



STATE OF IOWA

IOWA DENTAL BOARD

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Expanded Functions
Frequently Asked Clinical Questions
Approved By the Iowa Dental Board: 1/26/17

Overview: This document answers frequently asked clinical questions about expanded functions. This is the second resource the Iowa Dental Board has published regarding these rules (see “Expanded Functions FAQs” at www.dentalboard.iowa.gov). Iowa Administrative Code 650-20.4 establishes the requirements for registered dental assistants to provide expanded functions. Iowa Administrative Code 650-10.3(8) establishes the requirements for licensed hygienists to provide expanded functions. For more information contact the Board office at idb@iowa.gov.

1. Can a Basic or Certified Expanded Function Level 1 Provider place a sedative filling if using the same material as when placing a base such as IRM?

No, they cannot. Only Certified Level 2 Providers can place and shape amalgam or composite materials following the preparation of a tooth by a dentist. A Basic or Certified Expanded Function Level 1 Provider cannot place fillings.

Board rules limit expanded function providers to “applying” cavity liners and bases, desensitizing agents and bonding systems. The purpose and technique of these procedures is different than placing restorations, as their purpose is to apply a material that provides protection and/or retention to the tooth being restored.

The judgement and skill required to place a restoration is different than the judgement and skill required to place a liner or a base even though the same material may be used. That is why the training requirements differ.

Liner, base and cement materials are constantly changing and improving in a trend to reduce the number of components and clinical placement steps. Such advancements in materials allow some to be used for more than one purpose. Intermediate Restorative Material (IRM) would be such an example since the material may be used as a base or as a temporary restorative filling material. Another example, even though they have been available for many years, are glass ionomers (GI). Depending on the category, they can be used as a liner, a base, a luting agent or as a restorative material.

Just because an expanded function provider has training in the use of a material for a specific purpose, such as a base or liner, that does not authorize them to use that same material for other purposes, such as for a restoration.

2. If an expanded function trained dental assistant can place etch before the bonding agent (placement of bonding systems) why can they not place sealants?

Board rules (650—20.3(2)) specifically prohibit a dental assistant from placing sealants, and Iowa law, pursuant to the 2000 Iowa Acts, specifically prohibits the dental board from adopting rules that would allow a dental assistant to place sealants. Certified Level 2 dental assistants can use sealant materials as part of a restorative procedure (see question #3 below).

3. Can Certified Level 2 dental assistants use sealant materials as part of a restorative procedure?

Yes. Iowa law expressly prohibits dental assistants from placing sealants. It does not prevent them from using sealant material as part of a restorative procedure. Level 2 expanded function rules for dental assistants allow for the placement and shaping of composite following preparation of a tooth by a dentist. Sealing unrestored pits, fissures or grooves as part of a composite filling is a preventative resin restoration. This is very different and distinct from placing a sealant on a stand-alone tooth for preventative or therapeutic purposes.

4. Does the expanded function procedure of fabrication and removal of a provisional restoration also include the placement of the provisional restoration? If not, why since it is a reversible/temporary procedure?

Basic and Level 1 Expanded Function Procedure rules do not allow for the placement of a provisional restoration (crowns & bridges). Basic or Certified Expanded Function Level 1 Providers are only allowed to fabricate and remove provisional restorations. While the provisional restorations themselves may be temporary, their placement requires a more advanced level of training, judgement and skill to ensure proper seating and to perform bite adjustment.

Level 2 Expanded Function Procedure rules allow for the “placement” of stainless steel crowns only. The decision to limit such crown material to stainless steel was made by the Dental Board and the 2012 Expanded Functions Task Force charged with increasing the number of expanded functions that appropriately trained and certified dental auxiliaries are allowed to perform.

5. Has suture removal ever been, or will it ever be, considered for an expanded function?

The Board is not aware of any rule which would prohibit a registered dental assistant (non-expanded function) from removing sutures provided that it is done under the direct supervision of a dentist. The procedure is not listed as one that cannot be delegated pursuant to Board rules. It is mechanical in nature, does not result in an irreversible alteration of the oral anatomy, and it does not require the professional judgement and skill of a dentist. A dental hygienist could also provide such a procedure under general supervision.

6. Can an expanded function trained dental assistant remove excess wet cement from a crown a dentist has just placed with fingers or a cotton roll/cotton tip applicator (they are not using hand instrumentation)?

If hand instrumentation is not being used expanded function training is not necessary.

7. Can a Basic or Certified Expanded Function Level 1 Provider etch and put adhesive on a prep?

Because there have been technological advances in materials, there may be gray area in the definition of bonding systems. For the purpose of expanded function rules, bonding systems are defined as any adhesive. This would include anything involving a primer, adhesive and etch, but newer systems could combine these all into one solution. A Based or Certified Expanded Function Level 1 Provider may only apply the etch/adhesive to the tooth surface and may not place any appliance or device that requires the professional judgement and skill of a dentist, such as an orthodontic bracket, crowns, bridges, etc.

8. Can a Basic or Certified Expanded Function Level 1 Provider place Invisalign or other clear aligner composite attachments or buttons?

Yes. This would be allowed under bonding systems, as it is mechanical in nature and reversible.

9. Can a Basic or Certified Expanded Function Level 1 Provider take CEREC, Itero or Trios digital impressions?

Yes. This is allowed under taking final impressions.

10. Does the fabrication and removal of provisional restorations listed under Level 1 procedures allow the placement of filling materials for tooth restorations?

No. Provisional restorations only refer to fabricating or removing temporary crowns and bridges and does not include placing restorative materials.