



Dental assistant

Dental assisting is a career for people who enjoy helping others, working with people, and sharing expertise in a respected profession. Dental assisting also provides opportunities for career growth beyond private practice, including corporate, industry, research, institutional, human resources, and vendor opportunities.

What is a Dental Assistant?

Dental Assistants work with dental health professionals including dentists, oral health therapists, prosthetists, or specialists to provide support and assist clinical practice. This can include a variety of different tasks including receiving and preparing patients, arranging and handing instruments, medication, and other dental requisites to Dental Practitioners. Dental Assistants are also involved in preparing dental materials and processing x-rays, using suction devices and water sprays, performing routine maintenance on equipment, and preventing cross infection of equipment. With Certification, Dental Assistants may also teach patients good oral hygiene, sterilise instruments and equipment, and take and develop patient radiographs (x-rays).

Dental Assistants may also advise patients on dental health education and post-operative care and procedures, act as receptionist for dental practitioners, perform billing and other clerical tasks, or be involved in practice management.

What studies do I need to undertake?

There are a few ways to become a Dental Assistant. The first of which is via on-the-job training which is offered at some private dental practices, and does not require any previous study. These roles often vary in the duties expected, depending on the practice.

Many dental practices will require you to have completed further studies through a Certificate III or Certificate IV in Dental Assisting. These courses are offered through a Registered Training Organisation (RTO) such as the Dental Assistants Professional Association (DAPA), TAFE, or other private RTOs.



Health
Western Sydney
Local Health District

To apply for the Certificate III in Dental Assisting, you will need year 10 or equivalent, which can include a qualification in Certificate II or higher, or 2 years of industry experience in a role that requires the use of written documentation or communication. Other prior learning that can assist entry to these courses can be obtained through Higher Vocational Education and Training introductory units.

What happens when I enter the workforce?

Dental assistants can work in a variety of environments, including public dental hospitals, private dental clinics, specialist dental clinics, and health funds.

If you are interested in a career in Dental Assisting or would like more information -

Dental Assistants Professional Association (DAPA)
www.dapa.asn.au

TAFE NSW