



Working as a trainee dentist and requirements for working as a trainee dentist

In this context, trainee dentist means a person who has qualified outside the EU/EEA and who has completed an internship as separately mandated by Valvira to work and be granted a licence to practice in Finland.

There are no statutory provisions applying to working as a trainee dentist or to the requirements for working as a trainee dentist. The provisions of the Act on Health Care Professionals (559/1994) and the Decree on Health Care Professionals (564/1994) do not apply to working as a trainee.

A trainee is not a health care professional

Valvira notes that under no circumstances is a trainee a health care professional as referred to by law and that a trainee may not be given any of the responsibility for patient care that pertains to a health care professional. Under section 22 of the Act on Health Care Professionals, a licensed dentist shall decide on the dental examination, the diagnosis and the treatment of a patient. Licensed dentists are entitled to prescribe medicines from a pharmacy for dental medicinal or odontological purposes.

The employer is responsible for the work of a trainee

Because a trainee is not a health care professional, Valvira is not competent to supervise the work of a trainee. The employer and the health care professional guiding the trainee are responsible for his or her work. When recruiting a trainee, the employer must specify in sufficient detail the trainee's duties, responsibility, intervention limits and other obligations.

Under no circumstances must a trainee care independently for patients

Persons working as trainee dentists may under no circumstances treat patients independently, but work as trainees under the licensed dentist appointed in writing as their supervisor and under his or her supervision. How immediate guidance and supervision must be in reality depends on the duties that the trainee carries out. Nevertheless, the supervising dentist must be able to be immediately show up in all circumstances.

A trainee's duties

A trainee may, led by the supervising dentist and under supervision, examine patients and record examination data, write x-ray and other examination referrals if required, and prepare examination results for the dentist to check, for example. In addition, a trainee may prepare cavity protection (matrix strip or band) for restorative treatment procedures, place a rubber dam for root canal treatment and, where necessary, place temporary fillings in ready-made cavities. A trainee may carry out parodontologic therapy (break up biofilm, removal of visible dental calculus, fluoridation and give education in oral self-care). Should a trainee carry out procedures on a patient, the supervising dentist must be in the immediate proximity of the trainee and the patient so that he or she can also monitor the

trainee and be responsible for carrying out the procedure. The supervising dentist must check and approve all documents drawn up by the trainee and also make all prescriptions and decisions relating to treatment. The supervising dentist is responsible for all treatment.

Trainee monitoring, guidance and supervision

The supervisor appointed to the trainee must monitor, guide and supervise the trainee's work, intervene immediately in any shortcomings arising in the trainee's work and interrupt the trainee's work if patient safety is compromised.

Entries in patient documents

Under section 6 of the Decree of the Ministry of Social Affairs and Health on Patient Documents (298/2009), only health care professionals involved in treating the patient and also other persons acting under their instructions inasmuch as they are involved in treatment of the patient may make entries in patient documents. Entries made by a trainee are approved by his or her manager, supervisor or a person authorised by either of these. Under section 10 of the Decree, the name and position of the person making the entry and the date of the entry must be stated when making entries in medical records.

Valvira notes that entries made by a trainee in patient documents must state his or her position. In addition, Valvira notes that because a trainee may not be given any responsibility whatsoever for patient treatment, his or her manager, supervisor or a person authorised by either of these must always approve entries made by a trainee in accordance with section 6 of the Decree of the Ministry of Social Affairs and Health on Patient Documents.

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