

PHILOSOPHY OF DENTAL HYGIENE CARE

1. Core Values

Patient-Centered Care: When reflecting on the essence of dental hygiene care, my foremost consideration is that every patient should have the chance to feel acknowledged, valued, and at ease. Effective care starts with attentive listening, building trust, and fostering an environment where patients can openly express their concerns. My aim is to recognize each patient as a complete individual, with unique needs, aspirations, and significant life experiences. To truly embody a patient-centered approach, I commit to dedicating sufficient time to thoroughly explain each procedure, calmly address any inquiries, and involve patients in the decision-making process related to their treatment. Even during my busiest times, I remind myself that every patient deserves my full attention, compassion, and respect. I believe that good communication and empathy help build trust, and when patients trust their healthcare providers, they're more likely to take care of their oral health.

Prevention and Education: I believe that as a hygienist, and as one of the first front professionals in oral disease prevention, I hold a significant responsibility in helping to prevent oral health issues before they start. I feel that my role extends beyond treatment, it includes empowering patients with the knowledge and confidence they need to protect their oral and overall health. I plan to teach my patients simple, achievable habits they can incorporate into their daily lives, such as proper brushing techniques, the importance of flossing, maintaining a balanced diet, and reducing their intake of sugary foods and drinks. I believe that small, consistent changes can create lasting improvements, and I want to be the hygienist who helps make those changes feel both doable and meaningful. I will implement this value by holding myself accountable to always take the time to educate, motivate, and encourage every patient I encounter, even during busy days. I will commit to using clear communication, personalized education strategies, and positive reinforcement to help patients feel empowered, not overwhelmed.

Evidence-Based Practice: I plan to incorporate evidence-based practice into my career by staying current with the latest research, attending continuing education courses, and maintaining my professional memberships. I understand that my profession is always evolving, and there are constantly new developments that can improve patient care. I believe it's important to remain open to growth and change, so I can provide care that is based on current science, not outdated routines. My goal is for patients to feel confident that the care they receive is informed, up to

date, and tailored to their needs. By committing to lifelong learning, I can continue to grow professionally and ensure I'm giving my best to every patient.

Continuity of Care: Continuity of care is something I strongly believe in because building trust over time is essential to delivering effective and meaningful care. I don't want to just see patients once and then lose touch I want to create lasting relationships that encourage regular checkups and open communication. The hygienist-patient relationship plays an important role in a patient's decision to return for recurring appointments, and I aim to be a consistent, supportive presence in their oral health journey. When patients know they have someone who remembers their concerns, celebrates their progress, and genuinely cares, they are more likely to stay engaged in their preventive care. I believe that through continuity, I can make a deeper impact on their overall well-being.

Compassion and Empathy: Compassion and empathy will be integral to my practice. I recognize the apprehension that many individuals experience when seeking dental care and understand that such environments can often induce feelings of anxiety and vulnerability. My aim is to alleviate that fear by fostering an atmosphere where patients feel secure, listened to, and free from judgment. Regardless of how hectic or difficult the day might become, I will prioritize making each patient feel comfortable, supported, and appreciated. My objective is to approach every patient with kindness and respect, ensuring they leave feeling confident and at ease during their appointment.

2.Role of Ethics in Practice

Ethical considerations are important in dental hygiene because they ensure we provide care that respects patients' rights and well-being. Ethics help guide our decisions, ensuring we act with honesty, fairness, and integrity. By following ethical principles, we build trust with our patients and ensure the best care, leading to positive outcomes and a strong professional reputation.

The ethical principles that resonate most with my philosophy include beneficence, confidentiality, and justice. Beneficence drives me to consistently act in the best interests of my patients, aiming to enhance their overall well-being. Confidentiality is vital for safeguarding patients' personal health information and establishing trust. Justice underpins my commitment to treating all patients equitably, ensuring they receive the same level of care regardless of their background, appearance, or financial circumstances.

I also place great importance on respecting diversity. Each patient has a unique background, and I strive to create an inclusive environment in my practice, welcoming individuals regardless of their origins, language, or personal circumstances. My understanding of this principle has been enriched through my interactions with a diverse array of patients during my studies and professional experiences. I intend to take the time to comprehend each patient's needs without making assumptions. If I encounter aspects of their culture or beliefs that I am unfamiliar with, I will ask respectfully and endeavor to learn.

When faced with ethical decisions in daily practice, I am committed to prioritizing the best interests of the patient. I believe in providing care that is honest, respectful, and aligned with professional standards. If a situation raises concern, I will not hesitate to seek guidance or speak up. I recognize that accountability and integrity are essential to maintaining trust and delivering high quality care.

3. Impact on the Field

My goal is to positively impact the field of dental hygiene by engaging in community outreach, advocating for both my patients and the profession, and collaborating with other healthcare professionals. I aim to be involved in programs that educate underserved communities about the importance of oral health and offer preventive care to those with limited access to dental services. By volunteering in various underserved settings, I can provide care to individuals who otherwise struggle to find it, using my experience and compassion to make a meaningful difference.

I hope to establish connections with other dentists as well as community leaders, the health care community, public health agencies, educators, and patient advocacy organizations. Collaborating with all kinds of experts can provide a much broader and more complete understanding of patient care and community health. By partnering with these organizations, I hope to contribute to meaningful progress in preventive care, expand access to services, and support education that leads to better oral and overall health outcomes.

In terms of advocacy, I plan to actively promote access to dental care, ensuring that my patients receive the services they need, regardless of their background or financial status. For the profession, I want to be an advocate for dental hygienists, pushing for recognition of our value in the healthcare system and advocating for better working conditions and opportunities for

advancement. I will also support policies that improve public health education and access to care for underserved populations.

4. Plans for the Future

In the next 5+ years, I plan to advance my career by pursuing specialization in areas like public health or education, with a focus on serving underserved populations. I am particularly passionate about volunteering in refugee camps, where my family and friends have experienced the difficulty of accessing dental care. This personal connection has fueled my desire to provide essential oral health services in these communities.

As I grow professionally, I hope to take on leadership roles, such as mentoring new dental hygienists and advocating for better access to dental care in underserved areas. My personal philosophy will continue to evolve as I encounter the unique challenges of working in resource-limited settings, where flexibility and resourcefulness will be crucial. I anticipate that global health trends, technological advancements, and my experience working with diverse populations will help shape my approach to providing compassionate and culturally competent care.