

[LEGAL NOTICE NO. 129]

MEDICAL AND DENTAL PRACTITIONER DECREE 2010
(DECREE NO. 3 OF 2010)

Dental Practitioners Scope of Practice Guidelines 2011

IN exercise of the powers conferred upon me and on the recommendation of the Fiji Dental Council in accordance with section 121 of the Medical and Dental Practitioner Decree 2010(Decree No. 3), I hereby make these Guidelines—

Citation and commencement

1. These Guidelines may be cited as the Dental Practitioners Scope of Practice Guidelines 2011 and shall come into force on the date of its *gazettal*.

Application

2. These Guidelines shall apply to all dental assistants and dental practitioners in Fiji.

Interpretation

3. In these Guidelines, unless the context otherwise requires—

“Decree” means the Medical and Dental Practitioner Decree 2010;

“dental assistant” means a person who provides clinical and administrative support to registered dental practitioners;

“dental practitioner” has the same meaning as in the Decree;

“dentist” has the same meaning as in the Decree;

“dental hygienist” has the same meaning as in the Decree;

“dental therapist” has the same meaning as in the Decree;

“dental technician” means a registered dental practitioner who provides dental laboratory support to dentists;

“Permanent Secretary” means the Permanent Secretary for Health.

Scope of Practice Guidelines for Dental Assistants

4. A dental assistant is able to perform the following—

- (a) carry out the reception of patients;
- (b) register patients and assist in the maintenance of clinical records;
- (c) prepare the dental surgery and equipment for dental procedures;
- (d) clean, prepare and sterilise instruments and disinfect equipment;
- (e) prepare patients for any treatment required;
- (f) record a preliminary personal, medical and dental history;
- (g) take blood pressure and blood sugar readings if required;

- (h) record dental charting and maintain treatment records;
- (i) prepare patients for dental radiography;
- (j) process and mount dental radiographs;
- (k) prepare and mix restorative and impression materials required by clinical staff;
- (l) collection of fees from patients when required and maintenance of accurate records;
- (m) assist with maintenance of inventories of clinical stores;
- (n) collect data for inclusion in monthly reports when required;
- (o) do other clerical and administrative duties required by dental practitioners in charge of clinic;
- (p) apply first aid procedures to a level required for current certification by the St. John Ambulance Brigade and assist clinical staff in the management of medical and dental emergencies; and
- (q) apply correct occupational health and safety measures.

Scope of Practice Guidelines for Dental Hygienists

5. In addition to the duties of a dental assistant under guideline 4, a dental hygienist as a member of the Oral Health Team is able to perform or participate in the following—

- (a) community oral screening using appropriate indices to detect and record the presence of dental caries, periodontal disease and oral cancer;
- (b) identification of dental treatment needs;
- (c) the planning and implementation of individual and community oral health education programs;
- (d) implementation of school preventive programs and provide support and advice to teachers and senior primary school children as the persons responsible for the day to day running of oral hygiene drills;
- (e) engage maternal child health and public health nurses, nutritionists and mothers groups to encourage them to participate actively in the promotion of oral health;
- (f) provide basic preventive and periodontal care;
- (g) provide regular maintenance care for prevention of dental caries and periodontal disease;
- (h) detect conditions which require referral to dentists for consultation and/or treatment; and
- (i) application of fissure sealants on identified teeth.

Scope of Practice Guidelines for Dental Therapists

6. In addition to the duties of a dental hygienist under guideline 5, a dental therapist as a member of the Oral Health Team is able to perform or participate in the following—

- (a) administer static clinic when posted as officer in charge of remote clinics, such duties include correspondence, filing of records, stock control and ordering of stores;
- (b) supervise dental ancillary staff where required;
- (c) other health care duties related to community welfare as may be prescribed from time to time by the Permanent Secretary;

- (d) plan and co-ordinate school visits and community programs;
- (e) prepare quarterly, monthly and annual reports on the management and performance of the clinic where required;
- (f) record detailed personal, social, medical and dental history of patients;
- (g) perform a thorough extra and intra oral examination and record oral health status of patients appropriately;
- (h) identify common oral pathologies including the recognition of oral and dental abnormalities that should be referred to a dentist for treatment;
- (i) devise basic treatment plans for patients and refer to a dentist for further assessment and treatment planning as appropriate, ensuring that informed consent is obtained from the patient;
- (j) take, develop and interpret dental radiographs;
- (k) administer local anaesthesia utilising both the infiltration and mandibular block techniques;
- (l) carry out direct restorative procedures on permanent and primary teeth;
- (m) carry out pulpotomies on primary teeth with vital pulps;
- (n) protect exposed or near exposed pulp using the Direct or Indirect Pulp Capping Techniques;
- (o) extract primary and permanent teeth;
- (p) apply rubber dam during operative procedures;
- (q) extract residual roots not covered by soft tissues (visible) using appropriate dental instrument;
- (r) recover fractured roots that are easily visible, mobile and deemed simple;
- (s) control post treatment haemorrhage and refer as appropriate;
- (t) manage localized alveolar osteitis or “dry socket”; and
- (u) provide first aid in case of emergencies.

Scope of Practice Guidelines for Dental Technicians

7.—(1) A dental technician is able to perform the following—

- (a) fabricate complete dentures;
- (b) reline, rebase and repair complete dentures;
- (c) fabricate partial dentures;
- (d) reline, rebase and repair partial dentures;
- (e) fabricate removable orthodontic appliances;
- (f) fabricate mouth guards;
- (g) fabricate Occlusal splints;
- (h) fabricate onlays and inlays;
- (i) fabricate crowns and bridges;
- (j) construct obturators and splints used in maxillofacial surgery;
- (k) carry out shade taking with dentists;
- (l) work with the dentist on treatment planning and design of prosthesis;
- (m) prepare study casts and diagnostic wax-ups for dentist;
- (n) carry out infection control procedures;
- (o) keep full and accurate lab reports; and
- (p) organise and manage a dental laboratory where required.

- (2) Dental technicians shall not—
- (a) carry out clinical examinations;
 - (b) perform any form of clinical procedures;
 - (c) fit prosthetic or orthodontic appliances; or
 - (d) give advice to patients regarding any treatment.

Scope of Practice Guidelines for Dentists

8.—(1) In addition to the treatment and duties of dental therapists and dental technicians under guidelines 6 and 7, a dentist is able to perform and participate in the following treatments and duties—

- (a) diagnose oral diseases;
- (b) prepare a comprehensive treatment plan after obtaining informed consent from the patient;
- (c) provide endodontic, orthodontic and prosthetic treatment;
- (d) carry out oral surgery;
- (e) assess, diagnose and treat oral pathology or refer for appropriate management;
- (f) carry out treatment and management of periodontal disease;
- (g) carry out treatment of patients who are undergoing general anaesthesia or sedation;
- (h) prescribe drugs as part of dental treatment;
- (i) prescribe or make and interpret radiographs;
- (j) operate or manage static and mobile clinics;
- (k) demonstrate ability to work in co-operation with personnel in other health and allied programs;
- (l) plan and institute Community Oral Health Programs;
- (m) plan and organize surveys to monitor changes in the pattern of oral diseases; and
- (n) evaluate programs for the prevention of dental disease and the promotion of oral health.

- (2) Additional skills which a dentist could develop during his or her career include—
- (a) providing dental implants;
 - (b) providing fixed orthodontic treatments;
 - (c) giving inhalation and intravenous conscious sedation;
 - (d) planning and forecasting the workforce need and succession training plans for Oral health providers;
 - (e) developing Oral health policies and Strategic Plans;
 - (f) participating in programs promoting adopting ever-evolving contemporary practices in dentistry; and
 - (g) operating unsupervised in a private practice or clinic after;
 - (i) minimum of 3 years of satisfactory supervised clinical experience following internship; and
 - (ii) approval of the dental facility or clinic by the Fiji Dental Council in accordance with the Accreditation Checklist for Dental Practice 2011 in the Schedule.