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Dental Laboratory Technology - Basic Sciences, Removable Prosthodontics And Orthodontics



Synopsis

Section 1A
•Overview of the Specialty

1.1. Dental Mission. The mission of the dental laboratory specialty is “to support the Department of Defense personnel in building the world’s most respected air, land, sea, and space forces by fabricating dental prostheses and specialized products, supporting research activities, and providing consultation services to dental health care providers.” The foundation of our country’s national security is based on the strength and readiness of its military services. As part of the medical mission, each person assigned to the Dental Service plays a vital role in establishing and maintaining the dental health of uniformed military personnel.

1.2. Description of the Dental Laboratory Specialty. The dental laboratory specialty is an integral element of the Dental Service. It deals with the design, fabrication, and repair of dental prostheses (crowns, complete dentures, and fixed and removable partial dentures [RPD]) under the supervision of a dentist. Prosthesis is a general term that applies to any artificial replacement for a lost body part. Prosthetic dentistry (prosthodontics) is the art and science of fabricating artificial replacements for missing oral structures.

1.3. Specialty Duties. The duties and responsibilities of personnel assigned to the dental laboratory specialty increase as a person grows in knowledge, skill, and grade. These duties begin by performing routine procedures in the various areas of fixed, partial, and complete dentures. As skills and knowledge increase, more advanced procedures are learned through on-the-job training or in advanced training courses. The technician who demonstrates personal and professional maturity is expected to assume supervisory responsibilities. These duties include laboratory training, laboratory supervision, and administrative and leadership positions. A more extensive breakdown of skill and career progression is described in the Air Force Dental Laboratory Specialty Career Field Education and Training Plan.

1.4. Professional and Patient Relationships. A special standard of ethical behavior is required of all people involved in health care delivery. That is, a spirit of service and personal commitment must be the controlling factor in duty performance. Supporting patient care requires committed and responsible duty performance. Your performance affects the health of others.

1.4.1. Dentist’s Relationship to the Technician. The dentist should treat the technician as a professional. The dentist is responsible for giving the technician very specific directions (a prescription) for each case to be fabricated, being available to answer the technician’s valid questions, and providing assistance as necessary. After determining the patient can wear the prosthesis made by the technician, the dentist assumes legal responsibility for the entire procedure.

1.4.2. Technician’s Relationship to the Dentist. As a professional, a technician must maintain knowledge and proficiency by continuing his or her education. Every restoration the

technician makes must represent his or her best effort. The technician must follow the dentist's prescription exactly. In the technician's judgment, if a prescription change is indicated, the dentist must be consulted. Technicians must conduct themselves in a professional manner, especially when patients are present. Professionally oriented conversations between a technician and a dentist are privileged communications that must not be repeated to others.

1.4.3. Technician's Relationship to the Patient: 1.4.3.1. The technician must fabricate each prosthesis to the highest standard of which he or she is capable. The technician is responsible for any deliberate inappropriate actions resulting in failure of the prosthesis. 1.4.3.2. The technician's moral responsibility is to the patient. The technician must behave in a professional manner at all times.

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