

Working relationship  
between  
Orthodontic Auxiliaries and  
Dentists/Dental Specialists –  
Practice Standard

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Dental Council  
Te Kaunihera Tiaki Niho

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## The Practice Standard Rationale

- 1 The Health Practitioners Competence Assurance Act 2003 (the Act) promotes the continuation of a team approach between orthodontic auxiliaries and dentists in relation to the delivery of orthodontic services within the overall provision of integrated care to patients.
- 2 The objectives of this practice standard are to describe the general functions and level of supervision required by orthodontic auxiliaries and to provide detail on their scope of practice.
- 3 This practice standard is designed to assist practitioners to understand the requirements of orthodontic auxiliary practice and to ensure **direct clinical supervision**. The activities that registered orthodontic auxiliaries practice are set out in the **scope of practice** detailed in **Appendix 1**.

## Dental Hygiene Scopes of Practice

- 4 The Act requires the Dental Council to regulate five professions, recognised by the Act: dentistry, dental hygiene, clinical dental technology, dental technology and dental therapy. Each of the scopes of practice that the Council defines must be gazetted under one of these professions. There are two registration categories (scopes of practice) related to the dental hygiene profession:
  - Dental Hygienist
  - Orthodontic Auxiliary

## Orthodontic Auxiliary Practice

- 5 Orthodontic Auxiliary practice is a subset of the practice of dentistry and is commensurate with an orthodontic auxiliary's approved education, training and competence.
- 6 The term "Orthodontic Auxiliary" is the registered protected title and can only be used by, or to describe, those practitioners registered as orthodontic auxiliaries in the full scope of orthodontic auxiliary practice.
- 7 An orthodontic auxiliary's primary task is to assist the dentist in the carrying out of orthodontic procedures.
- 8 Orthodontic auxiliaries are responsible and accountable for their own clinical practice within their scope of practice, but the dentist is responsible and accountable for the **direct clinical supervision**.
- 9 Orthodontic auxiliaries practice under the **direct clinical supervision** of a dentist who is present on the premises at which the work is being carried out.

## Responsibilities within the Working Relationship

- 10 Orthodontic auxiliaries carry out orthodontic procedures within the boundaries of their education, training, competence and scope of practice.
- 11 Orthodontic auxiliaries and the dentists who supervise them **must** jointly review and sign a practice standard agreement.
- 12 The dentist must prepare a treatment plan for the patient concerned prior to the orthodontic auxiliary undertaking any orthodontic procedures on the patient; and remain responsible for the patient's clinical care outcomes.
- 13 The dentist is responsible for the treatment care outcomes and overall management of the patient's dental health.

## Continuing Professional Development

- 14 In relation to continuing professional development the dentist should support the orthodontic auxiliary in continuing education, by assisting the auxiliary with appropriate access to, and facilitate attendance at continuing professional development opportunities.

## Practice Standard Agreement for Orthodontic Auxiliaries and Dentists

(i) I am a registered Orthodontic Auxiliary.....  
(insert name)

I have read, understand and will abide by this Practice Standard

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(Name of Orthodontic Auxiliary) (Signed by Orthodontic Auxiliary) (Date)

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(Name of Dentist) (Signed by Dentist) (Date)

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(Name of Dentist) (Signed by Dentist) (Date)

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(Name of Dentist) (Signed by Dentist) (Date)

(ii) At these listed location(s)

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The following dentist(s) are responsible for providing the above signed registered orthodontic auxiliary with direct clinical supervision in accordance with this Practice Standard.

----- (name of dentist)

----- (name of dentist)

----- (name of dentist)

The following dentist holds a current **radiography** licence and is responsible for the direct supervision in relation to radiography and in accordance with the above orthodontic auxiliaries registered Scope of Practice.

----- (name of dentist)

### Notes

- Please note this agreement is location specific, that is, at a particular location a particular dentist(s) is agreeing to responsibilities as per the Practice Standard.
- A new agreement is required for each practice you work in.

## **Orthodontic Auxiliary Scope of Practice**

The scope of practice for orthodontic auxiliaries is set out in the documented “Detailed Scope of Orthodontic Auxiliary Practice” produced and published from time to time by the Dental Council - New Zealand.

Orthodontic auxiliary practice is a subset of the practice of dentistry, and is commensurate with an orthodontic auxiliary’s approved training, experience and competence.

Orthodontic Auxiliaries practice under the direct clinical supervision of a dentist or orthodontist who is present on the premises at which the work is carried out, who has prepared a treatment plan for the patient concerned and who is responsible for patient’s clinical care outcomes.

Orthodontic auxiliaries assist the dentist or orthodontist in implementing orthodontic treatment through performing such orthodontic procedures as taking impressions and making study models, inserting and removing some orthodontic appliances, preparing teeth for bonding, removing bonding composite and banding cement and providing oral health education and advice on the care and maintenance of orthodontic appliances.

## **Detailed Scope of Practice for Orthodontic Auxiliary Practice**

1. Taking clinical photographs for records
2. Taking impressions. Obtaining a record of occlusal relationships
3. Tracing cephalometric radiographs
4. Placing separators
5. Sizing of metal bands and their cementation including loose bands during treatment
6. Supragingival polishing of teeth (as part of oral hygiene, before bonding and after removal of fixed attachments)
7. Preparation of teeth for the bonding of fixed attachments and fixed retainers
8. Indirect bonding of brackets as set up by the orthodontist
9. Providing oral hygiene instruction and advice on the care and maintenance of orthodontic appliances
10. Placing archwires as formed by the orthodontist when necessary and replacing ligatures /closing self ligating brackets
11. Removing archwires after removing elastomeric or wire ligatures, or opening self ligating brackets
12. Removing fixed orthodontic attachments and retainers
13. Removing adhesives after the removal of fixed attachments using burs in slow speed handpieces where there is minimal potential for the removal of enamel
14. Trial fitting of removable appliances. This does not include activation
15. Fitting of passive removable retainers
16. Bonding preformed fixed retainers
17. Making study models and fabricating retainers and undertaking other simple laboratory procedures of an orthodontic nature

## **Prescribed Qualifications**

- Certificate of Orthodontic Assisting, Academy of Orthodontic Assisting; possession of a dental therapy, dental hygiene or dentistry qualification or registration as a dental auxiliary and approved experience in the provision of orthodontic auxiliary services under the direction and supervision of a dentist or dental specialist who can attest to competency.
- New Zealand Association of Orthodontists, Orthodontic Auxiliary Training Programme: Certificate of Orthodontic Assisting.