The Economy of Dental Hygienists In a Health Center

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La Clinica De La Raza was founded in 1971
Patient population: 61,909
Annual Dental Users: 22,573
Annual Dental Encounters: 68,661
Number of dental sites: 7 clinics in 3 counties including mobile dental clinic
Dental DDS FTEs:
Dental RDH’s:
Dental Auxiliaries (Front and Back office staffs):
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Duties of RDH’s:

Site#1: >FTE providing hygiene services, Western Career College DH Program

Site# 2: >FTE besides providing hygiene services, supervising dental hygiene students from Chabot DH program

Site #3: school based program in collaboration with the county
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RDH’s scheduling template:

Clinic: Hygiene, root planing and sealants only. Radiographs taken by dental assistants. Initial perio probings done by DDS.

School based: Prophy/Fluoride, applying sealants and patient education.
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Scope:
1. Patient clinical services
2. Patient education
3. Assist in developing dental hygiene and periodontal program
4. Establishes recall protocol
5. Mentor and supervise dental hygiene students along with Assistant to Dental Director
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Clinic design:

1. Work with DA: improve patient flow and become more productive
2. Diversify scope: mix clinical services with school activities results in better satisfaction and productivity
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Starting salaries at our Health Center

DDS I: 98,390.77 ($47.30/hr)

Dental Hygienist: 74,385.09 ($35.76/hr)
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Financial impact due to external factors:
1. State does not consider RDH as a billable provider
2. Four wall issue
3. In California, state just passed legislation for RDH to become billable provider but state wants to recalculate FQHC rate-not sure where that is going. Clinics are not rushing to fill out survey or request for scope change
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- Private Practice vs Public Health
- Do you really want to work in a community health center?
- Hire the right person for the job
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- California is .....Special !!!
  - Dental Hygiene Committee of California
  - www.dhcc.ca.gov

- Scope of Practice
  - Registered Dental Hygienist (RDH)
  - Registered Dental Hygienist In Alternative Practice (RDHAP)
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- Register Dental Hygienist in Alternative Practice
- The duties and responsibilities that RDHAPs are allowed to perform are specified in the Business and Professions Code Sections 1900 – 1966.6
An RDH may provide, without supervision:

- educational services, oral health training programs, and oral health screenings.

- shall refer any screened patients with possible oral abnormalities to a dentist for a comprehensive examination, diagnosis, and treatment plan.

- dental hygiene preventive services in addition to oral screenings, including, but not limited to, the application of fluorides and pit and fissure sealants.
A registered dental hygienist is authorized to perform the following procedures under direct supervision of a licensed dentist:

- (a) Soft-tissue curettage.
- (b) Administration of local anesthesia.
- (c) Administration of nitrous oxide and oxygen, whether administered alone or in combination with each other.
An RDHAP may:

- submit or allow to be submitted any insurance or third-party claims for patient services performed.
- hire other RDHAP to assist in his or her practice.
- Hire and supervise dental assistants performing intraoral retraction and suctioning.
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- When you have seen one health center, you have seen one health center
- One size does not fit all. What are the needs of your patients
- Maximize each team members scope of practice.
- What is your bottom line?
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- Where there is a will, there is a way !!!

- Good Luck !!!