



Hollie Simpson

Community
Dental Nurse

Can you give us a brief outline of your work history?

I have been dental nursing for six years and I qualified in January 2019. During this time, I have worked in general practice, Belfast Trust, and now Southern Trust.

What made you decide this career path?

To be honest, I didn't really know what career path I wanted to follow. I studied A-Level Health and Social Care and thought I might be interested in a career within a healthcare environment. I saw an opportunity for a trainee dental nurse in my own dental practice and I decided to go for it. Now, here I am, and it's the best thing I ever did.

How did you train for this role/educational route?

I worked full time as a trainee dental nurse in a general practice and attended Southern Regional College one evening a week for two years. I completed a written and oral exam and obtained a National Diploma in Dental Nursing. Since qualifying as a dental nurse, I have now completed training in post qualifications such as fluoride varnish application and impression taking.

What qualities are required for your job – personal and professional?

As a dental nurse, you are quite often the problem solver, so it is important you are a good listener, and you are sensitive to the different needs of the patients. Professionally, you need to be able to work in a team but also have the ability to work under your own initiative. You should be organised and you must be able to maintain and protect patients' information.

What does a typical day involve?

Every day is different. A typical day involves working in the clinic alongside the dentist or seeing patients in their own homes if they are unable to get into the surgery. Additional duties include visiting nursing homes, special schools, and supported living facilities for their oral health assessments. Another large part of our service is working in theatres in Daisy Hill Hospital and South Tyrone Hospital to provide essential treatment for our patients.

What do you like best about your job?

Our service looks after adults and children with additional needs. I enjoy the challenges and rewards for caring and getting to know all these individuals.

What advice would you give anyone thinking of doing your job?

You won't know until you try! Ask for work experience in this area to get a better understanding of what dental nursing involves.