

OH1.2025 Prepare and maintain safe working practices in clinical dental environments

OVERVIEW

This standard is about maintaining safe working practices in clinical dental environments, which involves preparing equipment, instruments and materials for clinical dental procedures. This includes Standard Infection Control Precautions and stock control. Dental procedures may be carried out in general dental practices, public dental services, hospital settings, domiciliary or other non-standard environments. Users of this standard will need to ensure their practice reflects up to date information and policies.

KNOWLEDGE AND UNDERSTANDING

1. Current legislation, guidelines and relevant workplace procedures within scope of your competence, responsibilities and accountability
2. Workplace procedures for identifying and reporting issues and how to apply these including:
 - hazards and risks
 - unsafe working conditions and practice
 - equipment failure
 - spillages
3. Potential routes of transmission of infectious agents in clinical environments
4. The significance of pathogenic and non-pathogenic micro-organisms and infective proteins in clinical environments
5. How infective conditions are managed within clinical environments
6. Effective hand hygiene methods and how to apply these
7. How to use PPE correctly to protect individuals
8. Types and properties of products used to decontaminate surfaces, including when and why they are used
9. The importance of maintaining and disinfecting of suction units
10. Reasons and frequency for regular maintenance and disinfection of water lines and water storage equipment
11. Methods for cleaning different types of equipment and materials and how to apply these
12. Methods of safe handling and transportation of re-usable items, before and after decontamination, how to apply these and why this is important

13. Differences between disinfection, sterilisation, and sterile procedures
14. Methods of sterilisation and types of sterilisers used, including their relationship to different equipment and instruments
15. Correct sequence and duration of decontamination equipment
16. Methods of testing to show decontamination equipment is functioning effectively and how to apply these
17. Different forms of packaging and methods of storage for instruments and handpieces appropriate to the clinical setting
18. The importance of maintaining appropriate ventilation and humidity within clinical environments in reducing risk of transmission of infection
19. Different methods of waste disposal and how to apply these
20. The importance of updating and storing relevant documentation

PERFORMANCE CRITERIA

1. Interpret and apply work instructions in accordance with all relevant legislation, guidelines, and workplace procedures
2. Identify and minimise workplace hazards and risks in accordance with workplace procedures
3. Identify and report hazards and problems in accordance with workplace procedures
4. Check equipment is functioning correctly taking appropriate actions in accordance with manufacturers' instructions and workplace procedures
5. Perform effective hand hygiene requirements in accordance with workplace procedures
6. Identify and apply appropriate personal protective equipment in accordance with workplace procedures
7. Decontaminate surfaces in accordance with workplace procedures
8. Clean, maintain and disinfect aspirating equipment in accordance with manufacturers' instructions
9. Clean, maintain and disinfect water lines and water storage equipment in accordance with workplace procedures
10. Clean and store equipment and materials safely and securely on completion of dental procedures
11. Prepare and handle re-usable instruments and handpieces for decontamination in accordance with workplace and manufacturers' instructions
12. Conduct decontamination procedures in accordance with all relevant legislation, guidelines, and workplace procedures
13. Package and store sterilised items using appropriate form of packaging medium in accordance with all relevant legislation, guidelines, and workplace procedures
14. Dispose of waste in accordance with all relevant legislation, guidelines, and workplace procedures
15. Check and confirm adequate supplies are available for clinical procedures in accordance with workplace procedures
16. Complete and store all documentation in accordance with relevant legislation,

guidelines,
and workplace procedures

ADDITIONAL INFORMATION

This National Occupational Standard was developed by Skills for Health. Final version approved February 2025.