

Comprehensive Clinical Dentistry Course in Competency Based Curriculum

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Received: June 06, 2015; **Published:** August 01, 2015

The "Comprehensive Clinical Dentistry" (CCD) course aims at expanding different professional skills and clinical experiences of undergraduate students. Furthermore, the CCD-course targets to enhance their ability to comprehensively manage different oral and dental health problems, to present and to discuss treatment plans using modern evidence-based multidisciplinary patient-centered approaches. Many dental schools around the world include this course as a major course of greatest credit hours of other courses of the undergraduate dental program [1].

The CCD-course is usually offered by the Department of Comprehensive Care in collaboration with all clinical disciplines in a horizontal and vertical integration manner. The onset of the CCD-course is just after the preclinical phase of the dental program. This gives adequate time, two to three years in different dental colleges, for the students to manage their cases with a satisfactory schedule for executing the most suitable treatment plan for each particular case. Moreover, this assures optimum quality oral and dental health care delivery as well as the patients' welfare and satisfaction. This is in line with the new Accreditation Standards for Dental Education Programs by the ADA (American Dental Association). In modern competency-based curricula, during the CCD-course students take a set of competency exams in different clinical specialties [2].

The students are supervised remotely rather than closely, which gives adequate training for independent practice. The performance of the students in the CCD-course depends on providing portfolios for clinical achievements in addition to passing competency exams rather than fulfilling certain clinical requirements. Additionally, the students' time management and ethical behavior are basic aspects in the routine clinical evaluation throughout the course. The management of patients in the CCD-course includes general dental practice of oral diagnosis, oral surgery, restorative dentistry, Periodontology, endodontics, prosthodontics and orthodontics and, whenever needed, referral for specialists in cases beyond the general dental practice [3].

The Objectives of the course

At the end of the course, the student should be able to:

1. Perform a comprehensive diagnosis of oral and dental health problems accurately employing all modern diagnostic tools.
2. Develop, present and discuss comprehensive treatment plans conducive to re-establishing and maintaining optimum status of health, function, aesthetics, patient satisfaction and welfare in a logical sequence and progress for *optimum quality and evidence-based care*.
3. Select, modify and follow the most appropriate comprehensive treatment plan for a particular case in a *multidisciplinary, patient-centered care* and to refer patients to specialized dental professionals for more extensive procedures beyond the scope of the general dental practice.
4. Competently carry out all prevention, intervention procedures in *modern general dental practice* as well as accurately prescribe adjunctive therapeutic measures; to present and to discuss completely treated cases.

The CCD-course usually encompasses one clinical and three didactic components:

- a. Treatment planning design and presentation (didactic): In this part, the student selects and designs the most appropriate treatment planning in close communication with his respective patient after consulting respective clinical instructors in an evidence-based approach. Furthermore, student should present and discuss his treatment plan with clinical instructors in sets of seminar sessions.
- b. Topic presentation (didactic): The student should be involved in presenting respective topics of clinical relevance to daily modern general dental practice. The student should select and present his topic after reviewing it with the course director and respective instructors.
- c. Executing the treatment plan by carrying out number of procedures, referrals and providing necessary adjunctive measures (clinical). Through the CCD-course a student should be able to complete a number of comprehensive cases with a number of clinical problems including at least three different clinical disciplines where prosthodontics as a main part in the treatment plan varying extensiveness according to the criteria described by the CCD-panel which is formed of members representing the different clinical specialties and chaired by the CCD-course director. The CCD-panel is concerned with determining policies and formulating regulations and monitoring the students.
- d. Cases Presentations (didactic): Where the student presents his case after complete fulfillment of all treatments listed in the treatment plan and which were previously presented as the clinical problems. The student discusses his treatment and any modifications that occurred in the treatment plan after obtaining the approval of the respective instructors and course director [4].

Conclusion

In conclusion, as part of a competency-based curriculum, the CCD-course augments the students' skills of self, life-long education and research conduction, thus moving students from discipline-based to competency-based education with a more objectively structured, constructively aligned and outcome-based curriculum. This enables students to attain a life-long learning attitudeso that on graduation they may be considered as qualified beginners in dental practice implementing evidence-based and patient-centered approaches.

Bibliography

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Volume 2 Issue 2 August 2015

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