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English translation of an extract from regulations for specialist training in dentistry (HSLF 2017:77), set by the Swedish National Board of Health and Welfare, valid from 1st June 2018. Original text in Swedish, see www.socialstyrelsen.se¹

Orofacial medicine specialty in Sweden

About the specialty

Orofacial medicine is a specialized branch of dental care dealing with the diagnosis and treatment of adult patients with orofacial diseases or conditions as well as other conditions such as systemic diseases, disabilities or mental illness. Within the specialty, patients are treated in both outpatient and inpatient care.

Areas of expertise include:

- in-depth knowledge concerning systemic diseases, medical treatments, disabilities and geriatrics
- in-depth knowledge concerning psychology and psychiatry
- in-depth knowledge concerning mucosal diseases and oral manifestations of systemic diseases and medical treatments
- care of patients with impaired autonomy
- in-depth knowledge concerning the link between a patient's physical, mental, social and existential needs

The interaction with other specialties and professions or professional groups in both medical care (dental and health care) and nursing care is central to the specialty.

About the description of objectives

Specialty training for dentists is goal-oriented, which means that it is based on set objectives. These objectives are presented in a description of objectives for each specialty. The description of objectives specifies the expertise required for a new specialist within the specialty. This must be used in the design of a dentist's specialist training and in the evaluation of his or her skills. The description of objectives is broken down into various sub-goals. The scope of the sub-goals and how long it will take to achieve them differ. Some sub-goals are specialty-wide (SW). The wording of these is identical and they apply for multiple specialties. Others are specialty-specific and thus apply to only one specialty. The sub-goals consist of a number of points. Some of these begin with the phrase "demonstrate knowledge concerning" and specify the knowledge that a dental specialist must have acquired during the training. Others start with the words "be able" and specify either skills or approaches that a dental specialist must have developed during their training. Odontological care is used in the descriptions of objectives as a designation for the actions that a dentist takes within the scope of their specialist expertise, in both outpatient and inpatient care. These actions include examination, assessment, diagnosis, prognosis, treatment and follow-up. Treatment can be both preventative and rehabilitative, both surgical and non-surgical. Referral to other care providers (dental and health care) and nursing care may be included in odontological care.

¹ <https://www.socialstyrelsen.se/Lists/Artikelkatalog/Attachments/20799/2017-12-40.pdf>

Descriptions of objectives for the specialty of orofacial medicine

Specialty-wide sub-goals (SW) for all dental specialties

SW 1 Leading professional development

The specialist dentist must

- be able to take responsibility for the development of examination and treatment procedures within their own specialty
- be able to convey knowledge in their own specialty subject area to different target groups
- be able to take responsibility for the interaction between their own specialty and e.g. other specialties, professions and organizations
- be able to take responsibility for continuous learning at the workplace
- be able to take responsibility for ensuring that improvement measures are carried out based on systematic evaluations of the workplace processes and procedures
- be able to take responsibility for the integration and phasing out of techniques and methods

SW 2 Dental public health

The specialist dentist must

- be able to apply laws, regulations and other administrative provisions applicable to specialist care
- demonstrate knowledge concerning the management and organization of the specialist dental care
- demonstrate knowledge concerning factors that affect health and the differences between different groups in society in terms of oral health
- demonstrate knowledge concerning how initiatives at the societal level can affect the oral health of the population and how the initiatives can be organized

SW 3 Communication, pedagogy and cooperation

The specialist dentist must

- be able to present and explain odontological or medical information in a clear and accessible manner, both verbally and in writing
- be able to adapt their manner of communicating with patients and relatives based on individual needs and communicative abilities
- be able to give patients and relatives difficult news respectfully, emphatically and sympathetically
- be able to plan and carry out teaching for different target groups
- be able to supervise and instruct colleagues and other co-workers
- be able to take responsibility for the multi-professional teamwork surrounding individual patients

SW 4 Science

The specialist dentist must

- be able to take part in knowledge development within their own specialty
- be able to critically review and evaluate odontological or medical scientific information
- be able to apply a scientific approach in their daily work

SW 5 Ethics

The specialist dentist must

- be able to identify ethical problems and analyse them in a structured manner
- be able to handle value conflicts in daily work

SW 6 Diversity and equality

The specialist dentist must

- demonstrate knowledge concerning how discrimination and inequality occur in society
- demonstrate knowledge concerning how discrimination and inequalities in dental care can be prevented and counteracted

SW 7 Patients with special needs

The specialist dentist must

- be able to identify patients with special needs and take adequate measures
- be able to cooperate in networks surrounding patients with special needs

SW 9 Geriatrics

The specialist dentist must – be able to adapt the dental care of older patients based on their particular conditions and needs

Specialist-specific sub-goals for Orofacial medicine

1 Psychology and psychiatry

The specialist dentist must

- demonstrate knowledge concerning how mental illness and psychiatric disorders and conditions could affect orofacial diseases and conditions
- be able to provide odontological care to patients with mental illness or psychological disorders or conditions

2 Odontological care in connection with internal medicine diseases and conditions

The specialist dentist must

- demonstrate knowledge on internal medicine diseases and conditions that could affect oral diseases and conditions
- be able to assess how a patient's internal medicine diseases or conditions interact with oral diseases or conditions
- be able to provide odontological care to patients with internal medicine diseases or conditions

3 Odontological care in connection with haematological and oncological diseases and conditions

The specialist dentist must

- demonstrate knowledge concerning haematological and oncological diseases and conditions that could affect oral diseases and conditions
- be able to assess how a patient's haematological or oncological diseases or conditions interact with oral diseases or conditions
- be able to examine patients with oncological diseases or conditions in the oral cavity and surrounding tissues
- be able to provide odontological care to patients with haematological or oncological diseases or conditions

4 Odontological care in connection with geriatric diseases and conditions

The specialist dentist must

- demonstrate knowledge concerning geriatric diseases and conditions that could affect oral diseases and conditions
- be able to assess how a patient's geriatric diseases or conditions interact with oral diseases
- be able to provide odontological care to patients with geriatric diseases or conditions

5 Odontological care in connection with neurological diseases and conditions

The specialist dentist must

- demonstrate knowledge concerning neurological diseases and conditions that could affect oral diseases and conditions
- be able to assess how a patient's neurological diseases or conditions interact with oral diseases
- be able to provide odontological care to patients with neurological diseases or conditions

6 Odontological care in connection with rheumatological diseases and conditions and other systemic diseases

The specialist dentist must

- demonstrate knowledge concerning rheumatological diseases and conditions and other systemic diseases that could affect oral diseases and conditions
- demonstrate knowledge concerning how rheumatological diseases and conditions and other systemic diseases could affect oral diseases and conditions
- be able to provide odontological care to patients with rheumatological diseases or conditions or other systemic diseases

7 Odontological care in connection with infectious diseases and infectious conditions

The specialist dentist must

- demonstrate knowledge concerning infectious diseases and infectious conditions that could lead to orofacial diseases and conditions
- be able to provide odontological care to patients with infectious diseases or infectious conditions
- be able to assess how infections in teeth, oral cavity, jaws or surrounding tissues affect a patient's general state of health
- be able to provide odontological care to patients with infections in the teeth, oral cavity, jaws or surrounding tissues prior to medical treatment

8 Ear, nose and throat diseases

The specialist dentist must

- demonstrate knowledge concerning diseases and conditions of the ear, nose and throat that could affect orofacial diseases and conditions
- demonstrate knowledge concerning how diseases and conditions of the ear, nose and throat could interact with orofacial diseases and conditions

9 Laboratory medicine

The specialist dentist must

- demonstrate knowledge concerning laboratory medicine methods relevant to treatment planning for patients receiving specialist care
- demonstrate knowledge concerning laboratory medicine methods relevant to the odontological treatment of patients receiving specialist care
- be able to assess the need for and initiate laboratory medicine examinations for patients receiving specialist care
- be able to assess laboratory medicine examination results in connection with odontological care

10 Odontological care in the final stages of life

The specialist dentist must

- demonstrate knowledge concerning palliative care in the final stages of life
- be able to provide odontological care to patients in the final stages of life, taking into account physical, mental, social and existential needs

11 Patients with reduced autonomy

The specialist dentist must

- be able to cooperate with patients with reduced autonomy and their relatives, taking into account ethical and legal aspects
- be able to cooperate with health and social care staff concerning patients' oral health and treatment with respect for the patients' self-determination, dignity and privacy

12 Patients and relatives being harmed

The specialist dentist must

- be able to identify signs that patients or their children or other relatives are being harmed and be able to take adequate action

13 Oral mucosal changes

The specialist dentist must

- demonstrate knowledge concerning the aetiology, pathogenesis and histopathology of oral mucosal changes
- demonstrate knowledge concerning symptoms and diagnosis of oral mucosal changes
- be able to examine, diagnose and determine prognosis of patients with oral mucosal changes
- be able to provide care to patients with oral mucosal changes

14 Radiology

The specialist dentist must

- demonstrate knowledge concerning radiology methods relevant to the treatment planning and odontological treatment of patients receiving specialist care
- be able to assess radiological examination results in the odontological care of patients receiving specialist care

15 Anaesthesia and sedation

The specialist dentist must

- demonstrate knowledge concerning methods in anaesthesia and sedation
- be able to assess the need for anaesthesia and sedation in connection with odontological care
- be able to apply methods for sedation as part of odontological care
- be able to provide odontological care to patients who are sedated or under anaesthesia

16 Pharmaceuticals

The specialist dentist must

- demonstrate knowledge on how drug treatments can be affected by oral diseases and conditions
- be able to adjust a specific drug treatment to a patient's other drug treatments and all of his or her diseases and conditions

17 Oral motor dysfunction

The specialist dentist must

- demonstrate knowledge concerning diseases and conditions that could give rise to oral motor dysfunction
- demonstrate knowledge concerning the diagnosis and treatment of oral motor dysfunction
- be able to provide odontological care to patients with oral motor dysfunction

18 Odontological care in connection with medical, physical, psychological and intellectual impairments

The specialist dentist must

- be able to assess how a patient's disabilities interact with orofacial diseases or conditions
- be able to diagnose orofacial diseases and conditions in patients with medical, physical, psychological or intellectual impairments
- be able to make a treatment plan that is adapted to a patient's particular conditions and needs
- be able to provide odontological care to patients with medical, physical, psychological or intellectual impairments