

Dental Hygienist



What do you like best about your job?

I like working in a team environment. In Public Health there are other dental hygienists and dental assistants on the team to collaborate with.

Describe your typical day?

One of the best things about Public Health is that there is such variety in your activities. In private practice, your days are focused on clinical practice. In my typical week in Public Health, I could do a school dental screening where I provide a brief visual exam of children's teeth, I could do a presentation to a group, do follow-up on my cases, facilitating care for parents who can't afford to take their children to the dentist, and finally a clinic day, working with patients.

How are you making a difference?

I am making a difference to families who have no dental insurance and can't afford dental care. We often find children with urgent dental problems such as large cavities or pain in our school screenings. Their parents have not been able to take them to the dentist because they can't afford the treatment and don't know what to do. I help facilitate children with urgent dental needs to obtain treatment. In my clinical practice, I hope I inspire children to care for their teeth and realize the connection between a healthy smile and their overall health.

What do you like about working or living in Waterloo Region?

I like that it is easy to get around Waterloo Region. I drive to schools and health centers for my job so I spend a lot of my time in the car. Waterloo is big enough to have great schools, restaurants and lots to do but small enough to get around.



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

My mother was a Public Health nurse and she told me how interesting it was working for Public Health. I was happy to leave private practice where I was working mainly with geriatrics and doing the same thing every day. In Public Health, most of our clients are children so it's a completely different experience. I remember learning what a Ninja Turtle was on my first week!

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

You must enjoy working with children. We work with a diverse population. There is great opportunity for professional development, to learn from other hygienists and to collaborate with other health professionals.

Areas you could work in:

- Infectious Diseases, Dental and Sexual Health

Qualifications you need:

- Diploma or Degree in Dental Hygiene from an accredited post-secondary institution
- Registered Dental Hygienist with the College of Dental Hygienists of Ontario, with a self-initiation designation
- Current Basic Cardiac and Life Support (CPR) Certification
- Ability to operate and maintain complex dental equipment

Wage/salary range:

- Approximately \$56,300 to \$63,900 annually (2015 rates)

Related Positions at Public Health:

- Clerk I Dental
- Clinic Dental Assistant
- Dental Assistant (Schools)

Schools you can attend:

- See the Canadian Dental Hygienists Association website for more information (Education Section)

Related websites:

- Canadian Dental Hygienists Association: www.cdha.ca
- Ontario Dental Hygienists Association: www.odha.on.ca

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