



## **CARE Local Anesthesia Program – A Refresher for the New Mexico Dental Hygienist**

### **New Mexico Local Anesthesia Certification Requirements**

This course provides 24 hours of at home, didactic education and 10 hours of in person, clinical, hands-on training (done at the CRDTS Testing/Learning Center in Topeka, Kansas). This course meets the minimum educational requirements outlined by the New Mexico Board of Dental Healthcare for local anesthesia certification by exam.

This program does not teach a licensee to pass a written or clinical board exam. Instead, it is a valuable resource available to help licensees prepare for their licensure examinations and safe clinical practice.

To obtain New Mexico certification, participants must also:

- Hold a current New Mexico dental hygiene license.
- Successfully complete a Board-approved written and clinical local anesthesia examination.
- Submit the required application and documentation to the New Mexico Board of Dental Health Care.

*Completion of this course alone does not grant certification.*

*Certification is issued solely by the New Mexico Board of Dental Health Care.*

### **Course Description:**

This local anesthesia refresher course provides licensees the opportunity to review the key components of pain management and then practice their hand skills in local anesthesia administration. This program is conducted in two parts: theory/didactic education and hands-on skills practice.

Learners will begin with a comprehensive review of pain management didactic coursework that consists of nine (9) modules, covering the following topics: Principles of Local Anesthetics and Vasoconstriction, Local Anesthesia Agents, Patient Assessment and Safety, Armamentarium, Injection Techniques, Maxillary Injections, Palatal Injections, Mandibular Injections, and Local Anesthesia Complications.

Learners will then complete a hand-skills, in-person session that covers local anesthesia armamentarium, injection techniques, and safety and infection control considerations. The hands-on, clinical portion of this course is held at the CRDTS Testing/Learning Center in Topeka, Kansas.

### **Learning Objectives and Course Competencies:**

#### **1. Knowledge-Based Objectives**

*By the end of the course, the learner will be able to:*

- **Describe the neurophysiology of pain conduction** and the mechanism of action of local anesthetic agents.
- **Identify pharmacologic properties** of commonly used local anesthetics and vasoconstrictors, including onset, duration, metabolism, and toxicity.

- **Explain the anatomical structures relevant to intraoral and extraoral injections**, including nerve pathways, vascular landmarks, and potential anatomic variations.
- **Differentiate between types of local anesthetic techniques** (infiltration, field block, nerve block) and their indications.
- **Discuss contraindications, precautions, and potential complications** associated with local anesthesia, including medical emergencies and drug interactions.
- **Interpret patient medical histories** to determine appropriate anesthetic selection and identify patients at increased risk of adverse reactions.

## 2. Clinical Skill Objectives

*By the end of the course, the learner will be able to:*

- **Perform safe and effective local anesthetic injections**, including but not limited to:
  - Maxillary infiltration and nerve blocks
  - Mandibular nerve blocks (lingual, long buccal, mental/incisive)
  - Palatal injections (GP, NP)
- **Select appropriate anesthetic agents**, needles, and techniques based on patient needs and clinical procedures.
- **Demonstrate proper aseptic technique**, including hand hygiene, syringe preparation, and needle handling.
- **Accurately identify anatomical landmarks** intraorally and extraorally to improve injection precision and minimize complications.
- **Manage patient positioning, communication, and comfort** to reduce anxiety and improve treatment outcomes.
- **Recognize and manage complications** such as hematoma, paresthesia, trismus, needle breakage, and systemic toxicity (including initiating emergency protocols when needed).
- **Document anesthetic administration** in accordance with legal and professional standards.

## 3. Professionalism & Safety Objectives

*By the end of the course, the learner will be able to:*

- **Apply evidence-based decision-making** in selecting anesthetic techniques.
- **Demonstrate ethical and legal compliance**, including obtaining informed consent and maintaining patient confidentiality.
- **Communicate effectively with patients** to explain procedures, address fears, and assess anesthetic success.
- **Collaborate with dental team members** to support safe and efficient anesthesia delivery.
- **Reflect on personal clinical performance** and implement strategies for skill improvement and continuous learning.

Please contact Tasha Raine for scheduling by email at [tasha@crdts.org](mailto:tasha@crdts.org) or by phone at (785) 273-0380.



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