

FM COMDT COGARD WASHINGTON DC//CG-112//

TO AIG 4905

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UNCLAS //N06010//

SUBJ: PERSONNEL, DENTAL HYGIENISTS

A. Coast Guard Medical Manual, COMDTINST M6000.1 (SERIES) 1. Dental hygienists are licensed graduates of American Dental Association accredited schools of dental hygiene. Whether contract or active duty providers, they are authorized to treat beneficiaries in Coast Guard (CG) dental clinics under the oversight of a Dental Officer (DO). Restrictions on the degree of required oversight and the scope of services vary from state to state.

2. Scope of practice. In the interests of standardization, quality improvement, and risk management, Dental Hygienists in CG health care facilities shall, in most circumstances, treat patients only when a DO is present for duty at the command. At the discretion of the Senior Dental Executive (SDE), and in the interest of expediency, this guideline may be overridden if each of the following conditions is met on each patient:

- a. Only active duty members are treated.
- b. A Medical Officer is present in the building.
- c. Patients have not been diagnosed with moderate to severe periodontitis in one or more quadrants within the last six months.
- d. The licenses of the DO and Dental Hygienist are not jeopardized by this action.

3. Patient criteria. In every case, patients must receive a Type 2 examination by a DO no more than six months prior to treatment by a Dental Hygienist.

4. Patient review. The SDE, or a staff DO designated by the SDE, shall conduct an intra-oral review of no fewer than 5 percent of the Dental Hygienist patients for completeness of plaque/calculus removal and damage to hard/soft tissues. The responsible DO shall document these reviews in the patients' dental records.

5. State laws. The scope of the Dental Hygienist services shall be governed by either the state in which the license is held or the state in which the clinic is located, whichever is more restrictive, and shall be itemized in the clinic SOP.

6. Injections. In some cases the state license may contain an addendum certificate which permits the Dental Hygienist to administer injections of local anesthesia (either Block and/or Infiltration) under the direct oversight of a licensed dentist. Direct oversight shall mean that the DO personally has authorized the Dental Hygienist to administer local anesthesia to the specific patient being treated at the specific time (i.e., blanket approvals are not authorized).

If the state in which the clinic is located also allows this, then the Dental Hygienist may deliver local anesthesia under the direct oversight of the dental officer. In all cases, the Dental Hygienist must possess specific approval through certification from the state of licensure allowing him/her to administer local anesthesia. The DO shall be physically present in the clinic while local anesthesia is administered by the Dental Hygienist. While direct oversight does not require the DO to be physically present in the Dental Hygienist operator, the DO must be in the clinic and be capable of responding to an emergency immediately.

7. This change will be updated in the next version of Ref (A).
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9. CAPT Deborah Noyes, Chief, Office of Health Services, sends.
10. Internet release authorized.

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