

CHAPTER 576
DENTAL HYGIENISTS

Chapter rescission date pursuant to Iowa Code section 17A.7: 4/9/30

481—576.1(153) Authorized practice of a dental hygienist.

576.1(1) “Practice of dental hygiene” is defined in Iowa Code section 153.15 and includes the performance of educational, therapeutic, preventive and assessment services. Dental hygienists may perform such services, except educational services, when delegated by and performed under the supervision of an Iowa-licensed dentist.

a. Educational services include assessing the need for, planning, implementing, and evaluating oral health education programs for individual patients and community groups and conducting workshops and in-service training sessions on dental health for nurses, school personnel, institutional staff, community groups and other agencies providing consultation and technical assistance for promotional, preventive and educational services.

b. Therapeutic services include identifying and evaluating factors that indicate the need for and performing the following:

(1) Oral prophylaxis, which includes supragingival and subgingival debridement of plaque, and detection and removal of calculus with instruments or other devices;

(2) Periodontal scaling and root planing;

(3) Removal and polishing of hardened excess restorative material, which may include adhesives, using nonmotorized instruments;

(4) Administration of local anesthesia with the proper permit;

(5) Administration of nitrous oxide inhalation analgesia in accordance with rule 481—579.1(153);

(6) Application and administration of medicaments prescribed by a dentist, including chemotherapeutic agents, or therapies for the treatment of periodontal disease and caries;

(7) Phlebotomy; and

(8) Expanded function procedures in accordance with 481—Chapter 577.

c. Preventive services include applying pit and fissure sealants and medications, including silver diamine fluoride; using other methods for caries and periodontal disease control; and organizing and administering fluoride rinse or sealant programs.

d. Assessment services include reviewing medical and dental health histories, performing oral inspection, indexing dental and periodontal disease, preliminary charting of existing dental restorations and teeth, making occlusal registrations for mounting study casts, testing pulp vitality, testing glucose levels, and analyzing dietary surveys.

576.1(2) The following services may only be delegated by a dentist to a dental hygienist:

a. Administration of local anesthesia;

b. Placement of sealants except as permitted by 481—Chapter 577; and

c. Removal of any plaque, stain, calculus, or hard natural or synthetic material, except when removed by toothbrush, floss, or rubber cup coronal polish.

576.1(3) Subsequent examination and monitoring of the patient, including definitive diagnosis and treatment planning, is the responsibility of the dentist and shall be carried out in a reasonable period of time in accordance with the professional judgment of the dentist based upon the individual needs of the patient.

This rule is intended to implement Iowa Code section 153.15.

[ARC 8990C, IAB 3/5/25, effective 4/9/25]

481—576.2(153) Scope of practice and supervision requirements.

576.2(1) In accordance with Iowa Code chapter 153, all authorized services provided by a dental hygienist, except educational services, shall be performed under the general, direct, or public health supervision of an Iowa-licensed dentist. Pursuant to 481—Chapter 577, clinical training in expanded functions requires those services to be performed under observational supervision.

576.2(2) Under the general supervision of a dentist, a dental hygienist may provide educational, therapeutic, preventive and assessment services, including screening, or data collection for the preparation of written records for evaluation by a licensed dentist. A dentist may only delegate patient services to be performed under general supervision for patients of record.

576.2(3) Under the public health supervision of a dentist, a dental hygienist may provide educational, therapeutic, preventive and assessment services, including screening, or data collection pursuant to rule 481—574.11(153).

576.2(4) Dental hygienists may only administer local anesthesia if they hold a current permit in accordance with rule 481—572.10(147,153), or nitrous oxide inhalation analgesia in accordance with rule 481—579.1(153), and perform expanded functions in accordance with 481—Chapter 577 under the direct supervision of a dentist.

576.2(5) Dental hygienists may perform all other authorized services on a new patient under the direct or public health supervision of a dentist pursuant to rule 481—574.11(153). An examination by the dentist must take place during an initial visit by a new patient, except when hygiene services are provided under public health supervision.

576.2(6) Dentists may authorize services to be performed under direct supervision in lieu of general supervision when the dentist determines such supervision is necessary to meet the individual needs of the patient.

This rule is intended to implement Iowa Code section 153.15.

[ARC 8990C, IAB 3/5/25, effective 4/9/25]

481—576.3(153) Unauthorized practice of a dental hygienist.

576.3(1) A dental hygienist who renders hygiene services, except educational services, that have not been delegated by a licensed dentist or that are not performed under the supervision of a licensed dentist as provided by rule is deemed to be practicing illegally.

576.3(2) The unauthorized practice of dental hygiene means allowing a person not licensed in dentistry or dental hygiene to perform dental hygiene services or for a dental hygienist to perform services that exceed the scope of practice authorized in Iowa Code section 153.15 and this chapter.

This rule is intended to implement Iowa Code sections 147.10 and 153.15.

[ARC 8990C, IAB 3/5/25, effective 4/9/25]

481—576.4(153) Students enrolled in dental hygiene programs. Students enrolled in an accredited dental hygiene program are not considered to be engaged in the unlawful practice of dental hygiene provided that such practice is in connection with their regular course of instruction and complies with the following:

576.4(1) The practice of clinical skills on peers enrolled in the same program may be performed under the direct supervision of a program instructor with an active Iowa dental hygiene license, faculty permit, or dental license.

576.4(2) The practice of clinical skills on members of the public may only be performed under the general supervision of a dentist with an active Iowa dental license or faculty permit.

576.4(3) The practice of clinical skills involving the administration or monitoring of nitrous oxide or the administration of local anesthesia may only be performed under the direct supervision of a dentist with an active Iowa dental license or faculty permit.

This rule is intended to implement Iowa Code sections 153.14 and 153.15.

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