

HANDBOOK

DENTAL PUBLIC HEALTH

GROOMING PROGRAMME



ORAL HEALTH PROGRAMME
MINISTRY OF HEALTH MALAYSIA

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**Message from the Principal Director of Oral Health
Ministry of Health Malaysia**

Dental Public Health gained recognition as one of the nine specialties in the Ministry of Health Malaysia in 2016. As a result, candidates applying to pursue postgraduate studies in this field have increased by many folds. However, many of them are oblivious to the extent of responsibility and accountability that is expected of a Dental Public Health Specialist (DPHS). Hence, a structured attachment programme will not only be an eye opener, but will open doors of opportunities towards the development and enhancement of hidden talents among potential candidates.

It is hoped that this Dental Public Health Grooming Programme (DPHGP) handbook will serve as a guide to both aspiring candidates and potential supervisors. Finally, I would like to congratulate everyone who is directly and indirectly involved in the development of this Programme. A leader is not born but is made. Therefore, they must be nurtured and continuously coached to cultivate characteristics and skills, and begin by taking the first step.

Dr Nomah binti Taharim

ACKNOWLEDGEMENT

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DENTAL PUBLIC HEALTH GROOMING PROGRAMME

1. INTRODUCTION

In recent years, the number of applications for Dental Public Health (DPH) postgraduate training has increased following recognition of DPH as one of the nine dental specialties in the Ministry of Health Malaysia in 2016.

Currently, for other dental specialties, there is a specific attachment programme for potential candidates interested in pursuing specialisation. However, no such programme is available for DPH. Consequently, it was agreed that a grooming programme for interested candidates in DPH specialty training would be developed.

The DPH Grooming Programme (DPHGP) is designed to serve as a training and orientation platform for potential candidates towards better understanding of the scope in the field of DPH. This programme will provide an insight into the role and function of Dental Public Health Specialist (DPHS) and will assist candidates during their interview for Federal Scholarship.

DPHGP is seen as a win-win initiative, whereby candidates are given the opportunity to gain experience through stimulus learning, while selection of suitable candidates can be made more objectively. However, DPHGP is not the only requirement to be selected for awarding scholarship.

2. BACKGROUND

Candidates attending interview for Federal Scholarship in DPH have no prior exposure and attachment related to the specialisation and are unaware of the roles and functions of DPHS, often making reference that the core function of DPHS is mainly administration.

Feedback received from panel of interviewers reported that English proficiency among candidates was poor particularly in communication and public speaking albeit good written English. In addition, candidates were lacking in analytical and critical thinking skills, both being important attributes of a DPHS. Therefore, selection of suitable candidates for postgraduate training in DPH is essential and requires an attachment programme that is structured and designed to meet the learning outcomes as specified, but with some flexibility in implementation.

3. OBJECTIVES

This document provides guidance in the implementation of DPHGP for candidates interested in pursuing postgraduate dental training in DPH, to prepare their mind-set with knowledge and understanding of the role and function of DPHS.

This document will provide information on the following:

- i. Programme structure (duration, placement and activities);
- ii. Content of the programme according to the learning outcome as specified;
- iii. Assessment; and
- iv. Requirement for programme completion.

Objectives of the DPHGP are to:

- i. Introduce basic clinical governance and its application;
- ii. Encourage analytical and critical thinking through literature appraisal and interpretation of available data/information;
- iii. Equip knowledge and skills required to manage oral health resources, programmes and service delivery at district/state/national level;
- iv. Enhance communication skills in English and Malay; and
- v. Explore leadership qualities and management skill.

4. PROGRAMME LEARNING OUTCOMES

At the end of the Programme, the candidates should be able to:

- i. Display skills in clinical governance and in conducting, implementing and managing oral health programmes for community;
- ii. Practice quality improvement initiatives and governance in oral health care services to maintain and improve standards of oral health based on research evidences;
- iii. Demonstrate ability to appraise scientific literature and oral health data;
- iv. Conduct situational analysis on oral health care activities;
- v. Prepare research proposal and/or conduct research with supervision;
- vi. Demonstrate proficiency in scientific writing;
- vii. Apply epidemiological concepts and trends related to oral diseases to solve public health problems and issues;
- viii. Plan and conduct oral health promotion activities;
- ix. Participate in implementation of oral health policy;
- x. Demonstrate ability in the management of oral health resources;
- xi. Perform public speaking at various levels;
- xii. Participate actively in group communication sessions;
- xiii. Demonstrate ability to collaborate and negotiate effectively with stakeholders;
- xiv. Display leadership qualities with peers and stakeholders;
- xv. Organise oral health team in service delivery; and
- xvi. Display skills for life-long learning and continuous professional development.

5. IMPLEMENTATION

The proposed implementation strategies to achieve the objectives of the DPHGP are as follows:

5.1 Selection of Candidates

Selection criteria for candidates to be enrolled into DPHGP will be as follows:

- i. Display interest in pursuing DPH as a postgraduate study;
- ii. Exhibit positive attitudes such as discipline, committed, creative, proactive etc.; and
- iii. Working experience of at least three (3) years,

5.2 Placement and Attachment of the Candidate

The proposed maximum duration of attachment is two (2) years in rotation at the Oral Health Programme/ State Health Deputy Director (Dental) Office, District Dental Office with DPHS and his/her workplace (**Table 1**). A DPHS shall be assigned as principal supervisor.

5.3 Appointment of the Supervisor

A principal supervisor shall be a gazetted DPHS appointed by:

- i. Director of Oral Health Care Division for the attachment at the Oral Health Programme; or
- ii. State Health Deputy Director (Dental) for attachment at the state and district level.

It is recommended that each supervisor shall supervise no more than two (2) candidates at any time. An additional supervisor could be appointed to assist the principal supervisor, whenever necessary.

6. PROGRAMME STRUCTURE

The DPHGP provides comprehensive knowledge and theories in DPH. The Programme is structured based on the essential scope and functions of DPHS,

and is made up of theory and practical components. The training methodology includes observation, group discussion, demonstration, interactive learning and self-directed learning. Assessment of the candidates is based on knowledge, skill and attitude.

The maximum duration of the Programme is two (2) years per attachment as scheduled in **Table 1**.

Table 1: Structure of Dental Public Health Grooming Programme

Duration	Placement	Activities
4-6 months	Oral Health Programme/ State Health Deputy Director (Dental) Office	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Orientation • Theory • Practical • Research • Training • Self-directed learning
5-6 months	Workplace (includes DPHS Unit if available)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Practical • Research • Training • Report writing • Self-directed learning
4-6 months	District Dental Office with DPHS	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Orientation • Theory • Practical • Research • Training • Self-directed learning
5-6 months	Workplace (includes DPHS Unit if available)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Practical • Research • Training • Report writing • Self-directed learning

However, sequence of placement will be as shown in **Figure 1**.

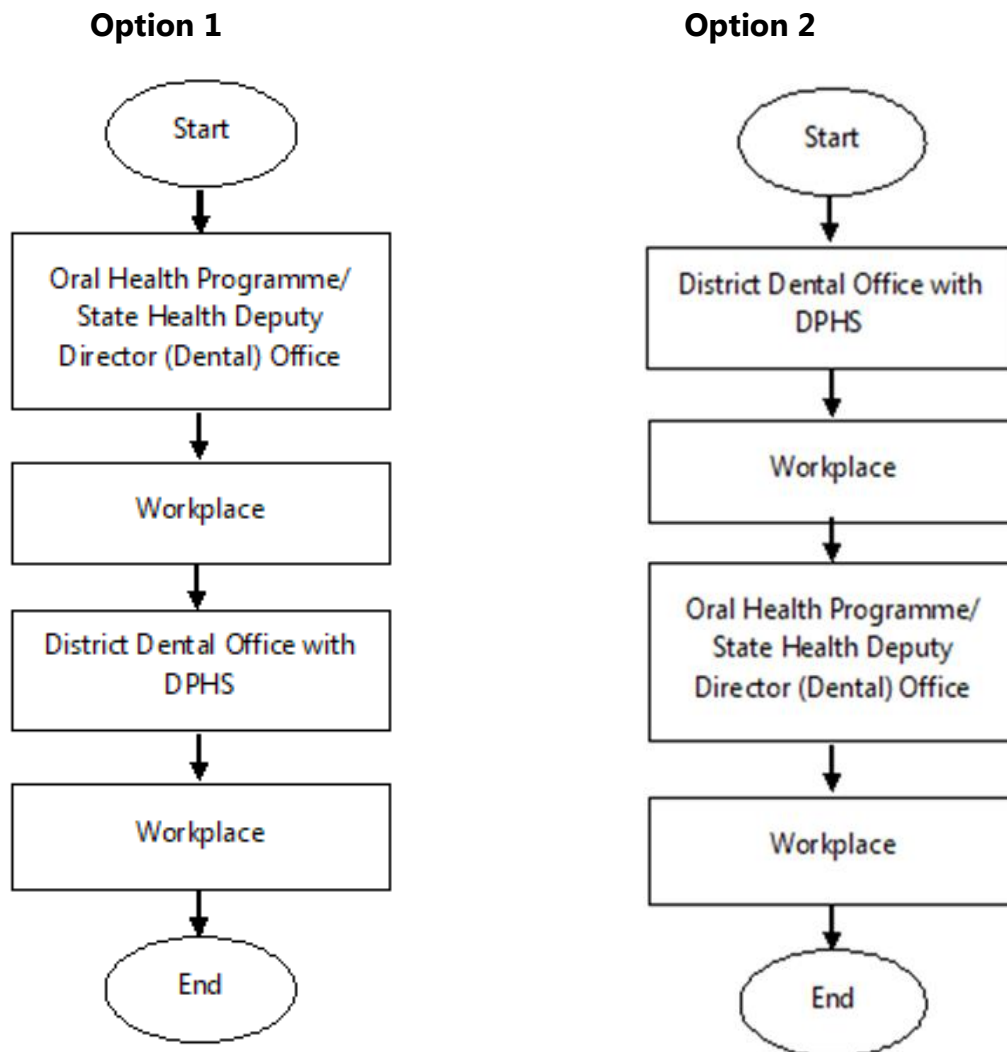


Figure 1: Option for Placement of Candidate

Placement for candidates from the Oral Health Programme should include these Sections:

- i. Primary Oral Health Care Section – 3 to 4 months
- ii. Community Oral Health Care Section – 3 to 4 months
- iii. Oral Health Promotion Section – 3 to 4 months
- iv. Specialist Oral Health Care Section – 1 month
- v. Epidemiology and Oral Health Systems Research Section – 2 to 3 months
- vi. Oral Health Professional Development Section – 2 to 3 months

- vii. Oral Health Technology Section – 2 to 3 months
- viii. Oral Health Information Development Section – 1 month
- ix. Oral Health Quality Section – 1 month

7. PROGRAMME CONTENT

In general, the content of this Programme is based on specific objectives and learning outcomes (**Table 2**). The candidate shall complete all modules in any order at their own phase.

Table 2: Content of Dental Public Health Grooming Programme

Specific Objectives	Learning outcome	Modules
Introduce basic clinical governance and its application	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Display skills in clinical governance and in conducting, implementing and managing oral health programmes for community • Practice quality improvement initiatives and governance in oral health care services to maintain and improve standards of oral health based on research evidences 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Public health management • Safety and health • Quality initiatives • Training • Administrative circulars • Guidelines, SOP, CPG • Information and Communication Technology • Oral Health Promotion
Encourage analytical/critical thinking through literature appraisal and interpretation of available data/information	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Demonstrate ability to appraise scientific literature and oral health data • Conduct situational analysis on oral health care activities • Prepare research proposal and/or conduct research with supervision • Demonstrate proficiency in scientific writing 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Situational analysis • Critical appraisal • Research proposal • Report writing / Technical Report • Presentation / publication

Specific Objectives	Learning outcome	Modules
Equip knowledge and skills required to manage oral health programmes, service delivery and resources at district/ state/ national level	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Apply epidemiological concepts and trends related to oral diseases to solve public health problems and issues • Plan and conduct oral health promotion activities • Demonstrate ability in the management of oral health resources • Participate in implementation of oral health policy 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Risk assessment • Resource management • Financial management • Oral health promotion • Health Information Management System
Enhance communication skills in English and Malay	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Perform public speaking at various levels • Participate actively in group communication sessions • Demonstrate ability to collaborate and negotiate effectively with stakeholders 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Corporate culture (teamwork, professionalism, caring) • Corporate communication • Negotiation skill
Explore leadership qualities and management skill	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Display leadership qualities with peers and stakeholders • Organise oral health team in service delivery • Display skills for lifelong learning and continuous professional development 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Communication and leadership skill • Management skill • Organisation skill

8. ASSESSMENT

The purpose of assessment is to ensure that candidates have achieved the knowledge and skill as specified in the learning outcomes. Multiple methods of assessment may be used such as direct assessment and/or embedded assessment, also referred to as continuous assessment. Assessment tools will

include supervisor observation, portfolios, oral and written reports, presentations, research proposal and project.

A log book is developed as a monitoring tool and used as a guide to record the activities and candidate's progress throughout the Programme. It records all the academic, practical and skill experience obtained by the candidate during the placement in the DPHGP.

Candidates are assessed based on performance level using a simple four-level rating scale, described narratively as *excellent, good, fair and poor*.

9. COMPLETION OF THE PROGRAMME

In order to complete the DPHGP, a candidate is required to:

- i. complete attachment within two (2) years;
- ii. fulfil log-book requirements (**Appendix 1**);
- iii. submit programme portfolio;
- iv. provide supervisor's narrative report on overall performance; and
- v. provide curriculum vitae.

10. CONCLUSION

This document provides guidance for national, state and district level implementation of the DPHGP. It will assist candidates to have sufficient understanding in dental public health before pursuing postgraduate training in DPH.

Implementation of this Programme is at the discretion of the respective states and subject to the local ability and limitations such as availability of DPHS as supervisor. The Programme is a win-win initiative, where candidates get the exposure opportunity in DPH and the Oral Health Programme is able to select appropriate candidates for postgraduate training in DPH. However, fulfilling this Programme is not a decisive factor to be selected for Federal Scholarship but it will be considered as a merit for it.

LOG BOOK FOR DENTAL PUBLIC HEALTH GROOMING PROGRAMME

PERSONAL PARTICULARS OF CANDIDATE



NAME: _____

I.C NO: _____

MDC NO: _____

NAME OF CLINIC: _____

DISTRICT: _____

DATE OF COMMENCEMENT INTO SERVICE: _____

DATE OF COMMENCEMENT INTO PROGRAMME: _____

ATTACHMENT LOCATION: _____

NAME OF SUPERVISOR: _____

This log book is developed as a monitoring and recording tool, and is one of the documents required for completion of the Dental Public Health Grooming Programme (DPHGP). It records and keeps track of the knowledge, practical and skill experience obtained by the candidate throughout the Programme.

The logbook will be based on five (5) modules, under which specified activities are outlined. Candidates will describe briefly in writing their learning experience/achievement under each activity, which must be supplemented by evidence before verification by their appointed supervisors. Interactive learning is recommended as it helps the candidates strengthen their problem solving and critical thinking skills.

It is the responsibility of candidates to document their experience, progress and achievement consistently. Assessment by supervisors will be done at the end of each module based on performance level using a simple four-level rating scale, described narratively as *excellent, good, satisfactory and poor*. This is followed by supervisors' remarks. Upon completion of all five (5) modules, supervisors are required to provide a narrative report on the overall performance.

Definition of Four-Level Rating Scale

Excellent – perform and complete all requirements with X factor

Good – perform and complete all requirements

Fair – perform all requirements but incomplete

Poor – not perform all requirements

1. BASIC CLINICAL GOVERNANCE AND ITS APPLICATION

- 1.1 Display skills in clinical governance and in conducting, implementing and managing oral health programmes for the community
- 1.2 Practice quality improvement initiatives and governance in oral health care services to maintain and improve standards of oral health based on research evidences

Modules	Descriptions	Discussion with and Signature of Supervisor
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Public health management • Safety and health • Quality initiatives • Training • Administrative circulars • Guidelines, SOP, CPG • Information and communication technology 		

Performance [tick (/) where appropriate]:

Excellent

Good

Fair

Poor

Supervisor's Remark:

2. ANALYTICAL/CRITICAL THINKING THROUGH LITERATURE APPRAISAL AND INTERPRETATION OF AVAILABLE DATA/ INFORMATION

- 2.1 Demonstrate ability to appraise scientific literature and proficiency in scientific writing
- 2.2 Demonstrate ability to appraise scientific literature and oral health data
- 2.3 Conduct situational analysis on oral health care activities
- 2.4 Prepare research proposal and/or conduct research with supervision

Modules	Descriptions	Discussion with and Signature of Supervisor
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Situational analysis • Critical appraisal • Research proposal • Report writing • Presentation / publication 		

Performance [tick (/) where appropriate]:

Excellent

Good

Fair

Poor

Supervisor's Remark:

3. KNOWLEDGE AND SKILLS REQUIRED TO MANAGE ORAL HEALTH PROGRAMMES, SERVICE DELIVERY AND RESOURCES AT DISTRICT/ STATE/ NATIONAL LEVEL

3.1 Apply epidemiological concepts and trends related to oral diseases to solve public health problems and issues

3.2 Plan and conduct oral health promotion activities

3.3 Demonstrate ability in the management of oral health resources

3.4 Participate in implementation of oral health policy

Modules	Descriptions	Discussion with and Signature of Supervisor
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Risk assessment • Resource management • Financial management • Oral health promotion • Health Information Management System 		

Performance [tick (/) where appropriate]:

Excellent

Good

Fair

Poor

Supervisor's Remark:

4. COMMUNICATION SKILLS IN ENGLISH AND MALAY

4.1 Perform public speaking at various levels

4.2 Participate actively in group communication sessions

4.3 Demonstrate ability to collaborate and negotiate effectively with stakeholders

Modules	Descriptions	Discussion with and Signature of Supervisor
<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Corporate culture (teamwork, professionalism, caring)• Corporate communication• Negotiation skill		

Performance [tick (/) where appropriate]:

Excellent

Good

Fair

Poor

Supervisor's Remark:

5. LEADERSHIP QUALITIES AND MANAGEMENT SKILL

5.1 Display leadership qualities with peers and stakeholders

5.2 Organise oral health team in service delivery

5.3 Display skills for life-long learning and continuous professional development

Modules	Descriptions	Discussion with and Signature of Supervisor
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Communication and leadership skill • Management skill • Organisation skill 		

Performance [tick (/) where appropriate]:

Excellent

Good

Fair

Poor

Supervisor's Remark:

SUPERVISOR'S NARRATIVE REPORT ON OVERALL PERFORMANCE

Signature : _____

Name : _____

Position : _____

Official Stamp:

Date : _____

WORKING GROUP MEMBERS

- Advisor** Dr. Nomah binti Taharim, BDS (Malaya), DDPHRCS (England)
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Director of Oral Health Care
Oral Health Programme
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BDS (Malaya), MPH (Oral Health) (Malaya), TGP Alumni
- Members** Dr. Rohana binti Abu Kassim
BDS (Malaya), MCD (Malaya)
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