Dental assisting is one of today’s fastest growing careers, according to the US Bureau of Labor Statistics. The main responsibility for Dental Assistants is to assist with and provide direct patient care alongside Dentists and Dental Hygienists. Right now, Dentists are looking for qualified Dental Assistants. They want professionals who are confident and well trained from a qualified program. With Northeastern Illinois University’s Dental Assistant Training, in partnership with MK Education, students receive the technical training and practical hands-on-experience required to begin a career in dental patient care.

**DENTAL ASSISTANT COURSE**
This program will cover topics essential to becoming a Dental Assistant. Students will learn the legal and ethical responsibilities of the dental healthcare worker. An introduction to general dental settings and office procedures will be covered as well as the principles of microbiology, disease prevention, and infection control procedures. After completion of this program, students will have knowledge of the anatomy and physiology of the mouth as it relates to dental functions.

**EXTERNSHIP**
The externship experience in a dental setting is performed under the supervision of a Dentist, Dental Technician or Dental Assistant. Routine techniques are observed and performed. Students will be placed in pre-arranged dental offices with the understanding that students come with dental theory training. The students should be allowed to work chair-side after observing the procedure and when the doctor and staff feel the student understands the duties he/she is to perform.
PREREQUISITES

- At least 18 years of age
- High school diploma or G.E.D.
- Proficiency in English (reading, writing and speaking skills)
- Have hand-to-eye coordination and finger agility
- Have suitable vision and hearing (normal or corrected)
- Basic computer skills
- Daily access to reliable internet and laptop (preferred) or tablet
- Additional fees (up to $300) may be incurred by students, depending on externship site requirements:
  - Successfully pass a criminal background check
  - Successfully pass a drug screening
  - Obtain immunizations required for externships
  - Obtain Basic Life Support Certification for Health Professionals training

AREAS OF STUDY

- Description of legal and ethical responsibilities of the dental health care worker
- General dental setting/office procedures
- Principles of microbiology and disease prevention and infection control procedures
- Anatomy and physiology as it relates to dental functions
- Record patient assessment data; use and knowledge of dental instruments and equipment
- Pharmacology and anesthesia as they relate to dentistry

SALARY:

Median Annual Wage ranges from $26,170 to $53,130

Depends on location and experience. Detailed information may be found at www.bls.gov.

JOB OUTLOOK

Employment of dental assistants is projected to grow 19% from 2016 to 2026, much faster than the average for all occupations. Ongoing research linking oral health and general health will continue to increase the demand for preventive dental services (www.bls.gov).

PLACES WHERE A DENTAL ASSISTANT CAN WORK

- Dental Office
- Dental Hospital
- Dental Clinic

GRADUATES ARE PREPARED TO SIT FOR THESE CERTIFICATION EXAMS AND EACH NATIONAL BOARD HAS THE FOLLOWING REQUIREMENTS TO EARN THE CREDENTIAL OR REGISTER FOR THE NATIONAL CERTIFICATION EXAMS.

Both national board exam applicants must be certified in cardiopulmonary resuscitation (CPR) by the American Heart Association or the American Red Cross. Check with the respective board for the appropriate CPR exam before starting the CPR certification training.

- **Board: Dental Assisting National Board (DANB) (Pathway IV)**
  - Exam: 3 exams to be NELDA certified: RHS + ICE + AMP + employment = NELDA
  - Students can take the three exams (RHS + ICE + AMP) immediately upon finishing course. To obtain NELDA certification, in addition to passing the three exams, students must be employed as a dental assistant and log 300-3000 hours, accrued over a period of at least two months and no more than three years before taking exam. Employment must be verified by a licensed dentist.

- **Board: American Medical Technologists (AMT) (Route 3)**
  - Check individual state requirements
  - Exam: Registered Dental Assistant (RDA)*
  - [https://www.americanmedtech.org/Get-Certified/RDA-Eligibility](https://www.americanmedtech.org/Get-Certified/RDA-Eligibility)
  - Employed as a dental assistant for a minimum of three years (5,250 hours) and shall present a recommendation from a current or former employer who is a dentist before taking the exam