supragingival polishing of teeth (as part of oral hygiene, before bonding and after removal of fixed attachments)
- Preparation of teeth for the bonding of fixed attachments and fixed retainers
- Indirect bonding of brackets as set up by the orthodontist
- Providing oral hygiene instruction and advice on the care and maintenance of orthodontic appliances
- Placing archwires as formed by the orthodontist when necessary and replacing ligatures /closing self ligating brackets
- Removing archwires after removing elastomeric or wire ligatures, or opening self ligating brackets
- Removing fixed orthodontic attachments and retainers

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<sup>5</sup> Further detail on the working relationship between orthodontic auxiliaries and dentists/orthodontists will be set out in the relevant Dental Council Code of Practice.

- Removing adhesives after the removal of fixed attachments using burs in slow speed handpieces where there is minimal potential for the removal of enamel
- Trial fitting of removable appliances. This does not include activation
- Fitting of passive removable retainers
- Bonding preformed fixed retainers
- Making study models, and fabricating retainers, and undertaking other simple laboratory procedures of an orthodontic nature

### **Prescribed Qualifications**

- Graduate Certificate of Orthodontic Assisting, Academy of Orthodontic Assisting; possession of a dental therapy, dental hygiene or dentistry qualification or registration as a dental auxiliary and approved experience in the provision of orthodontic auxiliary services under the direction and supervision of a dentist or dental specialist who can attest to competency.<sup>6</sup>

### ***For applications received before 31 March 2006<sup>7</sup>***

- A minimum of 600 clinical hours' experience subsequent to 1 July 2001 in the provision of oral health services within the scope of orthodontic auxiliary practice, under the direction and supervision of a dentist or dental specialist who can attest to competency.

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<sup>6</sup> The Dental Council approved this prescribed qualification on 10 July 2006.

<sup>7</sup> Given that it was not illegal for unregistered persons to undertake orthodontic auxiliary duties prior to the establishment of the Restricted Activities List on 1 August 2005, any orthodontic assistants who did not apply for registration prior to 18 September 2004 but had the requisite clinical experience could apply for registration under amnesty provisions until 31 March 2006.

## **Additional Scopes of Practice for Dental Hygiene and Auxiliary Practice**

### ***Scope for Administering Local Anaesthetic in Dental Hygiene Practice***

Administration of local anaesthetic using dentoalveolar infiltration and inferior dental nerve block techniques under the direct clinical supervision of a dentist or specialist who is present on the premises at which the work is carried out.

#### **Prescribed Qualifications**

- Bachelor of Health Science (Endorsement in Dental Hygiene), University of Otago and registration in the Scope of Dental Hygiene Practice; or
- Bachelor of Oral Health, University of Otago and registration in the Scope of Dental Hygiene Practice; or
- Bachelor of Health Science in Oral Health, Auckland University of Technology and registration in the Scope of Dental Hygiene Practice; or
- approved experience in the provision of local anaesthetic within the general dental therapy or general dental scope of practice and registration in the Scope of Dental Hygiene Practice; or
- completion of the Auckland University of Technology Local Anaesthesia Course for Dental Hygienists and registration in the Scope of Dental Hygiene Practice; or
- an approved Local Anaesthetic training course and registration in the Scope of Dental Hygiene Practice.

### ***Scope for Undertaking Orthodontic Procedures in Dental Hygiene Practice***

Dental hygienists with approved training, experience and competence in orthodontic procedures assist the dentist or orthodontist in implementing orthodontic treatment plans through performing such orthodontic procedures as taking impressions and making study models, inserting, and removing some orthodontic appliances, preparing teeth for bonding, removing bonding composite and banding cement and providing oral health education and advice on the care and maintenance of orthodontic appliances.

Dental hygienists who undertake orthodontic procedures practise:

- under the clinical guidance of a dentist or orthodontist who is responsible for the patient's clinical care outcomes; and
- to a treatment plan prepared by a dentist or orthodontist for the patient concerned.

The procedures involve:

- oral hygiene instruction, care and maintenance of orthodontic appliances
- taking clinical photographs for records
- making study models including taking impressions and bite records
- pre-banding polishing of teeth
- removing and placing arch wires as formed by the orthodontist
- removing composite/band cement following removal of fixed appliances
- removing O rings
- de-bonding and de-banding fixed appliances
- replacing loose bands.

### **Prescribed Qualifications**

- Bachelor of Health Science (Endorsement in Dental Hygiene), University of Otago, conferred from 2002 and registration in the Scope of Dental Hygiene Practice; or
- Bachelor of Oral Health, University of Otago and registration in the Scope of Dental Hygiene Practice; or
- Diploma in Dental Hygiene, University of Otago conferred from 2002 and registration in the Scope of Dental Hygiene Practice; or
- Graduate Certificate of Orthodontic Assisting, Academy of Orthodontic Assisting and registration in the Scope of Dental Hygiene Practice.

### ***For applications received before 19 September 2004***

- Diploma in Dental Hygiene, University of Otago conferred before 2002; registration in the Scope of Dental Hygiene Practice and a minimum of 150 clinical hours' experience subsequent to 1 July 2001 in the provision of oral health services within the scope for undertaking orthodontic procedures in dental hygiene practice, under the direction and supervision of a dentist or dental specialist who can attest to competency; or
- Certificate in Dental Hygiene issued by Otago Polytechnic of New Zealand; registration in the Scope of Dental Hygiene Practice and a minimum of 150 clinical hours' experience subsequent to 1 July 2001 in the provision of oral health services within the scope for undertaking orthodontic procedures in dental hygiene practice, under the direction and supervision of a dentist or dental specialist who can attest to competency; or
- New Zealand Defence Force training programme in Dental Hygiene; registration in the Scope of Dental Hygiene Practice and a minimum of 150 clinical hours' experience subsequent to 1 July 2001 in the provision of oral health services within the scope for undertaking orthodontic procedures in dental hygiene practice, under the direction and supervision of a dentist or dental specialist who can attest to competency.

### ***Scope for Intraoral Radiography in Dental Hygiene, Dental Auxiliary and Orthodontic Auxiliary Practice***

Taking periapical and bitewing radiographs for the purpose of recognising disease of the periodontium.<sup>8</sup>

### **Prescribed Qualifications**

- Diploma in Dental Hygiene conferred by a New Zealand educational institution and registration in the Scope of Dental Hygiene Practice; or
- Bachelor of Health Science (Endorsement in Dental Hygiene), University of Otago and registration in the Scope of Dental Hygiene Practice; or
- Bachelor of Oral Health, University of Otago and registration in the Scope of Dental Hygiene Practice; or
- Bachelor of Health Science in Oral Health, Auckland University of Technology and registration in the Scope of Dental Hygiene Practice; or

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<sup>8</sup> The Radiation Protection Act 1965 requires non-licensed persons who take x-rays to do so under the supervision or instructions of a person who holds a licence under that Act.

- Certificate in Dental Hygiene issued by Otago Polytechnic and approved experience in the provision of oral health services within the scope of intraoral radiography and registration in the Scope of Dental Hygiene Practice; or
- New Zealand Defence Force training programme in Dental Hygiene and approved experience in the provision of oral health services within the scope of intraoral radiography and registration in the Scope of Dental Hygiene Practice; or
- undergraduate dental hygiene degree or diploma from an Australian Dental Council accredited educational institution and registration in the Scope of Dental Hygiene Practice; or
- an exemption certificate for intraoral radiography issued by the New Zealand Medical Radiation Technologists Board (MRTB) current as at 18 September 2004 and registration in the Scope of Dental Hygiene Practice or Scope of Dental Auxiliary Practice or the Scope of Orthodontic Auxiliary Practice; or
- an approved intraoral radiography training course and registration in the Scope of Dental Hygiene Practice or Scope of Dental Auxiliary Practice or the Scope of Orthodontic Auxiliary Practice.

***Scope for Extraoral Radiography Practice in Dental Hygiene, Dental Auxiliary and Orthodontic Auxiliary Practice***

Taking extraoral radiographs.<sup>9</sup>

**Prescribed Qualifications**

- An exemption certificate for extraoral radiography issued by the New Zealand Medical Radiation Technologists Board current as at 18 September 2004 and registration in the Scope of Dental Hygiene Practice or Scope of Dental Auxiliary Practice or Scope of Orthodontic Auxiliary Practice; or
- New Zealand Defence Force training programme in Dental Hygiene and approved experience in the provision of oral health services within the scope of extraoral radiography and registration in the Scope of Dental Hygiene Practice; or
- an approved extraoral radiography training course and registration in the Scope of Dental Hygiene Practice or Scope of Dental Auxiliary Practice or Scope of Orthodontic Auxiliary Practice.

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<sup>9</sup> The Radiation Protection Act 1965 requires non-licensed persons who take x-rays to do so under the supervision or instructions of a person who holds a license under that Act.