

Informed Consent for Dental Procedures

Purpose

The purpose of this document is to ensure that all patients of the clinic receive clear, comprehensive, and understandable information about their dental care, and that valid informed consent is obtained prior to any procedure.

Scope

This document applies to all dentists, dental hygienists, dental assistants, administrative staff, and any other personnel involved in patient care or treatment planning within the clinic.

Statement

This document says that informed consent must be obtained before initiating any dental procedure, ensuring that the patient understands the nature, risks, benefits, alternatives, costs, and expected outcomes of the proposed treatment.

Requirements for Obtaining Informed Consent

A. Information to Be Provided to the Patient

The treating dentist must provide the patient with the following:

- **Nature of the procedure**
- **Purpose and benefits** of the treatment
- **Material risks and potential complications**
- **Reasonable alternatives**, including the option of no treatment
- **Expected prognosis** with and without treatment
- **Estimated costs** and any anticipated additional fees
- **Consequences of declining treatment**

The information must be presented in a way that is understandable to the patient, using plain language and visual aids when appropriate.

B. Patient Questions and Understanding

- The patient must be given the opportunity to ask questions.
- The dentist must confirm that the patient understands the information. The "teach-back" method is encouraged.
- The patient must voluntarily agree to the proposed treatment without coercion.

C. Documentation Requirements

The provider must document the informed consent discussion in the patient chart, including:

- Explanation of the proposed treatment
- Risks, benefits, and alternatives reviewed
- Patient questions and responses
- Confirmation that the patient understood the information
- That consent was given (verbal or written)

Written consent is required for:

- Surgical procedures
- Sedation or anesthesia
- Orthodontic treatment
- Implant placement
- CBCT imaging
- Any complex or high-risk procedure

D. Special Considerations

1. Minors and Incapable Adults

- Consent must be obtained from a parent, legal guardian, or substitute decision-maker.
- When appropriate, the minor or incapable adult should be involved in the discussion to the extent of their capacity.

2. Sedation and Anesthesia

- A separate sedation/anesthesia consent form must be used.
- Staff must follow sedation-specific regulatory requirements.

3. Implant Dentistry and Oral Surgery

- Additional discussion of long-term maintenance, possible failure, and need for future interventions is required.

4. Diagnostic Imaging (CBCT)

- Patients must be informed of the purpose of the CBCT scan, radiation exposure considerations, and how results will be used.

E. Staff Responsibilities

1. Dentists

- Lead the informed consent process.
- Ensure the patient has a clear understanding.
- Complete all required documentation.

2. Dental Assistants and Hygienists

- May provide supplementary explanations or educational material.
- Must not obtain consent independently for procedures requiring dentist authorization.

3. Administrative Staff

- Provide patients with written materials or forms as needed.
- Ensure signed consent forms are properly filed in the patient's record.

F. Review and Training

- This document shall be reviewed annually or when regulatory changes occur.
- All clinical staff should undergo training on informed consent procedures at onboarding and periodic refreshers thereafter.