

DENTAL ASSISTANT

Q What do you like best about your job?

A I really like working with all the children and getting them to trust me. Many of the children I see have never had dental work, or the dental work they have had was a terrible experience. A lot of these kids have never had an anesthetic before having a tooth pulled, so it is great when we can fix their problems without pain. There is a deep sense of satisfaction in helping these kids maintain good oral health. Their parents certainly appreciate it. This is better than working in a private practice because you get to see so many different patients and different challenges.

Q Describe your typical day.

A My usual day begins with working in the clinic, setting up all the instruments, pulling charts and doing everything a hands-on dental assistant does. I job share with another dental assistant, which is ideal for me because I'm raising a young family. It's a really busy day, but I like that.

Q How are you making a difference?

A Because the kids we see have no dental plans and do not have the financial means to see a private practice dentist, what I am doing and what the dentists in Public Health are doing is providing a necessary service for good health to individuals in the community. Good oral health makes a real difference in the quality of life of people.

*Continued
on reverse*



"I've been working with Region of Waterloo Public Health as a Dental Assistant since 1989."

"I have a Dental Assistant Certificate from Georgian College."



Region of Waterloo
PUBLIC HEALTH

Q What do you like about working and living in Waterloo Region?

A I grew up in Waterloo and I really like all the green space, parks and its proximity to the Great Lakes; we have a cottage on Lake Huron. The universities here give the area a lot of life – it certainly is not an aging community. Because of these students there are activities and restaurants for every age level and affordability. You can eat good food at a variety of really great restaurants.

Q Why did you choose to work for Region of Waterloo Public Health?

A I had a field placement from Georgian College and I really liked it. I had worked in a private practice briefly, but I much prefer working for Public Health. Management is very progressive here. I am allowed to job share, we have flex hours and the benefits are important. I also get to work with some really great dentists. The dentists who work here tend to be newer grads who bring new techniques and enthusiasm to their job. Plus they respect the dental assistants as equals. I even commuted from Toronto for four years. That's how much I like this job.

Q What would you tell someone considering a career as a Public Health Dental Assistant?

A If you are the kind of person who likes to help people and do different tasks all day, rather than sit at a computer, then you will like this job. There is a different dental challenge every day.



Region of Waterloo

PUBLIC HEALTH

For information about other careers with Region of Waterloo Public Health, please contact us at (519) 883-2000 ext. 5354.

www.region.waterloo.on.ca/ph

Qualifications You Need:

For Dental Assistant (clinical services) positions:

- Certified Dental Assistant through the Ontario Dental Nurses and Assistants Association
- Registered with the RCDSO or possess a National Dental Assisting Examining Board Certificate, in order to provide intra-oral dental assistant services
- Knowledge of the safe operation of a radiograph (X-ray) machine, with certification under the Healing Arts Radiation Protection (HARP) Act
- Current Basic Cardiac and Life Support (CPR) certification

Wage/Salary Range:

Approximately
\$32,000 – \$37,000 (2004 rates)

Schools You Can Attend:

See the Canadian Dental Assistants' Association website for more information (Schools section)

Related Positions at Public Health:

- Clerk II Dental
- Dental Assistant (school program)
- Dental CINOT/OW Assistant
- Dental Educator
- Dental Hygienist

Related Websites:

- Ontario Dental Hygienists' Association: www.odha.on.ca
- Ontario Dental Nurses and Assistants Association: www.odnaa.org
- The Canadian Dental Assistants' Association: www.cdaa.ca
- The Canadian Dental Hygienists Association: www.cdha.ca