

Hygienist Incentives

Compensation plans for dental hygienists can significantly influence both their motivation and their alignment with the practice's goals. By implementing well-thought-out compensation strategies, dental offices can not only boost their revenues but also enhance patient care and satisfaction. Here are some ideas for compensation plans that incorporate commissions, bonuses, and incentives tied to both sales and treatment plan acceptances:

1. Commission on Sales

Offering commissions on products sold directly by hygienists (like Waterpiks, electric toothbrushes, or other dental care products) can motivate them to discuss and recommend these products more frequently. This strategy can lead to increased sales and improved patient oral health outcomes.

Structure: A fixed percentage (e.g., 10-20%) of the sale price for each item sold, or a flat rate per item.

Training: Provide training on product details, benefits, and usage so hygienists can confidently recommend them.

2. Bonus for Preventative Care Procedures

Incentivizing hygienists for each additional preventative care procedure they perform can encourage them to recommend and apply treatments like night guards, sealants, and fluoride treatments that benefit the patient's oral health.

Structure: A set bonus amount (e.g., \$5 for fluoride application, \$10 for sealants, \$20 for night guards) for each procedure completed.

Eligibility: Ensure bonuses are tied to appropriate patient care standards to maintain ethical practices.

3. Incentives for Treatment Plan Acceptance

Encouraging hygienists to play an active role in treatment planning and acceptance can be beneficial. They often spend more time with patients than dentists, giving them ample opportunity to build trust and discuss treatment options.

Structure: Offer a percentage or fixed bonus for treatment plans accepted by patients due to the hygienist's recommendations. This could be based on the value of the treatment plan or a flat rate for each accepted plan.

Criteria: Clearly define what constitutes an "accepted treatment plan" and ensure it's documented that the hygienist's involvement directly influenced the acceptance.

4. Performance-Based Raises

Regular performance reviews that lead to salary increases can be highly motivating. Criteria might include patient feedback, sales targets, procedural accuracy, and overall contribution to the practice.

Structure: Annual or semi-annual reviews with potential salary increases based on predefined performance metrics.

5. Profit Sharing

Involving hygienists in profit sharing can align their interests directly with the practice's profitability, fostering a deeper sense of belonging and commitment.

Structure: A percentage of the profits could be distributed among staff based on their role, tenure, and performance metrics.

6. Team-Based Bonuses

Encourage teamwork by setting up practice-wide goals for sales, patient numbers, or patient satisfaction scores. When these goals are met, all team members receive a bonus.

Structure: If the practice's monthly or quarterly goals are met, a bonus pool is shared among the team.

Implementation Tips:

Transparency: Clearly communicate how each component of the compensation is calculated and the potential earnings from each.

Compliance: Ensure the compensation plan complies with local regulations regarding employee compensation and sales commissions.

Feedback: Regularly solicit feedback from hygienists to gauge the effectiveness and fairness of the compensation plan, making adjustments as necessary.

A well-designed compensation plan can not only motivate hygienists but also ensure that their goals align with those of the practice, ultimately leading to improved patient outcomes and business success.

Average Dental Hygienist Salaries in the US:

- \$74,500 average in NE US
- \$62,600 average in SE US
- \$70,750 average in SW US
- \$81,000 average in NW