

**Springfield Technical Community College**  
**School of Health and Patient Simulation**

**Technical Standards: Essential Skills for the Dental Assistant Program**

The STCC Dental Assistant Student must be able to meet the following safety and technical standards:

**Communication**

- Communicate in written format as well as orally with faculty, patients and fellow students.
- Establish a rapport with the faculty, patients and fellow students.
- Accurately transfer gathered data and record with correct grammar, punctuation, spelling and vocabulary.
- Observe and decipher non-verbal communication.

*Examples: obtain medical history information, document pertinent observations, orally disseminate post-treatment directions, correspond and cooperate with faculty, patients, fellow students and staff from a variety of cultural backgrounds*

**Physical Strength, Endurance and Mobility**

- Possess strength and mobility to work in a confined space for long periods of time when assisting with patient care.
- Stand and sit for long periods of time.
- Walk for a long distance.
- Change positions quickly in the operatory to perform patient care.
- Grasp items and equipment above shoulder height and below waist level to utilize equipment.
- Push/Pull/Lift up to 50lbs., including large boxes and equipment.

**Motor Skills**

- Operate and utilize equipment and instruments.
- Utilize hand, eye and foot coordination of dental hand pieces.
- Position and move patients in a safe manner.
- Perform CPR as needed and maintain certification status.
- Engage in simulation oral health skills in a clinic setting assuming the position of the dental assistant, patient and the operator.

*Examples: controlled intraoral hand movements, transfer of patients, response to a medical emergency*

**Visual:**

- Read written instructions
- Read and understand a medical history and patient charts.
- Evaluate a safe treatment and work environment.
- Distinguish between different equipment and its usage.
- Observe a patient's facial expressions and other nonverbal cues

*Examples: identify the working ends of various dental instruments, function of dental equipment, and materials, determine variations in tissue appearance (pallor & cyanosis), and interpret patient charts, records, and documents*

**Auditory:**

- Ability to monitor vital sign
- Correspond and cooperate with faculty, patients, fellow students and staff from a variety of cultural backgrounds.
- Follow verbal instructions.
- Recognize sounds, alarms and emergency signals.

**Olfaction:**

- Possess the ability to withstand unpleasant scents related to patient's oral hygiene and personal care.
- Possess the ability to know when one's own body odor and personal hygiene needs addressing

**Dermatological Health**

- Not prone to psoriasis, dermatitis or other chronic skin disorders with open lesions on the hands.
- Non-allergic responses to dental materials and agents.

**Intellectual, Conceptual and Cognitive Skills:**

- Collect, analyze and recall information and knowledge to participate in a clinic setting.
- Interpret, problem solve and demonstrate critical thinking.
- Comprehend and process information to aid in treatment plan creation.
- Possess the ability to self-evaluate.
- Recognize the potential for exposure to bloodborne pathogens (HIV, HBV, HCV), ionizing radiation and other potentially infectious (OPM) and hazardous material.

**Time Management Skills:**

- Ability to meet a variety of deadlines with time critical tasks.

*Examples: Tardiness to course lecture/lab/affiliations will not be tolerated. If you are unable to attend a laboratory session for any reason, it is your responsibility to notify the course professor or clinic faculty prior to the beginning of the scheduled class session.*

**Emotional/Personal Temperament:**

- Ability to withstand physically and mentally demanding workloads and function effectively under stress and respond calmly.
- Maintain composure under demanding course load and patient care.
- Accept constructive criticism and appropriately modify behavior.

*Examples: ability to think rationally during a medical emergency, express empathy towards patients, maintain HIPAA standards*