Introduction

An internship as a dental assistant allowed me to work closely with a dentist and two dental hygienists in a clinical treatment setting. I was part of the dental staff at Gentle Family Dental Care, where I was supervised by Dr. Brett T. Skinner and Stacey Clark. The office is a fast-paced general dentistry practice which treats all types of dental conditions in patients of every age and background.

I chose this internship in the hope that I would gain valuable experience in patient care and interaction as well as knowledge of how quality dental care can impact the lives of patients.

As an assistant to Dr. Skinner, I received hands-on experience participating in dental procedures, medical record keeping, and professional-patient relationships. Positive patient experience and comfort was the focus of my role at Gentle Family Dental Care.

Responsibilities

Primary responsibilities during my internship in a dental office included:

1. Communicate accurately and with empathy toward patients to create an environment of trust and comfort.
2. Optimize procedure flow by accurate setup of procedure instruments and proper assisting techniques.
3. Keep accurate patient care records in the form of detailed procedure notes and charting records.
4. Effectively control infection in a medical setting through means of proper sterilization techniques.

Conclusions

As an aspiring physician assistant, I gained invaluable knowledge through my internship. It allowed me to see the effects of positive healthcare provider-patient relationships, which is the basis of all medical professions. The opportunity to form relationships with patients you see routinely allows a higher level of care. Involvement in all stages of care, beginning with diagnosis, through treatment, and all the way to follow up builds trust between patients and healthcare providers. I saw firsthand how this relationship offers a sense of relief for patients and fulfillment for providers. This only reinforced the surety of my career choice.

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