



Health & Human Services Division
Lansing Community College
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Technical Skills Essential for the Field: Dental Hygiene

Motor, Cognitive, & Psychological Requirements

In keeping with its mission and goals and compliance with Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973 and the Americans with Disabilities Act, Lansing Community College promotes an environment of respect and support for persons with disabilities and will make reasonable accommodations. The definition of individuals with disabilities are those who currently have, have a record of having, or are regarded as having a physical or mental impairment that substantially limits one or more major life activity. Major life activities include caring for oneself, performing manual tasks, walking, seeing, hearing, breathing, and working.

In order to fulfill the requirements of the Dental Hygiene Program at Lansing Community College, students must be able to meet the physical demands associated with the profession. Listed below are technical skills (motor, cognitive, and psychological) required for a student enrolled in the Dental Hygiene Program. The skills listed below are based on standards from LCC's Dental Hygiene Program Competencies, Commission on Dental Accreditation, OSHA, OSAP, American Dental Hygiene Association, and the State of Michigan's Scope of Practice for Registered Dental Hygienist. These technical skills are established to ensure both patient and operator safety.

1. Essential motor skills required to meet the class and clinical practice outcomes are:

STRENGTH: Perform physical activities requiring the ability to push/pull objects/persons more than 25 pounds (Example: the strength to be able to transfer a patient from a wheelchair to a dental chair; use upper body strength to assist the patient in an emergency situation (perform CPR). Possess hand-arm strength to control manual and power dental instruments and tools.

MANUAL DEXTERITY: Perform complex motor skills such as writing, typing; manipulative skills with fine instruments and devices, and calibration of dental equipment. Students must have full use of hands, wrists, shoulders, feet, and the ability to extend hands and arms in any direction reaching above the head. No other structural defect or limitation, which may interfere with the ability to control and safely operate medical/dental

instruments and equipment. Examples: fine motor coordination, such as giving injections. Be able to grasp, pinch, or twist with fingers.

COORDINATION: Perform body coordination such as walking, filing, retrieving equipment, eye-hand coordination, arm-hand steadiness, have the ability to use both hands and one foot simultaneously, ability to extend the hands and arms in any direction, reaching above the head (i.e., use of hand instruments, taking blood pressures, calibration of instruments and equipment).

MOBILITY: Perform mobility skills such as walking, standing, prolonged standing or sitting in occasionally uncomfortable positions or very small spaces (i.e., 2 feet by 4 feet spaces), be able to sit in ergonomically correct dental hygiene position unassisted.

VISUAL ABILITY: See objects far away, very close, discriminate fine detail and colors, and to see objects closely as in reading faces, dials, monitors, etc. Examples: Need to be able to read millimeter measurement marking on dental instruments. Need to be able to distinguish between color variations (white, red, purple, blue) in tissues to distinguish between normal and abnormal. Differentiate between shades of gray on radiographs to determine the quality and identify anatomy. Visualize edge and adaptation of instruments at distances between 12-16 inches.

HEARING: Have sufficient hearing to respond to patient needs as well as interact with the patient in a variety of situations in the presence of extraneous sounds from clinical equipment such as sonic, ultrasonic and radiography equipment (i.e.: faint sound such a systole and diastole through stethoscope, percussion of teeth, temporomandibular joint - clicking/popping, alarm on nitrous machine, ultrasonic pitches, cutting edge of dental instruments).

TACTILE ABILITY: Demonstrate tactile abilities sufficient to make physical assessments of soft and hard tissues. To perceive attributes of patients and objects such as when performing intraoral and extraoral examinations; to use assessment instruments such as explorers and probes; to detect hard deposits on teeth as well as evaluate deposit removal; to evaluate tooth anatomy.

2. Essential cognitive skills required to meet the class and clinical practice outcomes:

ATTENTION SPAN: Concentrate on patient safety with a moderate amount of interruptions (i.e., patient and co-worker requests, alarms, equipment noise). Attend to task/functions that require up to 60 minutes in length and handle a variety of tasks for periods up to 8 hours. No mental, nervous, organic or functional disease, or psychiatric disorder likely to interfere with the ability to coordinate treatment planning; work with other health care professionals and patients; coordinate treatment procedures; and safely operate medical/dental devices and instruments.

CONCEPTUALIZATION AND CRITICAL THINKING: Comprehend and integrate knowledge from didactic courses and professional literature into the assessment, planning, implementation, and evaluation of dental hygiene treatment. Critical thinking ability sufficient for clinical judgment to identify cause-effect relationships in clinical situations and develop and implement treatment/care plans. Prioritize, organize, and utilize time-management skills to deliver patient care in a timely and accurate manner. Adhere to: HIPAA and OSHA guidelines, ADHA professional standards, LCC and Dental Hygiene Program professional conduct guidelines as well as clinical policies and procedures.

MEMORY: Remember task/assignments given to self and others over both short and long periods (i.e., information gathered in assessing patients and didactic courses).

3. Essential psychological skills required to meet the class and clinical practice outcomes:

INTERPERSONAL: Demonstrate interpersonal abilities to interact compassionately and effectively with patients from a variety of social, emotional, cultural, and intellectual backgrounds. Establish professional and respectful rapport with patients, classmates, staff, faculty, and dentist. Work effectively as a team member.

COMMUNICATION: Speak and write clearly and concisely with patients, classmates, staff, faculty, dentist, and other health care providers in English when applicable using standard medical and dental terminology. Communicate sufficiently for interaction with others in written form. Writing skills include being able to prepare legibly written documentation. Explain treatment procedures, initiate health teaching, interpret health care actions, and patient responses. Be able to read and interpret directions from one's supervisors.

SUBSTANCE ABUSE: No current clinical diagnosis of alcoholism. Must not use Schedule 1 drugs or other substances such as amphetamines, narcotics, or any other habit-forming drug except those substances or drugs prescribed by a licensed medical practitioner; who is familiar with the individual's medical history and assigned duties and who has advised the individual that the prescribed substance or drug will not adversely affect the individual's ability to safely practice.

STRESS: A student's behavior and social skills must be acceptable with the college and clinical settings. A student must be able to: monitor his/her emotions; manage strong emotions (such as grief or anger) in a professional manner; perform multiple responsibilities concurrently; adapt to a changing environment/stress and deal with the unexpected (such as a crisis situation); work with patients who may be very young/old, critically ill/injured, or mentally/physically deficient/impaired.

Warnings and Notifications of Hazards and Risks

All occupations have inherent risks that prospective students should be aware of. The purpose of this Warning of Hazards and Risks is to bring students' attention to the existence of potential dangers in the Dental Hygiene Program and to aid them in making an informed

decision concerning participation in the Program. Upon entering the Dental Hygiene Program, the student will be required to sign an Informed Acknowledgment and Consent to Hazards and Risks form after receiving and review the LCC Dental Hygiene Program's Student Program Manual and Risk Management Manual.

DISCLAIMER The above statement of criteria is not intended as a complete listing of behaviors required for the Dental Hygiene Program, but is a sampling of the types of abilities required by the student to meet program objectives and requirements. The Dental Hygiene Program or its affiliated agencies may identify additional critical behaviors or abilities needed by students to meet program or agency requirements. The Dental Hygiene Program reserves the right to amend this listing based on the identifications of additional standards or criteria for Dental Hygiene students.

Non-Discrimination Statement

Lansing Community College is committed to providing equal employment opportunities and equal education for all persons regardless of race, color, sex, age, religion, national origin, creed, ancestry, height, weight, sexual orientation, gender identity, gender expression, disability, familial status, marital status, military status, veteran's status, or other status as protected by law, or genetic information that is unrelated to the person's ability to perform the duties of a particular job or position or that is unrelated to the person's ability to participate in educational programs, courses, services or activities offered by the college.

The following individuals have been designated to handle inquiries regarding the nondiscrimination policies: Equal Opportunity Officer, Washington Court Place, 309 N. Washington Square Lansing, MI 48933, 517-483-1730; Employee Coordinator 504/ADA, Administration Building, 610 N. Capitol Ave. Lansing, MI 48933, 517-483-1875; Student Coordinator 504/ADA, Gannon Building, 411 N. Grand Ave. Lansing, MI 48933, 517-483-1885; Sarah Velez, Human Resource Manager/Title IX Coordinator, Administration Building, 610 N. Capitol Ave. Lansing, MI 48933, 517-483-1874; Christine Thompson, Student Title IX Coordinator, Gannon Building, 411 N. Grand Ave. Lansing, MI 48933, 517-483-1261.