

Dental Industry



Dental Practice:

I am a dentist and a Dental Practice owner.

My career:

I had a medical family who inspired me and my uncle was a dentist.

I studied at Glasgow University and decided I wanted to be a GP dentist, rather than work in a hospital. I worked at a dental practice in Newcastle, then I moved to Edinburgh and started my own practice.

Images of teeth:

We can see the bacteria left on teeth with X rays. These show adult teeth, these are a child's teeth. Digital dentistry allows us to study scans and x rays.

Dentistry:

It is a caring, practical, scientific profession.

You need to nurture good relationships with your patients and help any scared new patients. We have a very diverse range of patients, and we carry out cosmetic dentistry as well as fillings or extractions.

Community:

We are involved in our local community. We had a Mouth Awareness month, we support NHS initiatives like Childsmile, and give information on the oral cancers which could be caused by smoking etc.

Skills:

- Effective communication is key.
- Manual dexterity is important, but you get lots of practice on model heads at university and in the clinical schools on real patients.
- Empathy: it is a caring profession, you need to be kind
- Knowledge and Problem solving - when a patient has a pain, there could be many reasons for it, so we need to work out **where, why, what** in order to treat the patient. This can be complex. In this way we are doctors of the mouth - Oral Physicians.

Career Pathways:

Dentistry:

You can take a course in Dentistry at Aberdeen University, Dundee University, Edinburgh University, Glasgow University, Glasgow Caledonian University and the University of the Highlands and Islands. It usually takes 5 years of full-time study at University to become a dentist.

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After a degree in Dentistry - you can also go on to further study in Teaching, Research or Public Health.

Dental Nurse:

A dental Nurse prepares the clinical environment and aids the dentist with charting teeth, and preparing for treatments. You are employed and paid while you study on day release, and you can go on to achieve further qualifications for other roles in dentistry, e.g. dental hygienist (who are allowed to perform simple extractions) or go on to study to become a dentist.

NHS Education for Scotland has five dental education centres across Scotland delivering the SVQ in Dental Nursing and Professional Development Award (PDA) in Dental Nursing. The entry requirements for this programme are as follows:

- *Three qualifications at SCQF level 4 (e.g. Standard Grades at 'General' or above, or National 4 or above) in English; Maths; and a Science subject. Equivalent qualifications and prior learning will be recognised on discussion with the centre.*
- *Successful completion of our Dental Nurse Induction Programme*
- *Employment in a dental practice environment working clinically alongside a dentist or hygiene therapist covering a full range of clinical dental procedures for a minimum of 15 hours per week.*

www.nes.scot.nhs.uk/education-and-training/by-discipline/dentistry/dental-care-professionals/dental-nurses

Orthodontics:

- *Obtain good Higher grades to secure a place at university to study dentistry.*
- *It usually takes 5 years to become a dentist and obtain a degree in dentistry (the Bachelor of Dental Surgery or BDS degree).*
- *After qualifying, work as a dentist and gain experience in all fields of dentistry.*
- *Apply for a place on an orthodontic training scheme. This training takes a further 3 years of study and consists of both academic work and practical training. At the end of this, if you are successful in the Membership in Orthodontics examination (MOrth) you will become a specialist orthodontist.*

www.bos.org.uk/Public-Patients/Careers-in-Orthodontics/Information-for-GCSE-A-Level-Students-Non-dental-graduates/How-can-I-become-an-orthodontist

My Top Tips:

- Get Work Experience
- Chat
- Empathy
- Use your hands

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Questions:

What is the hardest job in dentistry?

It depends, surgery can be difficult - the fine detail cosmetic work is easier.

Is it stressful?

The majority of people don't like coming to the dentist, so that can be stressful. You can also get a sore back from leaning over patients. However it is very rewarding, it can be life-saving in certain cases.

Do you have to deal with major situations?

We have had to call ambulances in the past if a patient has had excessive bleeding or any extreme problems during surgery.

Was University difficult?

I found the second year at University hardest. You have to learn a lot about science and anatomy before you start clinical practice. It is a vocational training, so you will learn to treat patients in the dental school, first by observing, and then you will be allocated some patients.

Do you need to be good at Maths?

Yes, Maths is important for working out the dosage for patients.

Have you got your own practice?

My husband and I own the practice and employ over 30 people, 10 dentists, 11 nurses, receptionists and hygienists. You need to know about business. Everyone learns a lot. Our Receptionists have first aid training and can talk knowledgeably to patients, as do our dental nurses.

Can you work abroad?

Yes, with a degree in dentistry you can work in Canada, South Africa, Australia and New Zealand, and presently in Europe.

We have an international team in our practice with employees from Peru, Spain and India as well as from Scotland.

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