



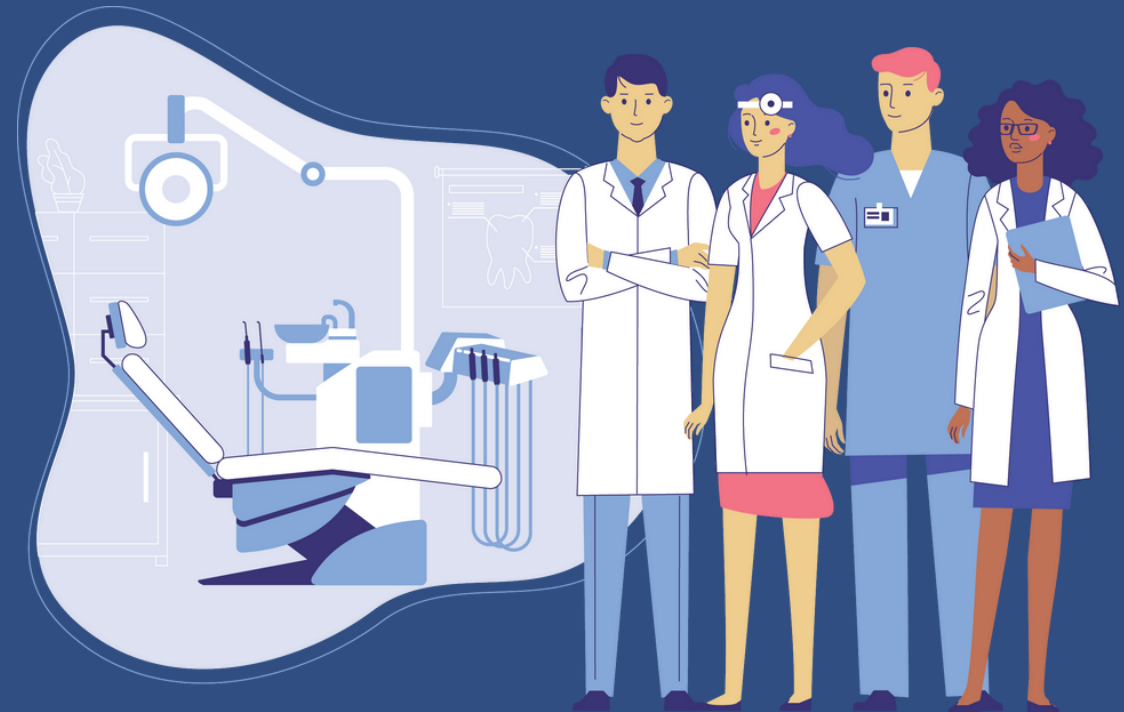
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Make a difference with a career in Dentistry!

If you are keen to help others, enjoy science and want a career in healthcare: a career in Dentistry could be for you! You will need good communication skills to work with the patients in a clinical role and as part of a wider dental team.

Use the menu at the bottom of the page to learn about the different roles in dentistry and where you could work as a member of the dental team.



> Roles in dentistry



> Where you could work

Roles in dentistry: Dentist

1 of 6

As a dentist, you combine expert knowledge of head and neck anatomy with excellent clinical and surgical skills. Dentists have good communication and leadership skills, often heading up the dental team.

General dental practitioners treat a large number of patients and build up good often life-long rapport with their patients.

A dentist may choose to work in general dental practice completing routine dentistry such as fillings, tooth extractions and root canal treatments.

A dentist might also choose to become a specialist, becoming an expert in one of the 13 dental specialties such as Orthodontics or Oral Surgery for example.

Where will you work? You might work as part of a dental team in a hospital, community clinic or most commonly in general dental practice. You might even work in public health, research or dental education.



Entry requirements

To practise as a dentist you need to study a five year dental degree at University. Following this, you will be able to work in private dental practice or complete a 12 month paid placement in general dental practice, after which you will be able to work as a dentist in the NHS. Learn more via the healthcare careers website.



> Roles in dentistry



> Where you could work

Roles in dentistry: Dental therapist

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A dental therapist works closely with other members of the dental team. You must be a strong communicator and leader, with good manual dexterity skills to be able to perform most routine dentistry.

A dental therapist can carry out restorative treatments (fillings) on patients, extract deciduous (baby) teeth, undertake pulpotomies (nerve treatments) and place preformed crowns on badly decayed children's teeth. They can also undertake scaling and polishing, oral health promotion and provide preventative fissure sealants for both adults and children.

Where will you work?

You might work as part of a dental team in a hospital, community clinic or most commonly in general dental practice. You might even work in public health, research or dental education.



Entry requirements

To practise as a dental therapist you need to study a three year degree at University. Once graduated you are able to register with the General Dental Council and start treating patients of your own. Learn more via the healthcare careers website.



> Roles in dentistry



> Where you could work

Roles in dentistry: Dental hygienist

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A dental hygienist works closely with other members of the dental team with a focus on preventative dentistry.

A dental hygienist can carry out professional cleaning of the teeth and gums, oral health promotion and provide preventative fissure sealants for both adults and children. You may also apply fluoride to patients' teeth to help prevent tooth decay.

Where will you work?

You might work as part of a dental team in a hospital, community clinic or most commonly in general dental practice. You might even work in public health, research or dental education.



Entry requirements

To practise as a dental therapist you need to study a three year degree at University. Once graduated you are able to register with the General Dental Council and start treating patients of your own. Learn more via the healthcare careers website.



> Roles in dentistry



> Where you could work

Roles in dentistry: Dental nurse

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A dental nurse works closely with other team members to coordinate the dental care. You will need good organisation skills, a be a great team player and communicator.

A dental nurse is responsible for decontamination of instruments, maintaining and organising operating equipment and working closely with the treating clinician to ensure the best patient care. The dental nurse needs good communication skills, a kind and caring manner with the ability to put patients at ease.

A dental nurse once qualified can further their career by

completing extended duties courses such as dental x-rays, applying fluoride treatments and even taking impressions of the patients teeth.

Where will you work?

You might work as part of a dental team in a hospital, community clinic or most commonly in general dental practice.

Dental nurses often lead on administration duties of dental practices, often becoming treatment coordinators or practice managers.



Entry requirements

To practise as a qualified dental nurse you will need to study either part time or full time for a qualification in dental nursing which will lead to registration with the General Dental Council. Learn more via the healthcare careers website.



> Roles in dentistry



> Where you could work

Roles in dentistry: Orthodontic therapist

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An orthodontic therapist carries out orthodontic treatment under the prescription and guidance of a dentist.

Orthodontics is a specialty in Dentistry involving straightening teeth and aligning the jaws of the face. The orthodontic therapist is a key member of the orthodontic team.

They are able to adjust braces on teeth, place some types of removable braces, take moulds of the mouth, prepare teeth surfaces for a brace, place retainers on teeth and give advice about wearing braces.

Orthodontic therapists can also further their skills to apply high strength fluoride to teeth and repairing plastic orthodontic appliances.

Where will you work?

You might work as part of a dental team in a hospital, community clinic or in specialist orthodontic NHS or private dental practice.



Entry requirements

To practise as a qualified orthodontic therapist, you will need to a 12 month diploma in Orthodontic Therapy, which will lead to registration with the General Dental Council. Make sure you check the individual therapy programme websites for their entry requirements.



> Roles in dentistry



> Where you could work

Roles in dentistry: Dental technician

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A Dental technician make dental appliances like caps and false teeth to help improve a patients oral health, appearance and speech.

A dental technician will work in a dental laboratory creating dental appliances. They will have good dexterity skills and ability to create precise and intricate dental appliances.

They will have an in depth knowledge of the use of materials such as ceramics and cobalt chromium.

A dental technician may choose to further their career becoming a clinical dental technician be able to provide some types of dentures to people.

Where will you work?

You might work in a hospital dental laboratory or in an independent dental technicians laboratory which you could run yourself as self-employed or be employed within an independently owned lab.



Entry requirements

To practise as a dental technician you will need to have either a diploma or degree in dental technology in order to become a registrant of the General Dental Council.

Learn more via the healthcare careers website.



> Roles in dentistry



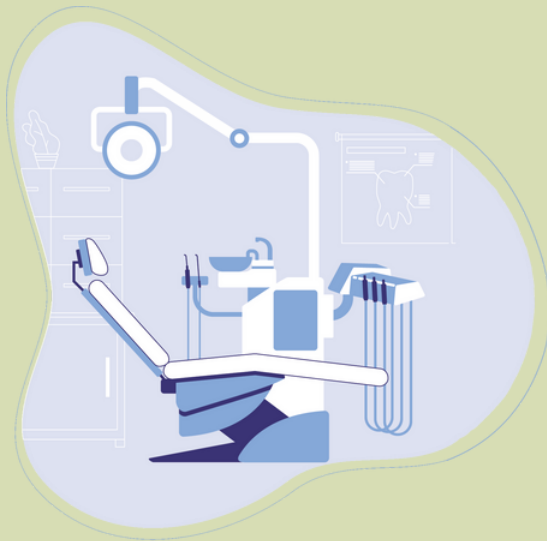
> Where you could work

Where do dental professionals work?

Community

You could work in a community dental clinic treating paediatric (child) patients and patients with additional needs such as complex medical conditions. In this role you could also be involved in oral health promotion and collecting data dental health surveys.

Within the community there may be opportunity for teaching undergraduate and postgraduate dental professionals.



General dental practice

You might choose to work in general dental practice be that in NHS or private care. General practice can be fast paced seeing sometimes twenty patients or more a day for routine dental check ups and treatment.

Within general dental practice there are opportunities to gain managerial roles for all members of the team. Some clinicians may choose to own their own dental practice and employ a dental team. The general dental practice is often a hub of the community and the dental team working there will develop strong ties with the their patients often over many decades.



> Roles in dentistry



> Where you could work

Where do dental professionals work?

Hospital

You may choose to work in a hospital setting, or what is often referred to as secondary care.

As a dentist you might choose to complete further specialist training and become a consultant working in NHS Hospital in orthodontics or oral and maxillofacial surgery for example.

Working in secondary care involves treating patients with less common dental conditions or complex medical needs. This setting often requires a multidisciplinary approach involving members of the medical team.



Non-clinical roles

There are a number of opportunities for dental team members to take on a non-patient facing role. This may be working in dental public health, planning oral health promotion, organising how the NHS dental system works or even planning the dental workforce of tomorrow to the oral health needs of the population are met.



> Roles in dentistry



> Where you could work