

## **3222 Dental Hygienists and Dental Therapists**

Dental hygienists provide dental hygiene treatment and information related to the prevention of diseases and disorders of the teeth and mouth. They are employed in dentists' offices, hospitals, clinics, educational institutions, government agencies and private industry. Dental therapists carry out limited dental services related to the prevention and treatment of diseases and disorders of the teeth and mouth. They are employed by the federal government and the provincial governments to provide services in rural and remote communities.

### **Example Titles**

- community dental hygienist
- dental hygiene technician
- dental hygienist
- dental hygienist – military
- dental hygienist technician
- dental nurse
- dental therapist
- dental therapist – military
- expanded duty dental hygienist
- expanded duty dental nurse
- licensed dental therapist
- orthodontic hygienist
- periodontal hygienist
- registered dental hygienist
- registered dental therapist

### **Main duties**

Dental hygienists perform some or all of the following duties:

- Conduct an initial dental assessment and consult with dentists on patient care
- Take dental impressions
- Instruct patients regarding oral hygiene procedures
- Clean and stimulate the gums to prevent gum disease
- Remove stains and deposits from teeth to prevent tooth and root decay
- Apply fluoride treatment
- Take and develop X-rays
- May perform restorative and orthodontic procedures under the direction of a dentist
- May supervise dental assistants in their health care functions.

Dental therapists perform some or all of the following duties:

- Conduct dental assessments and consult with dentist on patient care

- Take dental impressions
- Take and develop X-rays
- Remove stains and deposits from teeth to prevent tooth and root decay
- Apply fluoride treatment
- Instruct patients regarding oral hygiene procedures
- Supervise dental assistants in their health care functions
- May drill and fill cavities, extract teeth and replace portions of tooth crown.

### **Employment requirements**

- Dental hygienists are required to complete a college program ranging from one to three years, or other approved program in dental hygiene recognized by the governing board within the province or territory of residence.
- Dental therapists are required to complete the two-year dental therapy diploma program at the National School of Dental Therapy in Prince Albert, Saskatchewan, offered by Health Canada.
- Licensing by the appropriate provincial or territorial regulatory body is required for dental hygienists.
- Licensure is required for dental therapists in Newfoundland and Labrador, Saskatchewan, Nunavut, the Northwest Territories and the Yukon.

### **Classified elsewhere**

- *Dental Assistants* ([3411](#))
- *Dental Technologists, Technicians and Laboratory Bench Workers* ([3223](#))
- *Dentists* ([3113](#))
- *Denturists* ([3221](#))