



Dental Career Feature

Be the power behind the Dental Chair!

Would a challenging job that requires great communication skills, organization, and the ability to use modern computer and office equipment each day in a profession that helps people be of interest to you? Would you like employment in the professional atmosphere that comes with most healthcare jobs but don't want to go through the years of difficult schooling required to become a doctor or dentist? Then perhaps you should consider dental office opportunities like becoming an office secretary. The job of office secretary is like the axle around which all the other positions rotate. A good secretary can make an office run as smooth as glass. Dental office jobs will put you in a central position on a professional team where you will be able to really make a difference in the success of the dental practice.

Picture yourself seated at your desk, politely answering the phone and scheduling appointments and procedures for patients, entering data in patient files on the computer and also taking care of correspondence, billing and insurance forms. In some offices you will also help patients fill out medical and insurance forms, answer questions they may have, and facilitate their comfort as they wait for their appointments at your office; and yes, in some cases you may even make the coffee! All well run dental practices as well as offices do indeed revolve around a highly skilled and motivated office secretary that can keep things running smoothly even in the face of difficult days.

The secretary is the heart of any office. You are the face of the company and often the first contact the customer, or patient in the case of [dental office jobs](#), will have with your employer. Secretaries record and file information and facilitate the flow of that information to those who need it. Knowledge of software and office technologies is becoming greater each day for the modern secretary as offices become more and more automated. For those working as office secretary in the medical fields such as [dental opportunities](#), additional responsibilities and skills will be required. Your courteous and professional handling of booking patient appointments, answering their questions and concerns, and your reception of them into the office and care of them while they wait for their appointments will affect the overall patient experience. It is the job of the dental office secretary to answer and redirect phone calls, take care of appointments and scheduling, and in many offices you will also have duties in billing patients and recording payments and correspondence. Office secretaries in

dental jobs will help keep and file patient histories and must understand billing and insurance practices.

No actual degree is required for becoming a dental office secretary but training in basic computer skills, office software and even some in medical terms can be very useful. Short courses in basic office software programs are available and can increase the job seekers chances as they compete for available positions. Some knowledge of the dental office duties is also a must. Most offices will require at least a high school diploma or GED and those with additional training in secretarial skills from a junior college, technical school or trade school are usual given preference. Many secretaries hold associate degrees in disciplines like office administration or similar disciplines. Good skills in communication both by telephone and in person are also critical as the dental office secretary is in direct contact with the customers daily.

A secretary's income varies widely with secretaries in the corporate world who work as administrative assistants earning as much as \$54,000 per year and those at the low end earning less than \$20,000. Those choosing the medical office secretary jobs will take home a median income of about \$26,500 per year (Bureau of Labor Statistics).

While the job opportunities for most professional secretaries is expected to shrink due to the reorganization of workplaces and the increased use of office technology which reduces the demand for human labor, the outlook for office secretaries in the healthcare jobs and in dental jobs is somewhat better. Healthcare jobs are expected to continue to outstrip available



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employees for at least the next five years and dental offices will continue to need office secretaries. Those who add to their skill sets with extra training in software, medical terminology,

and human relations can look forward to a reasonable expectation of employment.

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