

SCOPE OF PRACTICE

DO:

- Turn up on time and be ready to learn – in your first few weeks there will be a lot to learn and it might feel overwhelming. A positive attitude and keenness to succeed can make all the difference.
- Look after yourself – Dental nursing is a busy job physically and mentally, especially when you first begin. Add starting a course to this and you will be tired. If you can plan in some down time and early nights in the first few weeks this will really help
- Ask Questions – if you don't know, then find out. The best Dental Nurses are the ones who fully understand what they are doing and why they are doing it, but none of us start out knowing everything. Ask your mentor, your dentist, your colleagues and tutors.
- Be a team player – Dental practices rely on teamwork, whether it's helping out another nurse in the decontamination room or helping in reception when you have gaps in the diary. Working and communicating well with others is a must.
- Keep your surgery fully stocked – no one wants to open a drawer to find they are missing something in the middle of a treatment. Always check every morning and night to make sure everything is where it should be.
- Learn your instruments - take photos of each tray set up and make yourself a folder with information on each treatment, to help you remember all the instruments and materials.
- Speak to patients and get to know people – the best Dental nurses are ones who communicate well with patients. Introduce yourself and ask patients how they are – it can make a huge difference to someone who is nervous.
- Above all, enjoy your new journey. Yes, its hard work and there is a lot to learn, but Dental Nursing can be one of the most rewarding jobs that there is if you have the right attitude and are committed to giving patients the best possible experience.

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DON'T:

- Bring your personal issues into patient interactions – it's fine to discuss your personal life with your colleagues, but choose the right time and place. Patients don't need to know the ins and outs of your personal life and problems. Remember, you are training to be a professional.
- Discuss patients in public areas where others may hear - breaching confidentiality is a serious issue.
- Make it up if you don't know –when you feel you should know something, it's tempting to tell patients something you think might be right. If there's something you don't know, you should always refer it to a more senior member of the team.
- Think it's only you that feels like this – if you are finding things hard or you are concerned about something, you are not alone. Speak to someone – your mentor, practice manager, supervising dentist and TDS tutor are all here for you.
- Ignore systems and practices – these should always be followed, they are for everyone's safety.
- Forget the importance of the patient – the patient should always be the most important person in the room. When you are training, or wrapped up in what you should be doing and what the dentist wants, it's easy to forget this. Focus on the patient, what they need, and how to support and monitor them.
- Forget that you can do this! There will be moments when you find things difficult, as with any job, but you can do this!