

Dental Auxiliaries/ Ancillaries



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INTRODUCTION

Definitions:

- Dentist:

A dentist is a person licensed to practice dentistry under the law of the appropriate state, province, territory or nation.

- Dental auxiliary:

A dental ancillary is a person who is given responsibility by a dentist so that he or she can help the dentist render dental care, but who is not himself or herself qualified with a dental degree.

Classification:

At a conference held conducted by WHO in New Delhi in 1967, the following classification was suggested:

- Non-operating auxiliaries
 - Clinical
 - Laboratory
- Operating auxiliaries

Non-operating auxiliaries:

- Clinical auxiliary:

This is a person who assists the professional in his clinical work but does not carry out any independent procedures in the oral cavity.

- Laboratory auxiliary :

This is a person who assists the professional by carrying out certain technical laboratory procedures.

Operating auxiliary:

- This is a person who, not being a professional is permitted to carry out certain treatment procedures in the mouth under the direction and supervision of a professional.

Revised classification:

- ◇ Non operating ancillaries:
 - Dental surgery assistant
 - Dental secretary/ receptionist
 - Dental laboratory technician
 - Dental health educator

- ◇ Operating ancillaries
 - School dental nurse
 - Dental therapist
 - Dental hygienist
 - Expanded function dental ancillaries

Dental surgery assistant:

- This is a person who assists the dentist with his clinical work but does not independently carry out any procedures in mouth.
- Functions:
 - To ensure general smooth running of the clinical area.
 - Traditionally, she/he has been given responsibility of the management of instruments, equipments and materials, including cleansing, sterilizing and recycling of these as necessary between patients.
 - She/he supplies instruments to the dentist at chairside as needed.

- She/he also has a duty to look after the general well-being of the patient.
- Some dental surgery assistants are also given patient reception and appointment-making duties and clerical work.
- Klein(1944) showed that addition of dental surgery assistant to a dental practice was associated with 33% increase in number of patients treated.

Four handed dentistry:



- The dentist and the dental surgery assistant sit closely beside the supine patient, the assistant anticipating the instruments and materials that are required, and passing them to the dentist in such a way that he may not have even to take his eyes momentarily away from the field of operation when changing to another instrument.
- The dental surgery assistant must work in a close and co-ordinated matter with the dentist and it will be clear that the operating area must be well organized and contain equipment of suitable design.

Dental laboratory technician:

- The dental laboratory technician is a person, usually male, works in a laboratory constructing dental appliances to the prescription of the dentist.
- He undertakes many mechanical tasks like casting of models from impressions made by the dentist, include the fabrication of dentures, splints, orthodontic appliances, inlays, crowns and sundry items such as special trays for the topical application of fluoride agents on teeth.

- In Tasmania, laboratory technicians are legally permitted to work directly with the public to provide a prosthetic service.
- Dental lab technicians may be employed by dentists in private or public health practice, they may be self-employed and accept work from dentists in the area.

Denturist:

- During the late 1970's and early 1980's, some dental laboratory technicians tried to change state dental practice acts to allow them to treat public directly for fabrication of dentures.
- These technicians call themselves denturists and their occupation is denturism.
- By mid 1990's, denturists were legally recognized in most Canadian provinces and few states in US.

Denturist:

- The ADA has opposed the denturist movement and the association argues that denturists are unqualified to treat patients.
- The ADA defines denturism as " the fitting and dispensing of dentures illegally to public".

Operating ancillaries:

- School dental nurse(New Zealand type):
 - This type of ancillary was established in New Zealand in 1923 to deal with a large amount of dental disease present among the school children.
 - The government made provision for training young women as school dental nurses who would provide the bulk of the treatment in school dental services.

New Zealand school dental nurse:

- The New Zealand school dental nurse was established in 1923 and the training began in 1921. The duties are:
 - Examination of the children and the diagnosis and treatment of the most prevalent dental diseases, dental caries and periodontal diseases.
 - She prepares cavities and restores teeth with amalgam and silicate cement, extracts deciduous teeth, scales & polishes teeth, applies topical fluoride solutions , provides dental health education and refers more complex cases to dentists in the area.

- She is permitted to use local infiltration anaesthesia, but not block anaesthesia.
- A supervising dentist of the school dental service has overall responsibility for the dental care of the children, but he does not have to be on the premises where the ancillary works.
- Each school dental nurse is assigned to a school where she is employed by the government to provide regular dental care for 450-700 children.

The dental auxiliary(United kingdom):

- This type of ancillary began operating in UK in 1962. training began in 1960, following revision of the Dentist's act in 1957.
- They have been likened to NZ- type school dental nurses but their role is quite different as they are not permitted to diagnose and plan dental care.
- They are permitted to work to written treatment plans devised by the supervising dentists, though the operative procedures they are entitled to carry out are similar to those of NZ Dental nurses.

The dental hygienist:

- This type of ancillary was first employed in 1906 in a private dental practice in USA, and in 1913 the first formal training course for hygienists was established.
- Duties:
 - Scaling and polishing of teeth.
 - Topical application of fluoride.
 - Provision of dental health education.
- In some countries, dental hygienists are permitted to take radiographs, make impressions for study models and polish restorations.

- In Denmark and Netherlands, they are allowed to make a preliminary examination and charting of teeth, while in Manitoba they are permitted to take impressions, record jaw relationships and repair some broken dentures.

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- Provision of dental health education
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Expanded function dental auxiliaries:

- Also known as expanded function dental hygienist, expanded function dental assistant, expanded function auxiliary, expanded duty dental auxiliary.
- An EFDA is a dental assistant who has received further training in duties related to direct treatment of patients, though still working under the supervision of dentist.
- They undertake reversible procedures, which could be either corrected or redone without undue harm to patient's health.

- They do not prepare cavities or make decision as to pulp protection after caries has been excavated, but work under side of dentist. They do only the restorative procedures.
- Functions:
- Placing & removing rubber dams.
- Placing & removing temporary restorations.
- Placing & removing matrix bands.
- Placing of acrylic restorations in previously prepared teeth.
- Condensing & carving amalgam restorations in previously prepared teeth.
- Applying the final finish & polish to previously listed restorations.

Dental hygienist with expanded duties:

- Removing sutures
- Placing, finishing & polishing restorations of amalgam & resin.
- Placing & removing matrix bands.
- Placing temporary fillings, cavity liners.
- Retracting gingiva for impression taking.
- Fitting & removing orthodontic bands.
- Separating of teeth prior to bonding by a dentist.
- Cementing temporary crowns.

Frontier auxiliary:

- In developed countries, dentists remain in urban centers and the number of areas too distant from public or private dental offices for the inhabitants to receive regular comprehensive care or emergency pain relief is very large.
- Nurses & former dental assistants can in such areas, provide valuable service with minimum training.
- Simple dental prophylaxis, basic dental education, dental first aid can be rendered in cases with pain and patients can be referred to nearest dentist.

New auxiliary types:

- The expert committee on auxiliary dental personnel of the WHO has suggested two new types of dental auxiliaries:
 - The dental licentiate
 - The dental aide

The dental licentiate:

- Semi independent operator.
- Functions:
 - Dental prophylaxis
 - Cavity preparation & fillings of primary & permanent teeth
 - Extractions under L.A.
 - Drainage of dental abscesses
 - Early recognitions of more serious conditions.

The dental aide:

- The duties include, elementary first-aid procedures for the relief of pain including:
- Extraction of teeth under L.A.
- Control of hemorrhage
- Referral