



**MAY 2009**

**// CED RESOLUTION**

# **COMPETENCES REQUIRED FOR THE PRACTICE OF DENTISTRY IN THE EUROPEAN UNION**

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**// INTRODUCTION**

The dentist is the primary oral health care provider, and upon graduation must be competent to practice evidence-based comprehensive dentistry unsupervised, independently and collaboratively (including referral) on adults, children and medically, physically and mentally compromised patients in the context of holistic patient care, supported by allied dental professionals, and other health care providers with the ultimate goal of improving the oral health of the public in a socially responsible and culturally competent manner.

Directive 2005/36 lays down the minimum training requirements for dentistry, which is confirmed as a specific profession in its own right requiring at least five years of full-time theoretical and practical training at a university or an equivalent dental school. The training imparts the necessary skills and knowledge to the dentist so that he has the relevant competences for the practice of preventive measures and for the diagnosis and for the treatment of diseases of the teeth, the mouth, the jaw, and their tissues.

In the context of this document the term “clinical competence” is applied to a combination of skills, attitudes, ethical standards and knowledge that provide the clinician with sufficient competence to undertake a specific clinical task. The acquisition of clinical competence may be achieved through a diversity of educational and training programmes. These may be assessed and examined in different ways throughout the European Union.

The clinical competences listed in this document should be the minimum competences required throughout Europe for the safe practice of dentistry. They do not cover the full range of competences required of a modern dentist and should not limit the further expansion of dental education and training nor should they be used or interpreted to promote specialisation in dentistry. These competences represent a common minimum denominator. Without these basic competences a person could not safely carry out the practice of dentistry.



In 2007, the CED adopted a resolution on the "Profile of the Dentist of the Future." Its objective was to adapt the professional profile of the dentist to the current challenges resulting from societal, economic and technological developments. The promotion of oral health should be an integral part of general health promotion for the population, as it is a determinant of general health and quality of life. In the resolution, the CED defined the following trends that should be considered when formulating the competences of the dentist:

- complexity of oral diseases and conditions;
- ageing population;
- association between oral health and general health;
- increasing behaviour-related diseases;
- growing cultural diversity and new science, research and technology.

Competences should be derived from the profile the dentist should achieve. The competences included in this document are in line with the profile described in the CED resolution "Profile of the Dentist of the Future," which gives the direction and orientation of the profession.

## // **PREREQUISITES FOR COMPETENCES**

As prerequisites for basic competences, the dentist should have sufficient knowledge and understanding of sciences relevant to dentistry and medicine: biomedical, behavioural, technical and clinical sciences. These include:

- basic biological and medical sciences: chemistry, physics, biology (biochemistry, molecular biology, pathological anatomy, head and neck anatomy and physiology, embryology, histology including cytology);
- behavioural sciences (mainly psychology and sociology, but also ethics and jurisprudence);
- human disease-related sciences: general medicine and surgery, pathology, microbiology, otorhinolaryngology, dermatology, epidemiology and pharmacology, appropriate to the needs of a dental practitioner and
- technical and biotechnical sciences: computer sciences, information technology, knowledge of materials and devices used in dentistry.

## // **FIELDS OF COMPETENCES**

In order to practise dentistry in the European Union at the primary or general dental care level (i.e. treatment which is usually carried out by a dentist and which does not require referral to a specialist) the qualified dentist should have an appropriate understanding of the subjects set out in the Dental Directive (2005/36) and be able to demonstrate competence in all of the following fields according to each patient's needs.

### Field of Competences I: Professionalism, Ethics and Communication

The dentist must have the competences necessary to provide ethical and evidence- based dental care for all patients.

#### Competences:

- Professionalism (evidence-based therapy, Continuing Professional Development, self assessment, referral)
- Ethics and jurisprudence (knowledge and application of ethical principles and legal framework – EU and national regulation)

- Communication and interpersonal skills (application of these skills in contacts with patients, their relatives, colleagues, the dental team and other health professionals involved in the care of the patient)

#### Field of Competences II: Practice Organization and Management, Knowledge Management

The dentist must as an effective employer and leader of the dental team have the ability to apply organizational, managerial, financial, administrative and leadership skills to the functioning of the dental practice and to the treatment of patients.

##### Competences:

- Organization and management of structures and processes needed for functioning of the dental practice
- Organization and management of structures and processes needed for treatment of patients
- Patient safety
- Safety and health of the dental team, including ergonomics and working environment
- Environmental protection

#### Field of Competences III: Assessment of the Patient, Diagnosis, Treatment Planning

The dentist must be able to evaluate the patient's overall medical and oral condition, analyze the outcomes of patient care and previous treatment and plan treatment needs to improve oral health through application of best practices according to the relevant diagnostic tools and taking into account cultural and social background of the patient.

##### Competences:

- Obtaining and recording a comprehensive medical history of the patient's oral state through a comprehensive examination of the patient
- Diagnosis
- Treatment planning (informed consent)

#### Field of Competences IV: Establishment and Maintenance of Oral Health, Therapy

The dentist must be competent in the provision of preventive, therapeutic and continued oral health care. The dentist must be able to perform procedures that treat and manage oral diseases, and maintain and restore optimal oral health. This includes the competences required for oral health care of children, adolescents, the elderly and patients with special needs, in the following disciplines:

- Pain and anxiety management
- Caries therapy
- Endodontic therapy
- Periodontal therapy
- Musculoskeletal and occlusal therapy
- Surgical and pharmacological therapy
- Orthodontic therapy
- Paediatric dentistry
- Oral medicine and oral pathology
- Restorative/prosthetic therapy
- Oral and medical emergencies
- Preventive dentistry
- Anaesthetics and sedation
- Dental radiology
- Dental materials

Field of Competences V: Prevention, Health Promotion, Public Health

The dentist must be able to provide comprehensive preventive care to patients of all ages according to their risk assessment status and treatment needs and educate patients and the public in oral health maintenance.

Competences:

- Adoption of a preventive approach throughout all dental procedures
- Oral disease prevention and oral health maintenance
- Individual patient oral health education
- Community involvement

// **CONCLUSION**

The present document lists the competences that each dentist in the EU must have and which are necessary for the independent practice of dentistry for a general dental practitioner. However, this does not preclude dental faculties from offering training in further competences according to the particular orientation of the individual faculty. The competences listed in this document should be included in the current curricula and imparted through modern, effective teaching methods. This catalogue of competences should become an annex to the EU-Directive 2005/36 dated 07.09.2005 and should replace Annex V.3. Dental Practitioner: 5.3.1 Study programme for dental practitioners.

**Adopted unanimously by the CED General Meeting on 30 May 2009.**