

## **Beatty: Community Oral Health Practice for the Dental Hygienist, 4th Edition**

### **Chapter 02: Careers in Public Health for the Dental Hygienist**

#### **Additional Case Studies — Answers and Rationales**

##### **MULTIPLE CHOICE**

As a dental hygiene faculty member, you collaborate with a local hospital to develop a dental clinic for special needs patients. You form an interdisciplinary committee to plan the clinic and its programs, seek grant funding, and pursue policy changes to facilitate the program. Plans include the use of an interprofessional collaborative practice (ICP) approach to operating the dental clinic.

1. This future clinic is considered an alternative practice setting. The plans for this dental clinic provide greater opportunity for enhanced quality of oral health compared with a traditional dental clinic.

- a. Both statements are true.
- b. Both statements are false.
- c. The first statement is true, and the second statement is false.
- d. The first statement is false, and the second statement is true.

ANS: A

A public health setting in which oral health care is provided outside the private office in a “nontraditional” setting is categorized as an alternative practice setting. A community-based clinic or hospital where medical care is also delivered provides a setting in which ICP can be established. This provides the opportunity for increased quality of care because the networking and communication that can occur among the various health professionals enable the sharing of data, resources, health education materials, and general community information relevant to all health needs, including oral health. Effective interaction of dental hygienists with other health professionals can increase the awareness and importance of the relationship between oral health and general health.

DIF: Comprehension

REF: p. 20

OBJ: 3, 6

2. To increase workforce capacity and access to dental services, and to reduce program costs, the committee explores the idea of pursuing a mid-level practitioner workforce model and direct access for dental hygienists in the state as a pilot project. Because this would require legislative action, the committee meets with representatives from the state health department, members of the legislature, and state dental board members to discuss this possible initiative. What role of the dental hygienist are you filling as you pursue this legislative proposal?

- a. Educator
- b. Advocate
- c. Clinician
- d. Administrator/manager

ANS: B

As an advocate, the dental hygienist attempts to develop solutions to problems related to achieving optimal oral health. One form of advocacy is to become a change agent by lobbying for changes that will enhance access to oral health care. A dental hygienist in the role of educator can focus on (1) teaching community dental health/dental public health courses to dental hygiene students as a faculty member, (2) delivering oral health education to the public as an oral health educator, or (3) sharing product information with practicing oral health practitioners as a corporate educator. In the role of clinician, the public health dental hygienist provides clinical services to priority populations, including assessment of oral health conditions and delivery of periodontal and preventive care. As an administrator/manager, the dental hygienist is an initiator who develops, organizes, and manages oral health programs to meet the needs of priority groups.

DIF: Application

REF: p. 34

OBJ: 8

3. ICP in this setting has all EXCEPT one of the following benefits and opportunities. Which one is the EXCEPTION?

- a. Interprofessional education (IPE) opportunities for your dental hygiene program to prepare graduates for a public health career option
- b. Response to a call to action to embrace ICP by the American Dental Education Association (ADEA) and the American Dental Hygienists' Association (ADHA)
- c. A cost-effective approach to manage the oral health care needs of a vulnerable underserved population
- d. Ease of operation of the clinic with little need for accountability

ANS: D

Operation of a dental clinic within a hospital will require a collaborative approach and special skills that are not necessary to operate a stand-alone, independent dental office or clinic in the community. Accountability to the hospital, accrediting agencies, funding sources, and the community is characteristic and a benefit of a complex healthcare organization such as this. ICP is a comprehensive, cost-effective, public health approach that has the potential to improve healthcare outcomes of individuals and enables the integration of oral health into overall health at the level of healthcare delivery. Special needs individuals have been identified nationally as a vulnerable, underserved population group. Involvement of the dental hygiene program in an ICP model will provide opportunities for IPE to prepare graduates to practice using an ICP approach. Various oral health, public health, and medical professional groups have encouraged professional schools to embrace ICP and IPE. ADEA has promoted IPE to prepare graduates in all oral health professions for the future of ICP, and ADHA has called for IPE to prepare for the anticipated growth of public health career opportunities for dental hygienists in the future.

DIF: Comprehension

REF: pp. 28-30

OBJ: 6, 7

4. Which current workforce model would be able to provide both dental hygiene and dental services in this program?

- a. Dental hygiene therapist (DHT)
- b. Dental health aide therapist (DHAT)

- c. Advanced dental therapist (ADT)
- d. Community dental health coordinator (CDHC)

ANS: A

From the answer choices in this question, the DHT, authorized in Maine, is the only current workforce model with a scope of practice that includes preventive and periodontal services traditionally provided by dental hygienists as well as restorative services. The Alaska DHAT and Minnesota ADT are authorized to provide preventive and restorative services but no periodontal services that are currently in the dental hygiene scope of practice. The CDHC proposed by the American Dental Association and currently in eight states is authorized to provide preventive and limited palliative restorative services.

DIF: Comprehension

REF: pp. 26-27

OBJ: 5

5. This clinic will address the call of national initiatives to increase access to dental care for underserved populations. Programs such as this provide public health career options for dental hygienists in the role of clinician, educator, advocate, administrator/manager, and researcher.

- a. Both statements are true.
- b. Both statements are false.
- c. The first statement is true, and the second statement is false.
- d. The first statement is false, and the second statement is true.

ANS: A

The various issues and problems concerning access to dental care can be addressed via public health programs to improve access. A comprehensive, hospital-based dental clinic with an ICP approach is an example of a dental public health program that can improve access to dental care. In such a program, a dental hygienist can pursue a career as a clinician; clinic director or manager; advocate for the program, patients, or profession; oral health educator; or researcher, for example, in relation to clinical practice, management, and the oral-systemic link for these special needs patients.

DIF: Application

REF: pp. 28-36

OBJ: 1, 2