

Just the Job Information Sheet

Job title **Dental practitioner - dentist**

Job description

A dentist is a health care professional who provides health care services with a focus on the mouth and teeth. Dental practice is centred on the assessment of oral health status and the implementation of preventive, restorative and educative services aimed at attaining and maintaining good oral health.

Dentistry is provided to all age groups.

The range and scope of dental services provided are detailed by the Dental Council of New Zealand under Scopes of Practice.

Dentists typically lead a team of staff, including other oral health service providers (eg. therapists and hygienists).

Dentists can work in general dental practice (private practitioners) or as salaried dentists in universities, District Health Boards (hospital and community dentists), the Defence Force and in corporate practices/industry.

Qualifications required

The qualification required to practice dentistry in New Zealand is prescribed by the Dental Council. The minimum requirement is a Bachelor of Dental Surgery (BDS) from the University of Otago. A small number of overseas universities also have accreditation with the Dental Council.

General requirements

To practice dentistry in New Zealand a dentist must be registered with the Dental Council of New Zealand and hold an annual practicing certificate.

Training costs

The BDS course is 5 years in duration, including a competitive first year prerequisite Health Sciences First Year programme. Entry is extremely competitive with a very high level of academic capability required. Students can expect to pay approximately \$65,000 in fees for the 5 year course.

Career path

Limited career opportunities exist in salaried appointments. Those in private practice tend to focus on building and sustaining a practice within their chosen community.

Salary range

\$65,000 - \$150,000 in public health system.

Incomes in private practice are similar but can also be significantly greater depending on the practice and business skills of the practitioner, the location of the practice and the hours worked.

How to increase the chances of successfully entering this industry

NCEA Level 3 is required for entry into the Health Sciences First Year programme. For dentistry useful NCEA subjects include maths with calculus and/or statistics, chemistry, physics, biology and English. Admission into dental school is determined by the Dental Admissions Committee with consideration of the grade point average achieved in the Health Sciences First Year programme.

The applicant must also have achieved a valid score in all three of the Undergraduate Medical and Health Sciences Admissions Test (UMAT) Sections and undertaken an Oral Assessment and achieved a threshold level.

Other places to source information about this job

University of Otago - Faculty of Dentistry

www.careers.govt.nz