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## The RACI Matrix and Its Use in the Office

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By Michelle C. Dziurgot, DDS  
Editor-in-chief

# The RACI Matrix and Its Use in the Office

Let us discuss the RACI responsibility assignment matrix in dental office management. RACI is an acronym for Responsible, Accountable, Consulted, and Informed.

Responsible refers to those the lead dentist assigns a job duty directly to — be it a dental assistant responsible for all of the back office, the lead hygienist for your periodontal program, or front office managers verifying insurance, sending insurance claims, and tackling billing.

In my office, I delegate my lead dental assistant Samantha with monthly equipment maintenance, along with contacting the correct repair service when equipment goes awry. She is also in charge of the least-favorite job in the office: stocking dental supplies. I have personally performed supply ordering since COVID-19 due to the rising cost of doing dental business. The dental industry has been holding us hostage with outrageous supply costs rivaling that of the “pink tax” females endure when shopping for feminine-related items, so I play their game and shop around when placing my orders. A local company I beta-tested years ago now offers an online program that “shops” the best price for both office and dental supply items. (I should also mention it’s worth checking out the MDA-endorsed TDSC.com to save you money on dental supplies.)

My hygienist Linda is our toothbrush, paste, and floss diva as well as our “toy queen.” Our adult patients enjoy their well-thought-out prophy gift bags, and our kids love the fun choices in the toy boxes that Linda lovingly fills. She is also our OSHA guru. She inherited this job from our in-memorial hygienist Stephanie, whose methods kept our office top notch.

I cannot forget the delegation of duties to my front team. Bethanny works onsite. She is the face of the office — greets, schedules, provides financial arrangements for the treatment plans proposed, collects co-pays from the patient, and is relentless with insurance companies. She is a workhorse. Shawn, my offsite insurance pro, can verify any insurance in split seconds. Together, both keep the back office sane, since these ladies know who is eli-

gible for what procedure, and when.

The Accountable in my office is me. I hold my employees to a high standard, but my standard is not imposing. All three of my employees understand that their position is respected, and in performing their delegated duties the office runs cohesively. But, all three are also cross-trained. Bethanny can greet and take radiographs of our patients. Samantha remotes in after hours to verify emergency patient insurance benefits. Linda can present treatment needs, schedule, and collect patient payments. I am the overseer of all three and keep them on track for the betterment of the patient experience.

The Consulted are the patients in our practice. Their dental result, a happy healthy mouth, is what we all strive for. Patient input into treatment, consisting of scheduling, showing up for scheduled treatment, and reimbursing the office for treatment, is key. Patients are not actually working on the project at hand, keeping or restoring them to oral health, but offer their mouths for us to practice dentistry. Patients need to be included in our management system since they are the wheel we need to keep turning to keep our offices flourishing.

And lastly — the Informed. These are our lab techs. Be it an AI Cerec crown design or a real live human creating our gorgeous restorations, be it fixed or removable — without them, how could we function? They are not decision-makers in the daily running of our offices, but their expertise in the craft of smiles makes both me (the Accountable) and my patients (the Consulted) very happy. Our labs do affect the Responsible. When a case cannot be designed in the office due to electronic glitches or is late for its return date, Bethanny and Samantha must jump into action to pacify both the patient and refill the opening in the schedule.

I hope this offered a little insight into the RACI matrix and its use in our dental offices. Go team! ●

*What do you think? Contact Editor Dziurgot at [mdziurgot@michigandental.org](mailto:mdziurgot@michigandental.org) or write to her in care of the MDA Journal.*