

# Increasing Access to Oral Health Care in Arizona

## 1. AFFILIATED PRACTICE RELATIONSHIP

- Definition: The delivery of dental hygiene services, pursuant to an agreement, by a dental hygienist who is licensed and who refers the patient to a licensed dentist for any necessary further diagnosis, treatment, and restorative care
- Between a licensed Arizona dental hygienist and licensed Arizona dentist
- Written contract submitted to the Board of Dental Examiners within 30 days after the effective date of the agreement
- Identifies settings, services, procedures, and standing orders to be followed by the dentist and dental hygienist

### Scope

Subject to the terms of the written affiliated practice agreement, the hygienist may perform the following procedures.

• Prophylaxis	• Periodontal screening or assessment
• Closed subgingival curettage	• Inspect oral cavity and surrounding structures
• Place dental sealants	• Record clinical findings
• Apply topical fluoride	• Compile case histories
• Screening and assessment	• Expose and process dental radiographs
• Scaling and root planning and administration of local anesthetic to a patient of record if patient is at least 18 years of age, has been examined by a dentist within previous 12 months, has had no change in medical history or a consultation, and there is documentation of approval by dentist	• Restorative functions permissible for an expanded function dental assistant after completing required training and examination

### Settings & Contracts

A contract for dental hygiene services MAY be entered into ONLY by a:

- Health care organization or facility
- Long-term care facility
- Public health agency or institution
- Public or private school authority
- Government-sponsored program
- Private nonprofit or charitable organization
- Social service organization or program

An affiliated practice dental hygienist may not provide dental hygiene services in a setting not listed above.

### Referrals, Follow up Care & Consultation

- Direct patients to the affiliated practice dentist for diagnosis, treatment or planning that is outside the dental hygienist's scope of practice
- Affiliated dentist can make necessary referrals to other dentists
- Consult with affiliated practice dentist if the proposed treatment is outside the scope of the agreement
- Consult with the affiliated practice dentist before initiating further treatment on patients who have not been seen by a dentist within 12 months of the initial treatment by the dental hygienist
- Consult with the affiliated practice dentist before initiating treatment on patients presenting with a complex medical history or medication regimen

### Dental Hygienists

- Currently hold an active Arizona license
- Actively engaged in dental hygiene practice for at least 500 hours in each of the 2 years immediately preceding the Affiliated Practice Relationship
- Have held an active dental hygiene license for
  - at least 5 yearsOR

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- at least 3 years and hold a bachelor degree in dental hygiene
- Maintain an appropriate level of contact, communication and consultation with the affiliated dentist
- Complete 12 hours of continuing education in the following areas to be included in the already required 54 hours:
  - a.) 4 hours in medical emergencies and
  - b.) 8 hours in two of the following: pediatric, special health care needs, preventive dentistry, or public health community-based dentistry
- Advise the patient that care is provided by a licensed dental hygienist and does not take the place of a diagnosis or treatment plan by a dentist
- Perform only those duties within the terms of the agreement
- The dental hygienist is responsible and liable for all services rendered by the dental hygienist under the affiliated practice relationship.

### Dentists

- Hold an active Arizona license
- Must be available to provide an appropriate level of contact, communication and consultation with the affiliated practice dental hygienist during the business hours of the affiliated practice dental hygienist
- Adopt standing orders applicable to the dental hygiene procedures and populations that may be treated
- Provide timely referral of patients referred by the affiliated dental hygienist to a licensed dentist for examination and treatment planning with a dentist who is geographically available to the patient
- Cannot permit dental hygiene services to be provided by more than 3 affiliated practice dental hygienists at any one time

### 2. TELEDENTISTRY

- Definition: Use of data transmitted through interactive audio, video, or data communications that occur for the purposes of diagnosis, treatment planning, consultation, and directing the delivery of treatment by dentists and dental providers in permissible settings as stated in the section on settings for affiliated practice dental hygienists.
- Verbal or written informed consent from the patient or health care decision maker
- Consent does not apply if the teledentistry interaction does not take place in the physical presence of the patient or the teledentistry interaction is the transmission of diagnostic images to another health care provider
- AHCCCS (Medicaid) recognizes dental services provided through teledentistry for enrolled members who are under 21 years of age, however, at this time AHCCCS declines payment for exams completed by the dentist via teledentistry

### 3. EXPANDED FUNCTIONS DENTAL ASSISTANTS

- Requires completion of a board-approved expanded function dental assistant training program completed at an institution accredited by the Commission on Dental Accreditation of the American Dental Association and successful completion of an examination that is approved by the board

#### Scope

- Placement, contouring, and finishing of direct restorations
  - Placement and cementation of prefabricated crowns following the preparation of the tooth by a licensed dentist
  - Placement of interim therapeutic restorations under general supervision following a consultation conducted through teledentistry
  - Apply sealants and fluoride varnish under general supervision
- A licensed dental hygienist may engage in expanded functions following a course of study and examination that is equivalent to that required for an expanded function dental assistant. When expanded functions are integrated into affiliated practice, the dental hygienist can provide these services unsupervised.

For more information go to: <https://dentalboard.az.gov/>

*The law takes effect 90 days after the legislature adjourns. The Arizona legislature adjourned on April 3, 2015 so the law took effect on **July 3, 2015**.*