

FROM COLLEGE TO CAREER IN...

DENTAL HYGIENE

The main concern of the dental hygienist is the maintenance of good oral health in relation to total health. The student is educated to perform clinical services, such as patient assessment, instrumentation, deposit removal, dental radiography, application of fluorides and sealants, and administration of local anesthesia. The student also learns to be an oral health educator, to teach patients and the community the principle of preventative oral health care. The program emphasizes the dental hygienists' role in the prevention of oral disease. Hands-on clinical experience in the program's modern dental hygiene clinic makes our graduates valuable to employers.

Graduates find careers in private dental practices, community health agencies, specialty dental practices, hospitals and schools. The Commission on Dental Accreditation of the American Dental Association accredits the Associate program. The program provides students with clinical competency in all dental hygiene procedures recognized by the Maine State Dental Practice Act as well as procedures and experiences required for laboratory competency.

Transferable Skills & Competencies

Dental Hygienists also are expected to be able to make critical decisions, analyze various data, solve problems, and work collaboratively with their peers, patients, and dentists to best meet the needs of their clients. Students in the program learn beginning periodontal instrumentation skills to more advanced skills. UMA's Dental Hygiene program consistently produces caring, competent, knowledgeable professionals who provide a valuable service to their communities. Additional skills and abilities found in UMA Dental Hygienists are listed below:

Communication

- Promoting awareness of health issues
- Counseling patients about tobacco cessation
- Taking patient histories
- Counseling about dental decay prevention
- Teaching

Technical

- Understanding medical terminology
- Utilizing precision tools
- Using local anesthesia for hygiene purposes
- Detecting and removing calculus and plaque
- Applying fluoride
- Toothbrush and rotary polishing
- Applying sealant
- Utilizing infection control
- Placing medicaments

Human Development

- Interacting with patients
- Assessing individual needs
- Managing patients throughout lifespan
- Understanding basic human needs
- Clarifying values

Critical Thinking

- Assessing medical, nutritional and dental histories
- Determining implications
- Behaving professionally
- Making ethical decisions and judgments
- Applying theory to clinical practice
- Implementing and evaluating plans



The University of Maine at Augusta
with campus locations in Augusta and Bangor,
teaching to over 100 centers and sites statewide.

Careers

The Associate of Science Degree in Dental Hygiene prepares students for entry-level positions in Dental Hygiene and may have application to other fields. Completion of a Bachelor of Science degree in Dental Hygiene further broadens one's career opportunities. The selected list which follows indicates a range of career possibilities.

Health Care

Clinical Dental Hygienist
Dental Lab Technician
Public Dental Hygienist
Patient Educator
Public Health Hygienist utilizing
Public Health Supervision Status

Careers with Similar Skills

Dental Office Manager
Podiatric Medical Assistants
Physical Therapy Assistants
Occupational Therapy Assistants
Ophthalmic Medical Assistants
Dental Ceramist*
Dental Assistant

Education/Human Services

State Oral Health Program Director*
Dental Hygiene Educator
Community Educator
College Professor*
Tobacco Cessation Counselor

Business

Dental Company Educator*
Pharmaceutical Sales
Dental Medical Equipment Salesperson
Dental Health Researcher*

* Baccalaureate or graduate level study is generally required for these occupations.

For More Information

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