

# Policy Statement 3.16 – Collaborative Practice

## 1. Position Summary

Dental teams, led by dentists, should participate in collaborative practice to achieve the best oral and general health outcomes for their patients.

## 2. Background

- 2.1. Collaboration between health care professionals has been a key element of health care delivery for many years.
- 2.2. There is a growing body of evidence that collaborative practice results in improved patient health outcomes.
- 2.3. Oral health is an integral part of general health.
- 2.4. For many years, dentistry has been acknowledged as one of the best examples of collaboration and teamwork between health professionals with clear responsibility for patient outcomes resting with the dentist as the clinical team leader.
- 2.5. Patients attend for dental examinations and treatment regularly on a recall basis and so dentists are in a position to screen patients for general health issues.
- 2.6. Dentists are the primary health practitioner for the prevention, detection and treatment of oral diseases.
- 2.7. Good teamwork requires mutual respect and understanding of the skills and competencies that each member brings to the team and clear delineation of responsibilities.

### Definitions

- 2.8. COLLABORATIVE PRACTICE is when multiple health practitioners from different occupations work in a coordinated manner with patients to deliver the highest quality care and includes inter- and intra-professional collaboration. Collaborative practice can also be described as interdisciplinary care, multidisciplinary care, shared care, team care or collaborative care.
- 2.9. DENTAL PRACTITIONER is a person registered by the Board to provide dental care.
- 2.10. A DENTAL TEAM comprises a mix of dentists and appropriate allied dental personnel and must at all times be headed by a dentist who must be responsible for the diagnosis, treatment planning, delivery of dental procedures and continuing evaluation of the oral health of the patient. The dentist supports, directs and supervises the members of the dental team.
- 2.11. A DENTIST is an appropriately qualified dental practitioner, registered by the Board to practise all areas of dentistry.
- 2.12. ORAL HEALTH is multi-faceted and includes, but is not limited to, the ability to speak, smile, smell, taste, touch, chew, swallow and convey a range of emotions through facial expressions with confidence and free from pain or discomfort, and disease of the craniofacial complex. [FDI new definition]

## 3. Position

- 3.1. Dental teams must be led by dentists and they should participate in collaborative practice.
- 3.2. Dentists should be involved in screening and assisting in the management of general health issues.

*This Policy Statement is linked to other Policy Statement: .2.8 Non-communicable Diseases, 2.9 Oral and Systemic Disease, 2.10 Oral Health and the Social Determinants of Health, 3.1 Dental Workforce, 3.2 Dentists, 3.3 Allied Dental Personnel, 3.4 Specialist Dentists, 3.14 The Role of Non-Dental Practitioners in Oral Health & 6.13 Partnering for Better Health - Dentists and Patients*

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- 3.3. Any health practitioner participating in collaborative practice should only perform those treatments for which they have been formally educated and trained.
  - 3.4. Dental practitioners' education and training should include an understanding of the roles of others in the dental team and other health practitioners.
  - 3.5. Dentists must be involved in the development and implementation of any Collaborative Practice model.

#### **Policy Statement 3.16**

Adopted by ADA Federal Council, April 14/15, 2016.

Amended by ADA Federal Council, August 8/9, 2019