

Standards of Practice



EVIDENCE-INFORMED PRACTICE

STANDARD STATEMENT

The dental hygienist seeks, promotes, supports, and incorporates an **evidence-informed approach** in their practice.

PERFORMANCE EXPECTATIONS

The dental hygienist must...

1. Access and critically evaluate current, credible, and relevant evidence from the best available **reliable sources**.
2. Apply appropriate evidence when providing dental hygiene services, using critical thinking and professional judgment.
3. Support decisions with evidence-based rationale.
4. Seek and assess new research, knowledge, and emerging trends to determine applicability to practice.
5. **Recommend** or provide only those services that are appropriate and beneficial for the client and that are consistent with the client's **informed consent**.
6. Refrain from recommending services, products, or treatments that have been proven to be ineffective through rigorous, peer-reviewed evidence.
7. Evaluate their practice in terms of client outcomes, and modify approaches based on this self-reflective process.
8. Integrate evidence and best practices when developing or reviewing organizational policies.

CLIENT EXPECTATION

The **client** can expect that the dental hygiene services they receive are informed by the best available current evidence, client needs, and the personal knowledge, skills, and experience of the dental hygienist.

GLOSSARY

EVIDENCE-INFORMED APPROACH

A formalized process which involves identifying, searching for, and interpreting the result of the best available evidence to inform decision-making processes.

INFORMED CONSENT

Receiving the client's permission to proceed with a proposed service following a process of decision-making leading to an informed choice. Informed consent involves ongoing communication between the parties involved. In the case of a minor or others who do not have the capacity to provide informed consent, the agreement must come from a legal guardian or substitute decisionmaker legally authorised to act on behalf of a client.

RECOMMEND

To suggest a course of action or drug therapy to a client based on professional expertise and assessed client need.

RELIABLE SOURCES

For example, scholarly peer-reviewed journals, systematic reviews, clinical and best practice guidelines.