



COMPETENCIES FOR THE NEW DENTAL GRADUATE

The PNWU School of Dental Medicine (SDM) is the newest dental school in the Pacific Northwest. The school is based in Yakima, Washington, as part of a vibrant health sciences university whose mission is to educate and train healthcare professionals emphasizing service in rural and medically underserved communities throughout the Pacific Northwest. The SDM will support this mission by providing a comprehensive and unique dental education program focused on graduating competent primary care dentists.

The general dentist is the primary oral health care provider, supported by dental specialists, allied dental professionals, and other health care providers. The future general dentist must be able to address healthcare issues beyond traditional oral healthcare and must be able to practice evidence-based, comprehensive dentistry independently and collaboratively with the ultimate goal of improving the health of society. The general dentist must have a broad interdisciplinary biomedical and clinical education and demonstrate professional and ethical behavior and effective communication and interpersonal skills. In addition, they must be able to evaluate and utilize emerging technologies, continuing professional development opportunities, and problem-solving and critical thinking skills to effectively address current and future issues in health care.

As used in this document and describes, a competency is a complex behavior or ability essential for the general dentist to begin independent, unsupervised dental practice. Competency includes knowledge, experience, critical thinking and problem-solving skills, professionalism, ethical values, and technical and procedural skills. These components become an integrated whole during the delivery of patient care by the competent general dentist. Competency assumes that all behaviors are performed with a quality consistent with patient well-being and that the general dentist can self-evaluate treatment effectiveness.

In competency-based dental education, what students learn is based upon clearly articulated competencies and further assumes that all behaviors/abilities are supported by foundation knowledge and psychomotor skills in biomedical, behavioral, ethical, clinical dental science and information management that are essential for independent and unsupervised performance as an entry-level general dentist. In creating curricula, dental faculty must consider the competencies to be developed through the educational process, the learning experiences that will lead to the development of these competencies, and ways to assess or measure the attainment of competencies. Competency statements for dental education have evolved to a point where they are divided into domains, are broader and less prescriptive in nature, are fewer in number, and, most importantly, are linked to requisite foundation knowledge and skills. A

glossary of terms used in competency-based education is found at the end of this document.

The PNWU SDM has prepared this document to:

- Define the competencies necessary for entry into the dental profession as a beginning primary care general dentist
- Enhance patient care quality and safety, and leverage current and emerging trends in the dental practice environment
- Serve as a guide and resource to promote change and innovation in our school's curriculum
- Serve as a guide for benchmarking, best practice, and interprofessional collaboration
- Serve as a resource to inform educators in other healthcare professions about the curricular priorities of dental education and entry-level competencies of a general dentist.

Educational Mission and Philosophy for the Dental Predoctoral Program at the Pacific Northwest University of Health Sciences - School of Dental Medicine

Mission

The Pacific Northwest University of Health Sciences - School of Dental Medicine's educational mission is to educate and train primary care dentists in a humanistic environment, emphasizing service among rural and medically underserved communities throughout the Northwest. Our graduates must be competent in preventing, diagnosing, and caring for patients with oral-facial conditions that affect overall health and patient well-being. They must be able to identify and screen for chronic health conditions, such as hypertension and diabetes, and provide support for patients with behavioral, nutritional, and substance abuse challenges. They must also function effectively in an integrated healthcare system, collaborating and partnering with other healthcare providers within their geographic area and beyond.

Philosophy

The School of Dental Medicine and the entire University are committed to developing a competent graduate. The development of a competent graduate primary care dentist requires the school to provide an environment based on humanism, compassion, empathy, and trust. We must provide an active learning environment where students engage with the content, each other, the other healthcare students on campus, and their faculty. The learning must focus on the student's involvement in the process of reasoning and understanding, as well as their responsibility to engage in continued learning, self-assessment, and the pursuit of higher knowledge.

Competency Statements

(Parentheses denote corresponding CODA standard)

Upon graduation, students will be competent in the following concepts and skills and will be expected to be able to perform them independently when they begin unsupervised dental practice. These independent skills are taught in the core curriculum. The competencies relate to patients over the entire life span.

Domain 1: Critical Thinking

1-1: Use critical thinking and problem-solving, including their use in the comprehensive care of patients, scientific inquiry, and research methodology. (2-10)

1-2: Evaluate and integrate best research outcomes with clinical expertise and patient values for evidence-based practice. (2-22)

1-3: Apply biomedical science knowledge in the delivery of patient care. (2-15)

1-4: Demonstrate the ability to self-assess, including developing professional competencies and demonstrating professional values and capacities associated with self-directed, lifelong learning. (2-11)

Domain 2: Professionalism

2-1: Apply ethical and legal standards in the provision of dental care. (2-18, 2-21)

2-2: Practice within one's scope of competence and consult with or refer to professional colleagues when indicated. (2-18, 2-24.c)

Domain 3: Communication and Interpersonal Skills

3-1: Apply appropriate interpersonal and communication skills. (2-16, 2-17)

3-2: Apply the fundamental principles of behavioral and psychosocial sciences using patient-centered approaches for promoting, improving, and maintaining oral health. (2-16)

3-3: Manage a diverse patient population and have the interpersonal and communication skills to function successfully in a multicultural work environment. (2-17)

Domain 4: Health Promotion

4-1: Provide oral health care within the scope of general dentistry to include prevention, intervention, and educational strategies. (2-24)

4-2: Participate with dental team members and other healthcare professionals in the management and health promotion of all patients. (2-20)

Domain 5: Practice Management and Informatics

5-1: Evaluate and apply contemporary and emerging information, including clinical and practice management technology resources (2-19)

5-2: Apply risk management principles, including informed consent and appropriate record-keeping in patient care. (2-18)

5-3: Demonstrate effective business, financial management, and human resource skills (2-19)

5-4: Comply with local, state, and federal regulations, including OSHA and HIPAA (2-18)

5-5: Develop a catastrophe preparedness plan for the dental practice. (2-19)

Domain 6: Patient Care

Assessment, Diagnosis, and Treatment

6-1: Manage the oral health care of the infant, child, adolescent, and adult, as well as the unique needs of women, geriatric and special needs patients. (2-23, 2-24, 2-25)

6-2: Prevent, identify, and manage trauma, oral diseases, and other disorders. (2-24.m)

6-3: Obtain and interpret patient/medical data, including a thorough intra/extra oral examination, and use these findings to accurately assess and manage all patients (2-24.a)

6-4: Select, obtain and interpret diagnostic images for the individual patient. (2-24.a)

6-5: Recognize the manifestations of systemic disease and how the condition and its management may affect the delivery of dental care. (2-24)

Establishment and Maintenance of Oral Health

6-7: Utilize universal infection control guidelines for all clinical procedures. (2-18)

6-8: Prevent, diagnose, and manage pain and anxiety in the dental patient. (2-24.e)

6-9: Prevent, diagnose, and manage temporomandibular disorders. (2-24.k)

6-10: Prevent, diagnose, and manage periodontal diseases. (2-24.i)

6-11: Develop and implement strategies for the clinical assessment and management of caries. (2-24.d)

6-12: Manage restorative procedures that preserve tooth structure, replace missing or defective tooth structure, maintain function, are esthetic, and promote soft and hard tissue health. (2-24.f, 2-24.h)

6-13: Diagnose and manage developmental or acquired occlusal abnormalities. (2-24.n)

6-14: Diagnose, identify, and manage pulpal and periradicular diseases. (2-24.j)

6-15: Diagnose and manage oral surgical treatment needs. (2-24.l)

6-16: Prevent, recognize and manage medical and dental emergencies. (2-24.m)

6-17: Diagnose, identify, and manage oral mucosal and osseous diseases. (2-24.k)

6-18: Evaluate outcomes of comprehensive dental care. (2-24.o)