



BOTSWANA HEALTH PROFESSIONS COUNCIL

Dentistry Scope of Practice

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INTRODUCTION

This document outlines the scope of practice that applies to all dentists in Botswana, either involved directly or indirectly with patients.

- The scope of practice describes what an individual is trained for and competent to do. It also describes those areas in which an individual has the knowledge, skills and experience to practice safely in the best interests of the patient.
- The lists will be reviewed regularly to make sure that they are relevant in the light of new developments in dentistry.
- The scope applies to all the dentists working in government institutions, non-governmental organizations, private institutions and private practices.

DEFINITIONS

- **Competency** - the demonstrated ability to safely perform a clinical task or to explain and discuss a clinical concept.
- **Foundation knowledge and skills**- this is the ability to acquire and use information accurately and safely to address problems and produce acceptable results
- **Attitudes and professional behavior**-
- **Continuing Professional Development**-

ETHICS

These are ethical principles the dental professionals are responsible for maintaining during their practice in Botswana.

1. **Beneficence**- the dental professionals should always desire to do good and perform actions that serve the best interests of the patients and acting to protect them
2. **Autonomy**- respecting patients dignity and their rights to make decisions
3. **Non-maleficence**- avoidance to do any harm or hurt.

4. Informed consent- patients should be fully informed and understand the potential benefits and risks of their choice of treatment
5. Justice- patients should be treated with fairness and equally
6. Protecting patients' confidentiality
7. Maintaining professional knowledge and competence
8. Cooperation with other members of the dental team and other healthcare colleagues in the interests of patients.
9. Being open and honest to patients and colleagues
10. Know when to refer to relevant authorities

SCOPE OF PRACTICE IN DENTISTRY

Description of the profession

Dentistry is the art and science that involves the assessment, diagnosis, prevention and management of any disease and disorder or condition of the oral cavity and maxillofacial area and associated structures within the scope of the practitioner's education, training and experience.

Basic Educational Requirements

Minimum requirements for a dental degree is a five year full-time degree or four year full-time degree with a pre-doctoral degree (basic science undergraduate degree i.e USA). This training should include but not limited to basic health sciences like human anatomy, physiology, pathology, histology, biochemistry and pharmacology. **Core courses** that should be covered in the degree are:

Restorative dentistry

Periodontics

Prosthodontics

Endodontics

Oral surgery

Oral Pathology

Oral Radiology

Oral Medicine

Pediatric dentistry

Orthodontics

Dental Public Health /Community dentistry

Material Science

Dental Pharmacology and therapeutics

Dentist's scope

1. Examine and diagnose diseases, injuries and conditions of the oral maxillofacial and
2. Related structures by assessing the overall health of the patient including taking and evaluating complex medical histories and preparing comprehensive treatment plan.
3. Provide instruction and advice on oral health care and preventive measures to maintain healthy oral tissues and prevent oral disease.
4. Prescribe or perform and interpret radiographs and relevant investigations to identify oral disease and conditions.
5. Restore and replace teeth damaged by decay, lost from trauma or disease.
6. Prescribe medication to prevent and manage oro facial diseases and conditions
7. Perform surgical and non-surgical procedures on oral tissues
8. Provide surgical and non-surgical endodontic treatment
9. Correct malpositioned teeth by fixed and removable appliances for simple cases
10. Administer local anaesthesia and sedation with additional training
11. Establish and maintain records

12. Provide fixed and removable prostheses
13. Perform extractions and other minor oral surgical procedures
14. Carry out treatment under general anaesthesia
15. Should be able to manage oro facial conditions affecting special groups e.g. medically compromised
16. Manage medical emergencies
17. Insert and restore dental implants with additional training

CORE COMPETENCIES IN DENTISTRY

Competencies are outcomes of clinical training and experience and encompass:

- Attitudes and professional behavior
- Foundation knowledge and Skills

Attitudes and professional behavior

1. Demonstrate ethical and professional behavior towards patients and other colleagues
2. Apply appropriate interpersonal and communication skills
3. Ability to obtain informed consent
4. Participate with dental team members and other health care professionals in the management and health promotion of patients
5. Knowledge of laws relevant to the practice of dentistry in Botswana in both private and public institutions

Foundation knowledge and Skills

1. Identify the patient's chief complaint and obtain associated history
2. Perform assessment of the orofacial tissues
3. Development of problem list and establish diagnosis
4. Development of treatment options based on relevant data
5. Evaluate medical status of patients and determine their ability to tolerate treatment

6. Determine level of expertise required for patient care and initiate referral where appropriate
7. Knowledge of the relationship between general health and oral health
8. Application of universal infection control guidelines in all clinical procedures to prevent transmission of infectious diseases
9. Management of dental emergencies
10. Establishment and maintenance of good oral health
11. To recognize the determinants of oral health in individuals and populations
12. Maintenance of accurate and complete patient records in a confidential manner
13. Recognize and manage functional and non-functional occlusion
14. Prevention and management of conditions and diseases of the periodontium
15. Diagnose and manage pulpal and periradicular diseases
16. Diagnose and manage oral mucosal diseases.
17. Diagnose and manage oral surgical cases.
18. Diagnose orofacial growth and development abnormalities and manage minor cases
19. Preservation and restoration of tooth structure by necessary restorative techniques to maintain function and esthetics
20. Recognise and manage patient abuse
21. Knowledge in Cardiopulmonary Resuscitation(CPR)
22. To provide oral health education and promotion
23. Prescribe drugs safely
24. Recognize and institute procedures to minimize occupational hazards related to the practice of dentistry

Core competencies abide by dynamic standards which must be responsive to any clear need for change.

CONTINUING PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT (CPD)

The CPD programs improve and expand the knowledge, expertise, competence and develop the professional requirements throughout the dental practitioner's professional life. The dental professionals in Botswana have to be up to date with new developments and should match international standards. To ensure personal and professional development, the CPD (Continuing Professional Development) points system is used for registration and renewal of dental professionals as per the requirements set by the Botswana Health Professions Council

Allocation of CPD points is generally based on a point per learning hour for accredited courses by Botswana Health Professions Council or other accrediting bodies recognized by Botswana Health Professions Council. At least 2 points of total accumulated points per annum should be ethical points. This ethical content is compulsory and necessary in today's health profession environment. The CPD points can be obtained from lectures, seminars, journal clubs, study clubs and distance learning.

REFERENCES

1. General Dental Council -www.gdc-uk.org
2. American Dental association- www.ada.org
3. Health Professions Council of South Africa
4. American Dental Education Association
5. Dental Council of New Zealand
6. Dental Board of Australia

