

Dental Assistant

What does a Dental Assistant do?

A dental chair side assistant (sometimes known as a dental nurse) works closely with the dental practitioner in all stages of the patient's treatment.

Duties include reception of the patient and preparation for treatment, sterilising instruments and setting them out for the dental practitioner, mixing materials, developing and mounting x-rays and chair side assistance by passing instruments and using suction apparatus.

A dental assistant may also be involved in the administration of the practice by answering telephones, making appointments, maintaining patient records, ordering supplies, preparing accounts and collecting payments.

Personal requirements

- Manual dexterity
- Good communication and interpersonal skills
- Ability to concentrate and follow instructions
- Good organisational ability and time management skills
- Interest in health care work

What training is required to become a dental assistant?

NSW, TAFE offers a Certificate III in Dental Assisting which is completed while employed with a Dental Practice.

Employment Opportunities

Most dental assistants are employed by dentists in private practices and clinics. Opportunities are also available in the public sector.

Additional Information

At present, dental assistants are not required to be registered. For more information see The Dental Assistants Professional Association at <http://www.dapa.asn.au/home/about-dapa>