

"There are opportunities to continue to learn and develop and I may consider teaching when I am a bit older."

After she left school aged 16, Cheryl studied dental nursing at college and later developed her career in the dental team as a dental hygienist.

Cheryl McBroom

Dental hygienist

Employer or university

York



- **How I got into the role**

Expand / collapse

I was a dental nurse for five years before training to be a hygienist.

-

What I do

Expand / collapse

Many people don't realise what being a dental hygienist involves. It's not for the squeamish – someone once popped their false eye out and asked me to clean it!

I work as part of team in a general hospital where I see people who are very ill, depressed and anxious. One of the rewarding parts of the job is being able to spend time talking to them – not just about their treatment, but about their life, their family and so on.

As a hygienist you can work in a range of different places with different patients. When I was training I had placements in a community dental clinic, an acute mental health trust and a school for children with special needs.

The job itself is also extremely varied. In the hospital outpatient clinic I see all sorts of patients, from children undergoing orthodontic work to cancer patients who are having chemotherapy [1] and need help in helping keep their mouths moist, as the treatment can leave them with sore and dry mouths.

•

The best bits and challenges

Expand / collapse

There are opportunities to continue to learn and develop and I may consider teaching when I am a bit older.

The flexibility of the career is useful. I took some time off to do charity work in Tanzania, training local people in dentistry. It's great to share skills with people who need them.

•

Related real life stories

Expand /

collapse

Annette Matthews is a dental hygienist and dental therapist. Read Annette's story [2]

Source URL:<https://www.healthcareers.nhs.uk/explore-roles/dental-team/roles-dental-team/dental-hygienist/real-life-story-cheryl-mcbroom>

Links

[1] <https://www.healthcareers.nhs.uk/glossary#Chemotherapy> [2] <https://www.healthcareers.nhs.uk/explore-roles/dental-team/roles-dental-team/dental-therapist/real-life-story-annette-matthews>