

DOCTORAL DENTAL COMPETENCIES

The USC School of Dentistry curriculum is described in terms of Competencies, a concept originally presented by Chambers and Gerrow.¹ The *25 USCSD Doctoral Dental Competencies* focus on outcomes leading to the creation of a graduate with desired skills and guide faculty in choosing and providing educational experiences which will lead to the development of graduates with those skills.

These 25 competencies are applicable to the pediatric, adolescent, adult, geriatric and medically compromised patient. These competencies define the expectations for all USC School of Dentistry graduates and achievement of competence in each of these areas is judged to prepare the graduate to become an entry level general practitioner. Each of the competencies has been defined with respect to core content required, breadth of clinical experience, specific sets of performance evaluations and development of clinical decision making skills. Assessments may be applicable to several different competencies and the completion of all assessments defining both individual and the entire set of competencies is necessary prior to graduation. The completion of only portions of the competency is not acceptable for consideration for graduation. The requirements to complete each of these 25 Competencies are listed in this Clinical Education Document.

In order to facilitate reading this list of statements, certain terms are predefined so they could be used in the document without repetitive definition. In situations where it is expected that the USCSD graduate will be able to, and likely to, actually perform the necessary procedures, the terms “perform”, “provide”, “restore”, or “treat” is used. In circumstances where the graduate may perform some treatment but is more likely to oversee treatment or refer, the term “manage” is used. The term “appropriate” is not used in these statements to eliminate repetitive verbiage. It is assumed that all knowledge, skills and procedures described will be performed for appropriate reasons, in appropriate circumstances, and in an appropriate manner.

GENERAL PROFESSIONAL COMPETENCY

1. Provide empathic care for all patients without discrimination.
2. Improve the oral health of individuals from diverse, disadvantaged, and “at risk” populations through diagnosis, treatment and education in a variety of practice settings.
3. Apply ethical, legal and regulatory concepts and principles to the provision and/or support of oral health care services.
4. Regularly assess one’s knowledge and skills, and seek additional information to correct deficiencies and enhance performance.

¹ Chambers DW, Gerrow JD, Manual for developing and formatting competency statements, J Dent Educ 1994; 58:361-6

PRACTICE MANAGEMENT

5. Understand the differences between various models of oral health care delivery.
6. Understand the principles, regulations and procedures necessary to manage and lead a contemporary dental practice.
7. Implement and monitor infection control and environmental safety programs according to current standards.

PATIENT CARE - Comprehensive Assessment, Diagnosis, and Treatment Planning

8. Perform a comprehensive diagnostic evaluation based upon the application of scientific principles, and current literature, with consultations as appropriate.
9. Assess patient goals, values and concerns to establish rapport, guide patient care, maintain oral health and monitor therapeutic outcomes.
10. Combine clinical and supporting data, with individual patient's goals and values, and integrate multiple disciplines into individual, comprehensive, sequenced treatment plans with appropriate diagnoses, prognoses, and treatment alternatives.
11. Recognize the normal range of clinical findings and significant deviations that reflect oral pathology and that require monitoring, treatment or management.
12. Recognize oral manifestations of systemic disorders, as well as systemic complications of oral disease, and seeking consultations as needed.

PATIENT CARE - Comprehensive Treatment

13. Provide patient education and preventive procedures to maximize oral health.
14. Recognize periodontal disease, treating uncomplicated conditions, and referring complicated periodontal procedures.
15. Restore single defective teeth to optimal form, function and esthetics using direct and indirect restorations.
16. Restore edentulous spaces to optimal form, function and esthetics using fixed partial dentures, removable partial dentures, complete dentures or implant supported restorations.
17. Recognize pulpal and periradicular disease, treating uncomplicated conditions and referring complicated endodontic procedures.

18. Recognize indications for oral surgical procedures, treating uncomplicated conditions and referring complicated surgical procedures.
19. Recognize patients with chronic orofacial pain and dysfunction (including temporomandibular joint disorders), treat uncomplicated conditions and refer complicated cases.
20. Recognize needs for orthodontic treatment, performing uncomplicated procedures and referring complicated procedures.

PATIENT CARE - Medical and Dental Emergencies, Pain and/or Anxiety Control

21. Anticipate, detect and provide initial treatment and follow-up management for complications and medical emergencies that may occur during or as a result of dental treatment.
22. Recognize and manage pain, hemorrhage, trauma and infection of the orofacial complex.
23. Select and administer or prescribe pharmacological agents in the treatment of dental patients.
24. Manage patients with pain and/or anxiety using non-pharmacological methods.

PATIENT CARE - Communication

25. Communicate effectively, both orally and in writing, with colleagues, practitioners, staff, patients, and the public.