

NORTHAMPTON

COMMUNITY COLLEGE



DENTAL HYGIENE PROGRAM

Thank you for your interest in the Dental Hygiene Program at Northampton Community College.

Enclosed is information about the profession of dental hygiene, frequently asked questions about the program, admission requirements/procedures, program costs and the Dental Hygiene Program curriculum including the program's mission, goals, objectives, competencies and essential functions.

Should you have any questions about Northampton Community College, the admissions process to the Dental Hygiene Program, course prerequisites and/or transferability of college credits, please contact:

Rachael Toonder, Admissions Office at 610 861-5500

Should you have any specific questions regarding the dental hygiene curriculum, please contact:

*Sherri L. Meyers, Professor & Program Director Dental Auxiliaries,
at 610-861-5440 or smeyers@northampton.edu*

If you would like more information about Northampton Community College and the services the College provides please visit the College's website at:

www.northampton.edu

GENERAL INFORMATION ABOUT THE PROFESSION OF DENTAL HYGIENE

Introduction

Dental hygiene plays an important role in the health care field. As a professional member of the dental health team, the dental hygienist is concerned with the prevention, recognition and treatment of dental diseases. Dental hygienists are preventive oral health professionals who provide educational, clinical and therapeutic services.

What do dental hygienists do?

The dental hygienist works to meet the oral health needs of patients/clients. Since each state has its own specific regulations regarding their responsibilities, the range of services performed by hygienists varies from state to state. The dental hygienist, once licensed by the respective state board of dentistry, provides direct patient/client care. This care includes, but is not limited to:

- Evaluate and monitor medical and oral health history.
- Examine the head, neck and oral cavity for health and disease.
- Identify oral or systemic health problems such as dental caries (tooth decay), periodontal diseases (gum disease), oral lesions and/or high blood pressure.
- Administer local anesthetic agents to control pain.
- Remove deposits and stain from all surfaces of the teeth to prevent disease of the supporting structures.
- Apply caries preventive agents such as fluorides and pit and fissure sealants.
- Expose, process and review dental x-rays.
- Personalize home care instruction to accommodate individual patient/client needs.
- Provide dietary education and counseling.
- Educate groups on oral health and health promotion.
- Design and implement community or school oral health programs.

Must a dental hygienist be licensed?

Dental hygienists must be licensed. Licensure is the strongest form of regulation used today. A state license to practice dental hygiene assures the public and other professionals that you have completed a nationally accredited dental hygiene program and successfully passed a national written examination and a state or regional clinical examination. Examples of other licensed health care providers include nurses, physical therapists, dentists and physicians.

Where do dental hygienists work?

There are many employment opportunities in the field of dental hygiene. Dental hygienists are in demand in general dental practices, as well as in specialty practices such as periodontics or pediatric dentistry, community clinics, university dental clinics, hospitals, prison facilities, nursing homes, and schools. The majority of Northampton Community College graduates are employed in private dental practices as **clinicians**.

Dental hygienists may also be employed as a clinician or administrator to provide dental hygiene services for patients/clients in **public health** clinics in rural or inner city communities, Indian Health Service, Head Start programs, and school sealant programs. Depending on the level of education and experience achieved, dental hygienists can apply their skill and knowledge to a variety of career options and to act on behalf of patients/clients as an oral healthcare **advocate**.

The dental hygienist in the public health sector:

- community health programs
- school systems
- military bases
- correctional facilities
- long-term care facilities
- government agencies

The dental hygienist educator:

- teaches in dental hygiene or dental programs (clinical/classroom)
- provides continuing education seminars
- writes/edits educational materials
- acts as a consultant/corporate educator to dental product and insurance companies

The dental hygienist administrator/manager and corporate:

- holds administrative positions in education, public health, hospitals, nursing home and professional associations
- holds dental product and equipment sales positions
- manages or owns a dental personnel placement company
- evaluates or processes dental insurance claims
- initiates/evaluates community dental health programs

The dental hygienist researcher:

- writes grant proposals
- collects/analyzes data
- develops research methodology
- conducts clinical research
- conducts research surveys
- writes scientific papers for publication

The dental hygienist entrepreneur:

- Practice management company
- Product development and sales
- Employment service
- Continuing education provider or meeting planner
- Consulting business
- Founder of a non-profit
- Independent clinical practice
- Professional speaker/writer

A DENTAL HYGIENIST'S CAREER PATH IS LIMITLESS!

If you would like more information about the dental hygiene profession, please go to the American Dental Hygienists' Association's website www.adha.org



Frequently Asked Questions about the Dental Hygiene Program at NCC

What are the minimum requirements for entry into the Dental Hygiene Program (DNHD)?

Admission to the clinical Dental Hygiene Program is on a competitive basis. The **minimum** admission requirements to the program include:

- completed high school Biology with a lab component with a grade of B and
- completed high school Chemistry with a lab component with a grade of B

(if a candidate did not complete Biology and/or Chemistry with B grades in high school, equivalent courses taken at a post-secondary institution are acceptable substitutes, i.e. NCC CHEM 135 and BIOS 160 or BIOS 115) and

- an overall high school grade point average (GPA) of 3.0 (B) and
- a completed Career Assessment Form.

Note: If a high school student completed Biology in high school with a C grade, it is recommended that s/he take BIOS 160 at NCC as a prerequisite for admission to the Dental Hygiene Program. If a high school student never took Biology in high school, the appropriate Biology course to take at NCC is BIOS 115. If a high school student completed Chemistry in high school with a C grade, or never took Chemistry in high school, s/he would need to take CHEM 135 at NCC as a prerequisite for admission to the Dental Hygiene Program.

The minimum admission requirements to the program for applicants who have **completed more than 12 college credits** include:

- the most recently completed Biology course with a lab – if completed in high school with a grade of B, or if completed in college, a grade of B minus (i.e. NCC BIOS 115, BIOS 160 or BIOS 204) and
- the most recently completed Chemistry course with a lab – if completed in high school with a grade of B, or if completed in college, a grade of B minus (i.e. NCC CHEM 135) and
- a program-specific college science GPA of 2.7 (possible courses include NCC CHEM 135, BIOS 160 and BIOS 202 only) and
- a cumulative college grade point average of 2.7 in all program specific non-science courses and
- a completed Career Assessment Form.

Policy on repeating a college science or general education course to improve the GPA:

- All science and program-specific general education courses may be repeated ONCE to improve a grade. The grade from the most recently completed attempt will be used when calculating

your science and/or general education grade point average(s). When the Admissions Committee reviews transcripts and sees a repeated science course, the candidate's file may be ranked slightly lower than a candidate who completed the same course with one attempt.

What is the Career Assessment Form?

- The Career Assessment Form is a writing assignment that uses a series of open-ended questions to address your motivation/interest in pursuing a dental hygiene degree and the qualities that you will bring to the profession. The Career Assessment Form is available from the as a PDF downloadable file from the College's website.

PLEASE NOTE: Admission into the Dental Hygiene Program is competitive. Meeting the minimum admission requirements does not guarantee admission to the Dental Hygiene Program.

When should I apply to the Dental Hygiene Program?

You should apply to the program when you have completed, or are in the process of completing, the required prerequisite courses, Biology and Chemistry. To be given primary consideration in the selection process your application to the Dental Hygiene Program and supporting documents must be received in the Admissions Office by **January 15th**.

Should I complete general education courses before applying to the Dental Hygiene Program?

Many students complete the general education courses (courses with course code prefixes other than DENH) prior to beginning the dental hygiene curriculum. Completing all, or most, of the general education courses that are applicable to the dental hygiene degree prior to entering the Dental Hygiene Program is strongly encouraged. The dental hygiene curriculum is challenging. Each week, students must commit a great deal of time to prepare for classes, tests and cases and to complete homework assignments and projects.

Successfully completing all of the general education courses prior to applying to the program does not guarantee an applicant will be accepted into the Dental Hygiene Program.

How do I apply to the Dental Hygiene program?

Apply Now to NCC!
THERE IS NO FEE TO APPLY - GET STARTED TODAY

STEP 1

Get started at:
northampton.edu/apply

Use the login button to create an account for the Admissions portal using your personal email and password.

Check your email to verify your Northampton Community College account.

STEP 2

Once you're in the Admissions & Financial Aid Portal, click on **NCC Undergraduate Admissions**, and then click **Start New Application** to fill out and submit your application.

Once submitted, your application appears as a link in the portal. Click on it to see the status of your application and admission decision.

Take note of any outstanding requirements that you still need to finish. You can click on each requirement to read a full description of what's needed.

Visit Northampton.edu/CheckMyApp to review your application status!

AFTER YOU'RE ADMITTED TO NCC

Check the personal email you entered in your application. Within 24 hours, you will receive an email with the username and temporary password for your Workday Student Account. **Your Workday Student Account is the Northampton Student Portal.** You will use your **Workday Student Portal** to:

- Update your personal information
- Build an academic plan and class schedule
- Sign up for classes
- Access financial information
- Pay your tuition and fees

Need help?

Contact the Admissions Office at 610-861-5500
or adminfo@northampton.edu



1. If you are not a student at NCC, create an Admissions portal account to submit your application.
2. If you are a current student at NCC, use your Admissions portal account to submit your application (this is not the same as your student account). If you have been a student at NCC since before fall 2021, you will need to create an Admissions portal account to submit your application.
3. If you have attended NCC in the past, but you are not attending presently, create an Admissions portal account to submit your application.
4. Contact the high school from which you graduated (or will be graduating) and request the school mail one (1) official high school transcript directly to the Processing Center at NCC. If you were home schooled, submit one (1) official copy of your home school record to the Processing Center. If you have a GED, request the GED office mail one (1) official transcript directly to the Processing Center.
5. If you have attended another college and/or university, contact the institution(s) and request the institution(s) mail one (1) official copy of your college/university transcript directly to the Processing Center at NCC.
6. Complete and upload a Career Assessment Form to your application in the Admissions portal account.

Note: The application window is open between mid-October through January 15th after which time the portal closes.

How many applicants are accepted each year?

Every year, approximately 250 candidates apply to the program. Forty (40) students are accepted into the Dental Hygiene Program (DNHD).

How is the admissions decision made?

Candidates who have forwarded their transcripts and uploaded the Career Assessment Form to Admissions before January 15th and who have completed the prerequisite Biology and Chemistry courses, achieving at least the minimum grade requirement, will have their files reviewed for admission to the program. The most important academic indicators that are reviewed and ranked

are the candidates' prerequisite Biology and Chemistry grades. All candidates are ranked based on their past performance in the prerequisite Biology and Chemistry courses.

The cumulative GPA for coursework in program-specific general education is used to further rank a candidate among other candidates who have prior college experience. Candidates who are applying directly from high school are ranked against other high school candidates using their overall high school GPAs. The program accepts candidates directly from high school provided the high school candidates are very strong academically.

The Career Assessment Form (CAF) is used as an additional selection tool; if two candidates are similar in academic ranking, the CAF will determine their rank order. Both the mechanics of writing and the quality of the responses are assessed.

Applicants are ranked using the following factors in order of priority:

1. Prerequisite science grades, most recently completed coursework (high school or college)
2. Program-specific college science GPA (if applicable)
3. Program-specific college non-science GPA (if applicable) or high school GPA
4. Career Assessment Form

When will the decisions be made?

The decisions are released to the applicant through workday in early April.

When I am accepted into the Dental Hygiene Program when do I register for my fall semester dental hygiene courses?

All 40 candidates who are accepted into the Dental Hygiene Program will be required to attend the Dental Hygiene Program Orientation. At the program orientation, we will register you for all of your fall semester courses and any summer courses you may need to complete before beginning the Dental Hygiene Program. Typically, this three- to four-hour orientation session is scheduled on a weekday mid-morning/early afternoon) in the mid-May. The College will mail you notification about the mandatory orientation, along with an acceptance packet.

Will I need to complete criminal background checks and Child Abuse History Clearance to be accepted into the Dental Hygiene program?

All students who receive an acceptance packet from Admissions are required to submit results of criminal background checks (FBI and PA state) into an electronic record tracking system as guided by the College (Certiphi; myRecordTracker) prior to the program's orientation session in May.

Until clearance is received, program acceptance is provisional and may be rescinded.

You must also submit your name to the Pennsylvania Department of Public Welfare's Childline and Abuse Registry. The Registry will send you a copy of your Pennsylvania Child Abuse History Clearance and you must upload a copy of the clearance form to the electronic record tracking system as guided by the College (Certiphi; myRecordTracker) prior to the program's orientation session in May.

Are there additional program requirements I must complete after I am accepted into the Dental Hygiene program (DNHD)?

Prior to the start of the first semester (fall) classes, entering dental hygiene students must complete courses in **Standard/Basic First Aid AND Basic Life Support (BLS) for Healthcare Providers**. At the Dental Hygiene Program Orientation faculty will discuss the specific First Aid and BLS courses you will need to complete during the summer. Students must upload of the course certification cards in the electronic tracking system as guided by the College (Certiphi;

myRecordTracker). If a student has a physical condition that renders him/her unable to perform Basic Life Support, s/he must contact the program director at 610-861-5440.

The College's Health Center requires you to have a medical examination and possibly update some of your immunizations before fall classes begin. Also, you must have health insurance while you are a dental hygiene student.

Attention High School Graduates – Important notice re: Mandatory Summer II Courses

If you complete high school in May/June of the year you are accepted into the dental hygiene program you MUST complete Chemistry of Life (CHEM 135) and English I (ENGL 101C) during the Summer II semester prior to beginning DENH courses. The Registrar reserves seats for dental hygiene students in the Summer II day section of CHEM 135 and in the evening section of ENGL 101C. It is strongly recommend that you complete CHEM 135 at NCC, as an equivalent Chemistry course at another college is often difficult to find. Registration for these courses will occur at the Dental Hygiene program orientation. A student who does not complete CHEM 135 and ENGL 101C before the start of the fall semester will have his/her acceptance to the dental hygiene program rescinded.

NOTE: If you have not taken any college level courses prior to entering the program, you will also be required to register for NCC's first-time student College Success course (1 credit).

Once enrolled in the Dental Hygiene program are there any specific grades I must maintain and what happens if I do not meet the grade expectation?

Once enrolled in the Dental Hygiene Program, all DENH courses must be completed with a grade of 75.0% or better to promote to the next course in the major. Should a student earn a course grade of less than 75.0% (or a grade of F in a P/F course) in one DENH course s/he must repeat the course, provided space is available. Per the College's *Policy for Academic Withdrawal from Allied Health Programs* any student who does not successfully complete TWO courses (either two different courses or the same course twice) with the course code prefix of DENH, regardless of when in the program curriculum the unsuccessful attempt occurs, will be withdrawn from the Dental Hygiene Program.

A student who is withdrawn from the Dental Hygiene program during the first or second semester clinical program may apply through the Admissions Office to be reaccepted into the program with the next applicant group. Reapplication to the program does not ensure reacceptance. A student who is withdrawn from the Dental Hygiene program during the summer session between first and second year or during the second year may request reinstatement to the program by meeting with the program director within 10 working days.

How long will it take me to complete the Dental Hygiene program at NCC?

The College admits one class per year into the Dental Hygiene Program, with dental classes beginning in the fall semester. The Dental Hygiene program is considered a full-time, day program. The program requires students to attend NCC for two years. In the first year, the dental hygiene class meets during the fall, spring and summer semesters. The summer I semester begins in late May and classes run for 10 weeks. In the second year, the dental hygiene class meets during the fall and spring semesters, with graduation in May.

Is the Dental Hygiene program offered in the evenings or on weekends?

The Dental Hygiene Program is not offered in the evenings or on weekends.

May I complete the Dental Hygiene program as a part-time student?

No, the Dental Hygiene Program is not available on a part-time basis.

Can general education credits be transferred from another college or university to NCC?

Generally, yes. Students are encouraged to schedule an appointment with an admissions counselor after their transcripts have been forwarded to the College. General education courses deemed equivalent for which a student received grades of C or better will be accepted as transfer credits. Only credits from accredited institutions, or those recognized by the American Council on Education, are acceptable. Please discuss all general education course equivalencies with the Admissions Office.

Is the Dental Hygiene program accredited?

The Dental Hygiene Program is accredited by the Commission on Dental Accreditation. The Commission is a specialized accrediting body recognized by the United States Department of Education. The Commission on Dental Accreditation can be contacted at (312) 440-4653, at 211 East Chicago Avenue, Chicago, IL 60611-2678, or at www.ada.org.

Commission's Complaint Policy

The Commission on Dental Accreditation will review complaints that relate to a program's compliance with the accreditation standards. The Commission is interested in the sustained quality and continued improvement of dental and dental-related education programs but does not intervene on behalf of individuals or act as a court of appeal for individuals in matters of admission, appointment, promotion or dismissal of faculty, staff or students. A copy of the appropriate accreditation standards and/or the Commission's policy and procedure for submission of complaints may be obtained by contacting the Commission at 211 East Chicago Avenue, Chicago IL 60611 or by calling 1-800-621-8099 extension 4653.

As a dental hygiene student, what are my responsibilities regarding client/patient recruitment?

Clinical practice begins in the second semester of the curriculum (Spring). Each semester of clinical practice requires students to treat a minimum number of adult, geriatric, special needs and pediatric clients. In Clinic I students treat approximately eight clients, in Clinic II students treat a minimum of 12 clients and in Clinic III students treat a minimum of 14 clients. The Litwak Dental Clinic is open to the public, and members of the community are encouraged to call the clinic to make appointments to receive their dental hygiene preventive care at NCC. **Dental hygiene students are responsible for recruiting their own clients/patients to the dental hygiene clinic.**

What are the costs associated with the Dental Hygiene Program?

Fall 2021 – Summer 2, 2022

• Tuition Schedule

- Tuition and fees for full-time students registered for 12 to 18 credit hours are charged at a flat rate.
- Tuition and fees for part-time students registered for less than 12 credit hours are charged at a per-credit hour rate.
- Additional credit hours over 18 are charged at a per-credit hour rate.
- **Part-Time: Students registered in less than 12 credit hours; additional credit hours over 18**

Tuition and Fees	Northampton County PA*	Monroe County PA	Other PA County	Out of State/Country
Tuition	\$116	\$182	\$232	\$348
<i>Institutional Fees:</i>				
Comprehensive Fee	\$22	\$22	\$22	\$22
Technology Fee	\$25	\$25	\$25	\$25
Capital Outlay Fee	\$0	\$30	\$66	\$114
TOTAL per Credit	\$163	\$259	\$345	\$509

- **Full-Time: Students registered in a minimum of 12 credits hours up to 18 credit hours**

Tuition and Fees	Northampton County PA*	Monroe County PA	Other PA County	Out of State/Country
Tuition	\$1740	\$2730	\$3480	\$5220
<i>Institutional Fees:</i>				
Comprehensive Fee	\$330	\$330	\$330	\$330
Technology Fee	\$375	\$375	\$375	\$375
Capital Outlay Fee	\$0	\$450	\$990	\$1710
TOTAL Flat Rate	\$2445	\$3885	\$5175	\$7635

- *Northampton County PA includes residents in the following sponsoring school districts only: Bangor, Bethlehem, Easton, Nazareth, Northampton, Pen Argyl, Saucon Valley, and Wilson.

Program Costs (approximate over two years):

Additional costs for background checks, BLS, immunizations, physical exams, lab fees, instrument kits, supplies uniforms, books, national board exams, clinical exams, professional association student membership, etc. equals approximately \$2695 to \$3200.

Is Financial Aid available?

Generally, yes. Students may qualify for the usual federal or state programs. In addition, a dental hygiene student may qualify for one of the professionally-affiliated scholarships offered by the College. For more information, contact the Financial Aid Office at Northampton Community College at 610-861-5510.

Should a dental hygiene student work while attending the program?

Students enrolled in the Dental Hygiene Program are cautioned regarding accepting employment, especially during the first semester. Due to the heavy course workload, it is best that a student begin the program without job responsibilities, or work minimal hours/week. The intensity of the program is such that employment may detract from course responsibilities.

What is included in the Dental Hygiene program curriculum?

The 75 credit Dental Hygiene Program at Northampton Community College culminates in an *Associate of Applied Science Degree*. A one-credit course, College Success, is taken by first time students. The Dental Hygiene program includes courses in the following areas:

General education:

- English I
- English II
- Psychology
- Sociology
- Speech Communication
- Humanities or Social Science Elective

Biological sciences:

- Chemistry of Life
- Human Biology
- Microbiology
- Pharmacology
- Nutrition

Dental sciences:

- Oral Radiology
- General and Oral Pathology
- Periodontology
- Oral Anatomy
- Oral Histology
- Dental Materials
- Local Anesthesia

Dental hygiene theory and practice:

- Foundations of Preventive Oral Health Services/Pre-clinic
- Preventive Oral Health Services I, II and III
- Clinical Preventive Oral Health Services I, II and III
- Community Dental Health I and II
- Management of Medically Complex and Special Needs' Clients

The dental hygiene curriculum is sequenced over six semesters/sessions. Students complete one summer session (six weeks) and a fall and spring semester (14 weeks each) in the first year and one summer session (10 weeks) and a fall and spring semester (14 weeks each) in the second year, with graduation in May.

Courses in dental hygiene, i.e. course numbers with the DENH prefix, MUST be taken in the semester sequence published in the Catalog and can only be taken by students accepted into the Dental Hygiene program (DNHD).

What are the program's policies and procedures for bloodborne and infectious diseases?**Standard Precautions**

Applicants to the Dental Hygiene Program, current dental hygiene students, dental hygiene department staff and faculty are not required to disclose their bloodborne infectious disease status to the Dental Hygiene Program.

It is strongly encouraged that clients to the dental hygiene clinic disclose, by means of the written health history, their bloodborne infectious disease status, i.e. positive tests for Hepatitis B, Hepatitis

C and/or HIV. This information is confidential and will not be released to anyone without the client's written consent. A client with a bloodborne infectious disease, based on the client's infectious disease status, will never be denied access to student-provided dental hygiene services at the clinic.

Because disclosure of a bloodborne infectious disease is at the discretion of the individual, the Dental Hygiene Program must take it upon itself to consider all members affiliated with the program, i.e. students, staff, faculty and clients, to be potentially infectious and require the consistent use of standard precautions. Under standard precautions, blood and saliva of all clients and clinicians is considered potentially infectious for HIV, HBV, HCV and other bloodborne pathogens. In applying a policy of standard precautions, personal protective equipment is based on the procedure(s) performed and the infection control protocols/procedures used with any given procedure must be same for all clients.

All employees and students will observe and practice standard precautions when performing clinical and radiological procedures. These precautions will minimize or eliminate exposure to bloodborne pathogens. Non-compliance will result in suspension of clinical practice.

Immunizations/Health Requirements

When an applicant is accepted into the Dental Hygiene Program, the Admissions Office will send a letter to the successful applicant outlining the college's health requirements. Additionally, the health requirements/immunization information will be discussed at the Dental Hygiene Program Orientation (mid-May).

Prior to beginning the Dental Hygiene Program, dental hygiene students must have a physical examination, some students may require MMR immunization boosters and all dental hygiene students are required to begin the Hepatitis B (HBV) immunization series or submit evidence of HBV immunization (or declination).

A student is not permitted to begin clinical practice (i.e. first year, spring semester) until the college's health center and the program director have received written evidence that a student's Hepatitis B immunization series is complete (or declined).

Screening for Tuberculosis

Students accepted into the Dental Hygiene Program (DNHD) must have a Two-Step Tuberculin Skin Test (TST) to screen for tuberculosis. The results from the two-step TB skin test must be received in the College's health center before fall classes begin.

Non-compliance to either the Hepatitis B immunization or the Tuberculin Skin Test policy will result in suspension from clinical practice.

Other Immunizations

Mandatory immunizations include Influenza and being fully vaccinated against COVID-19.

Additionally, a 10-Panel Drug Screen is mandated as assigned for testing.

Does the Dental Hygiene Program have a mission statement, program goals, objectives and competencies?

Yes; this information is stated within the pages that follow.

DENTAL HYGIENE PROGRAM MISSION STATEMENT

While upholding the mission, vision and values of Northampton Community College, the Dental Hygiene program provides excellent, comprehensive learning experiences to prepare students with the knowledge and clinical skills to competently practice as dental hygienists. This mission comprises the following areas: teaching, client care, service and research.

STATEMENT OF VALUES

The Dental Hygiene program values:

- Excellence—Quality in the educational experiences that we provide
- Innovation—Curricular responsiveness to adapt quickly to changes in the profession
- Sustainability—Commitment through our professional actions to respond to the institution, the community, the economy and the environment
- Accountability—Individual responsibility for his/her actions, growth and development
- Integrity—Academic, personal and professional honesty, fairness, ethical conduct and respect for others
- Diversity, Equity & Inclusion—Environment that fosters and values every person's contributions, celebrating the ways in which cultures, identities, and backgrounds enrich the dental hygiene program and enhance our profession
- Engagement—Involvement in, and collaboration with, the communities we serve

GOALS OF THE DENTAL HYGIENE PROGRAM (PG)

The Dental Hygiene program outcomes include six programmatic goals:

- PG 1. Students will be competent with respect to the Northampton Community College's Dental Hygiene Department document, "Competencies for Entry into the Profession of Dental Hygiene".
- PG 2. Students will be prepared to successfully complete the National Board Dental Hygiene Examination and the clinical board examination administered by the Commission on Dental Competency Assessments (CDCA-WREB).
- PG 3. A relevant, current dental hygiene program will be maintained with a curriculum that reflects the standards of clinical practice, education and research.
- PG 4. Quality individualized client-centered dental hygiene care will be provided.
- PG 5. Students and faculty will engage in interprofessional collaboration to enhance learning experiences, interpersonal skills, and interactions with diverse populations and health care teams.
- PG 6. Students and faculty will participate in community service and professional association activities.

DENTAL HYGIENE PROGRAM OBJECTIVES

To achieve the Goals of the Dental Hygiene Department, the faculty and/or administration will strive to meet the following program objectives:

1. Review program curriculum to ensure that the curriculum is current and relevant.

2. Continually assess all aspects of the program to ensure excellence and to guide program improvement.
3. Maintain an active Advisory Committee.
 - This committee is made up of local area dentists and dental hygienists; the committee is a liaison between the Program and the community/workplace.
4. Provide student support to enhance students' ability to successfully complete the program and enter into the profession.
5. Maintain admissions policies to ensure qualified students.
6. Involvement in and collaboration with the communities we serve.

COMPETENCIES FOR ENTRY INTO THE PROFESSION OF DENTAL HYGIENE

The Dental Hygiene Program uses competency-based education principles to design and modify its curriculum. The Program sequences learning experiences and uses teaching and evaluation strategies to move students through the developmental stages from novice to competent. The ultimate goal of our competency-based program is to produce a competent beginning dental hygiene practitioner.

“Competencies for Entry into the Profession of Dental Hygiene” describes the abilities expected of a dental hygienist entering the profession. Competencies combine skills, understanding, and professional values and are performed independently in realistic settings. Dental hygiene graduates from Northampton Community College must demonstrate competence in four domains. The domains include: Core, Health Promotion/Disease Prevention, Community Involvement and Client Care.

1. Dental hygienists must possess Core (C) competence, the ethics, values, skills and knowledge integral to all aspects of the profession.
2. Health Promotion and Disease Prevention (HP) is a key component of health care. Dental hygienists have an active role to play in the promotion of optimal oral health and its relationship to general health. Dental hygienists must deliver oral health promotion and disease prevention services in both public health and private practice settings.
3. Dental hygienists have a complex role in the Community (CM) where they are required to assess, plan, implement and evaluate programs and activities to benefit a variety of individuals and groups within the general population.
4. Dental hygienists must be able to provide comprehensive, individualized Client Care (CC). It is imperative dental hygienists assess, diagnose, plan, implement and evaluate services.

COMPETENCIES FOR ENTRY INTO THE PROFESSION OF DENTAL HYGIENE

The Dental Hygiene program outcomes also include sixteen competencies for entry into the profession of dental hygiene. In order to achieve PG1 students must demonstrate competency in the following:

CORE COMPETENCIES (C)

The dental hygiene graduate will be able to:

- C1. Model professional behavior.
- C2. Adhere to state and federal laws, recommendations and regulations in the provision of oral healthcare.
- C3. Gather, evaluate and use information effectively.
- C4. Reflect on personal performance through self-assessment.

- C5. Communicate effectively with individuals and groups from diverse populations both verbally and in writing.
- C6. Use evidence-based decision making to evaluate products and existing, emerging therapies.

HEALTH PROMOTION AND DISEASE PREVENTION (HP)

The dental hygiene graduate will be able to:

- HP1. Identify risk factors and develop, implement and evaluate strategies to promote health and prevent disease.
- HP2. Utilize methods to ensure the health and safety of the client and the dental hygienist in the delivery of dental hygiene services.
- HP3. Foster interprofessional relationships and collaborate on strategies for health promotion and disease prevention for individuals and communities.

COMMUNITY INVOLVEMENT (CM)

The dental hygiene graduate will be able to:

- CM1. Assess the oral health needs of the community and plan, implement and evaluate programs to address those needs.
- CM2. Provide community oral health promotion and disease prevention activities in a variety of settings.

CLIENT CARE (CC)

The dental hygiene graduate will be able to:

- CC1. Systematically collect, analyze and record data on the general, oral and social health status of a variety of clients to identify risk factors, clients' needs and oral health problems. (Assess)
- CC2. Use assessment data and critical decision making skills to reach conclusions about clients' oral health needs. (Diagnose)
- CC3. Collaborate with clients and other health professionals to formulate client-centered, comprehensive dental hygiene care plans that are based on current evidence-based practices and that acknowledge clients' informed consent. (Plan)
- CC4. Provide specialized treatment that includes preventive and therapeutic services designed to achieve and maintain oral health. (Implement)
- CC5. Evaluate the effectiveness of the implemented clinical, preventive and educational services and modify as needed. (Evaluate)