A Career in

Dental Hygiene and Therapy
The role and responsibility of the Dental Hygienist-Therapist

Dental Hygienist-Therapists are members of the generic group of dental care professionals (DCPs) who work as part of the dental team. They undertake the prevention and treatment of oral disease.

A Dental Hygienist-Therapist is able to work in all branches of dentistry including general dental practice, hospital and community services, in industry and within the armed forces. They may also set up an independent referral practice or choose to work in an academic environment such as in teaching or research.
The role of the Dental Hygienist-Therapist

The role of a Dental Hygienist-Therapist encompasses:

- Provision of advice on smoking cessation, nutrition, fluoride and prevention of oral disease
- Provision of periodontal therapy (scaling and polishing of teeth)
- Application of antimicrobial agents
- Administering local anaesthesia
- Monitoring oral disease
- Screening for oral cancer
- Placing restorations (fillings) in deciduous and permanent teeth
- Undertaking treatment of the pulp of deciduous teeth
- Placing preformed crowns on deciduous teeth
- Extracting deciduous teeth
- Taking dental radiographs
- Taking dental impressions
- Providing emergency replacement of crowns and bridges
Training

Dental Hygienist-Therapist education in Scotland is presently available in several regions with varying qualification outcomes:

**Diploma in Dental Hygiene & Therapy (Dip DHDT RCSEd)**
Glasgow Dental Hospital - 27 months duration

**BSc in Oral Health Sciences**
University of Dundee
University of Highlands & Islands/NESS, Inverness and Dumfries - 3 years duration

**BSc(Hons) in Oral Health Sciences**
University of Edinburgh - 4 years duration

The entry requirements

Each education establishment has different entry requirements. Please visit the websites below to view these:

- University of Edinburgh  www.ed.ac.uk
- University of Dundee  www.dundee.ac.uk
- University of Highlands & Islands  www.uhi.ac.uk
- Royal College of Surgeons of Edinburgh  www.RCSEd.ac.uk
General Dental Council Ethical Standards

The General Dental Council aims to protect patients within the United Kingdom by regulating dental professionals, assuring the quality of dental education and setting standards for conduct that all dental professionals must adhere to.

For more information on the GDC, access their website at www.gdc-uk.org
Positive and recent changes to the profession

Although Dental Hygienists and Therapists have always been required to register with the General Dental Council in order to practice, compulsory Continuing Professional Development has recently been introduced.

The GDC require that all registered DCPs complete at least 150 hours of Continued Professional Development (CPD) every five years to maintain registration. Of these, 50 must be ‘verifiable CPD’ in specific subjects. 50 hours

50 Hours Verifiable CPD

- Medical Emergencies 10 Hours per cycle
- Radiography and Protection 5 Hours per cycle
- Decontamination 5 Hours per cycle
- Complaints Handling
- Legal and Ethical Issues

Further Qualifications

Masters Degrees in a number of subject areas eg Education, Public Health, Health Promotion etc

BSc/MSc in Dental Primary Care
Contact details

The following regional contacts can provide information on training and development opportunities for DCPs in your area.

**Lead DCP Tutor**
Aberdeen Dental Education Centre
Argyll House
Forresthill
Cornhill Road
Aberdeen
AB25 2ZR
**T** 01224 559708
**F** 01224 552545
**E** caroline.taylor@nes.scot.nhs.uk

**Lead DCP Tutor**
Dental Office
NHS Education for Scotland
The Centre for Health Science
Old Perth Road
Inverness
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**T** 01463 255722
**F** 01463 255736
**E** Teresa.Ross@nes.scot.nhs.uk

**Lead DCP Tutor**
Dundee Dental Education Centre
Frankland Building
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Perth Road
Dundee
DD1 4HN
**T** 01382 425771
**F** 01382 425797
**E** anne.crowe@nes.scot.nhs.uk

**Lead DCP Tutor**
Edinburgh Postgraduate Dental Institute
Fourth floor, Lauriston Building
Lauriston Place
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EH3 9HA
**T** 0131 536 3103
**F** 0131 536 4962
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**Lead DCP Tutor**
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1st Floor Clifton House
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