

## Professional Reflection of a Senior Dental Hygiene Student 2022

On this day of December 2nd, 2022 I have been able to evaluate my skills as a dental hygiene student compared to the end of my junior year. I have been able to accomplish heavier cases and pass my scaling and root planing products using every technique I have learned and adapt to the varying cases involved. I have also improved on the goal of time management and accomplished treatment promptly, always being conscious of the time I have spent assessing, scaling, and giving oral hygiene instructions. As a junior, I feel like most of the time was spent probing, and now the skill of time management has allowed me to complete all portions of treating a patient to be done with accuracy and efficiency. Planning ahead, organization of paperwork and knowledge of how to perform procedures thoroughly is key in not wasting any time and using downtime to give oral hygiene instructions catered to the needs of the patient and not the needs of requirements. The patient's needs always come before the needs to pass requirements and giving a self-review portion in our NCR forms allows me to strive to always improve.

One of the challenges I work on is calculus detection, as it is a very tactile feeling and as time goes by, detecting minute pieces of calculus is something that comes with experience, time, and practice. I am always amazed at some of the faculty and their delicate exploration in detecting calculus is something I want to improve. I have also worked on my sequencing depending on the specific case and have learned a lot about choosing the right instruments for the job which will allow me to save time and develop my own way of performing efficient and successful removal of deposits. For instance, for full mouth prophylaxis, I have developed a method to allow me to use the same

instrument, such as a 13/14 to do all the distal portions and then switching to a toe-down position to scale all distal line angles, switching to a mesial instrument (11/12 or 15/16) and buccal/lingual instrument in order to complete all surfaces of posterior teeth then caring for the anterior sextant. It is a sequencing technique I adopted from professor Chie and am grateful for the knowledge as before I would waste too much time putting down and picking up instruments which take precious time away and compromises ergonomics with constant turning and changing of positions. Also using my armamentarium and knowing what instrument would work best initially, intermittently, fine scaling, and root planing.

In the next semester, I aim to be able to assess and diagnose patients without second guessing and be able to plan treatment accordingly as I now feel more confident to be able to identify the extent of bone loss, clinical attachment loss, and modification to treatment depending on the case. Being able to treat the patient with confidence, caring nature and the patient's best interest at heart is something important to my philosophy and developing a clinician-patient relationship built on trust is a major goal that will stay with me in my career as a dental hygienist.