

## DENTISTRY

### DESCRIPTION OF SESSION

This session provides participants with an understanding of dentistry and how it fits into the overall health care profession.

### CATEGORY

- Health
- Dentistry

### OBJECTIVES

By the end of this session, participants will be able to:

- Understand proper dental care, including treatment and preventive techniques.
- Discover opportunities within dentistry.
- Understand the educational process involved in becoming a dental professional.
- Tour a dental office and observe dental practices.

### SUPPLIES

- Dental model
- Toothbrush for demonstration purposes
- Dental floss
- Dental plaque disclosing tablets, if available
- Water and small cups for rinsing mouth
- Alcohol-based hand sanitizer
- American Dental Association crossword puzzle—download from [http://www.ada.org/~media/ADA/Public%20Programs/Files/NCDHM/NCDHM2016\\_Crossword\\_Older\\_Kids\\_English.pdf?la=en](http://www.ada.org/~media/ADA/Public%20Programs/Files/NCDHM/NCDHM2016_Crossword_Older_Kids_English.pdf?la=en) and print one copy for each participant
- American Dental Association word search—download from [http://www.ada.org/~media/ADA/Public%20Programs/Files/NCDHM/NCDHM2016\\_Word\\_Search\\_English.pdf?la=en](http://www.ada.org/~media/ADA/Public%20Programs/Files/NCDHM/NCDHM2016_Word_Search_English.pdf?la=en) and print one copy for each participant
- Prize for completing crossword puzzle or word search activity first—maybe give hand sanitizer or dental floss and toothbrush set
- Images of teeth for identifying different types of teeth
- Tray of basic dental tools

### PREPARATION

- Arrange for someone to speak about the dental profession.
- Arrange for a tour of a dental office.
- Obtain permission from parent or guardian before using plaque disclosing tablets with participants.

### RESOURCES

**Reminder:** Any time you use an outside source, be sure you follow the content owner's or website's permission requirements and guidelines.

The following are suggested resources that Advisors may find helpful in planning this session:

- [“Careers in Dentistry”](#) from the American Dental Association
- [“Alternative Dental Career Options”](#) from the American Dental Association
- [“Dental Team Careers”](#) from the American Dental Association
- [“Cavities/Tooth Decay”](#) from the Mayo Clinic
- [“How to Brush Teeth Properly With a Manual Toothbrush?”](#) from the Oral-B Institute
- [“Self-Examination for Dental Plaque”](#) from WebMD
- [“Using Plaque Disclosing Tablets, Solutions, and More”](#) from Oral-B

**ADVISOR NOTE:** Text in italics should be read aloud to participants. As you engage your post in activities each week, please include comments, discussions, and feedback to the group relating to **Character**, **Leadership**, and **Ethics**. These are important attributes that make a difference in the success of youth in the workplace and in life.

## ACTIVITIES

### Introduction

Tell participants: *Dentistry is the profession or science of dealing with the prevention and treatment of diseases and malformations of the teeth, gums, and mouth as well as the removal, correction, and replacement of decayed, damaged, or lost teeth. Dental professionals perform procedures such as filling cavities, crowning teeth, straightening teeth, and constructing dentures.*

### ACTIVITY 1

#### Speaker

Have a dental professional address these topics:

- Overview of the dental profession
- Education requirements, including recommendations for high school and college preparation
- Dentistry settings and roles
- A typical day for a dental professional
- Implications of improper dental hygiene
- The different types of teeth and how cavities form

### ACTIVITY 2

#### Hands-On Practice

- Explain proper dental care.
- Show proper brushing and flossing technique using model of teeth.
- Demonstrate the use of plaque disclosing tablets. Have participants use plaque disclosing tablets in accordance with manufacturer's directions after obtaining permission from a parent or guardian.

- Have participants pair up and practice using proper brushing and flossing techniques on the model. Provide coaching as appropriate.

### **ACTIVITY 3**

#### **Crossword Puzzle or Word Search**

- Distribute to each participant either the crossword puzzle or the word search or both, and have them complete it. You may choose to give a prize to the first person who finishes.

### **ACTIVITY 4**

#### **Dental Clinic Scenario**

- Read the following scenario to participants. Then initiate a discussion using the questions that follow.

*It is another busy day at the dental clinic. You have been a dental assistant here for just two weeks. The dentist has patients from many different countries. You enjoy meeting patients from different cultures, but still struggle with trying to communicate and learning their cultural beliefs. Your first patient, Jace Lim, is in for a cleaning and X-rays. When your patient sits in the dental chair, you catch a whiff of his breath and you are overcome with nausea. Your patient's halitosis is overwhelming. Mr. Lim is a refugee from Cambodia, and he speaks limited English. When he first looks at you and your white uniform, his expression suddenly changes from a smile to one of fright. You remember from your training that you must watch your nonverbal expressions, maintain professionalism at all time, and use tact. This is one of those situations your instructor warned you about—one in which maintaining professionalism might not be easy. You have 30 minutes to brush and floss his teeth and determine how to best communicate to Mr. Lim the importance of proper oral hygiene. X-rays will be taken by the dental hygienist, and after they are developed, you need to properly mount them.*

#### **Questions**

- With respect to his culture, why might Mr. Lim be frightened when he sees you?
- How do you handle this situation with respect to his culture?
- What is a tactful way to handle his halitosis?
- How do you make sure your patient understands your instructions?

#### **Teaching Tips/Strategies**

- Ask students why it is increasingly important for health care workers to be able to communicate with people of different cultures and understand their beliefs and rituals.
- A tooth model with toothbrush may be used as a model for teaching.
- Having the patient gargle with mouthwash before working on them is sometimes standard procedure and would be a way to tactfully help handle the halitosis.
- Note that the patient from Cambodia might be frightened when he sees the dental assistant in all white because of cultural differences: White is a sign of bad luck and indicates mourning and death.

(Dental clinic scenario, questions, and teaching tips from Pearson. Used with permission.)

## ACTIVITY 5

### Teeth and Tools

- Provide images of teeth and mouths to participants and have them count the patient's teeth (there are 32 permanent teeth in dentition and 20 deciduous teeth in dentition), noting how many are missing.
- Have participants identify different types of teeth and parts of the teeth as a review.
- Place dental tools on a tray and have participants identify (or take their best guess at) what the tools are and what they are used for. Then clarify and further explain the tools and their uses.

## ACTIVITY 6

### Tour

- Tour a dental office.

### ADVISOR NOTE

Some sample questions are below. They are designed to help the participants apply what they have learned to their own interests. You are welcome to use these questions or develop your own questions that relate to your post or specific focus area.

## REFLECTION

### Focusing Questions

- *What type of dental role or specialty most interests you?*
- *What did you learn during today's discussion?*

### Analysis Questions

- *What, if any, modifications will you make in your personal dental hygiene based on the information gained today?*

### Generalization Questions

- *What can you do now, during your time as a student, to prepare yourself for this or a similar career in the medical field?*
- *Why is this topic important?*

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