

Careers in dental therapy



An important asset to the dental team, dental therapists are able to carry out a significant amount of routine dentistry which a dentist can do. The career is both varied and rewarding with the opportunity to work in a number of different settings.

What do dental therapists do? Some of their duties include:

- numbing teeth and placing fillings
- cleaning teeth (scale and polish)
- deep cleaning under the gums
- applying high fluoride medication
- placing fissure sealants on teeth
- removing baby teeth
- nerve treatments on baby teeth
- teeth whitening*
- remove stitches from a wound*
- provide sedation to patients.*

These duties are carried out on the instruction of a dentist

Where do dental therapists work?

Dental therapists work across various settings:

- general dental practices
- community clinics
- hospitals
- prisons
- education – some dental therapists even decide to go on to teaching the next generation of therapists.

What skills do I need to be a good dental therapist?

- you will need to have good communication and people skills, be friendly and able explain things in a way that people can understand
- as a practical role you will need to have good manual dexterity to allow you to use tools and carry out treatments such as fillings
- organisational skills are key – a busy list of patients means that you need to be organised, with the ability to plan and prioritise tasks
- you need to be able to work well as part of a team.

How do I become a dental therapist?

To become a registered dental therapist with the general dental council (GDC) you will need to achieve a BSc in dental therapy and dental hygiene, which is offered through a three year full-time course at Cardiff University.

Combining a great mixture of clinical placements with modules including oral diseases and dental radiography, studying the degree provides you with the skills, knowledge and experience to carry out the role.

**Want to find
out more?**

Careersville: <https://careersville.heiw.wales>

NHS Wales Careers: www.nhswalescareers.com