Australia's growing and ageing population, combined with expanding private health insurance coverage, has generated strong demand for health services. While rising private health coverage has provided significant benefits to allied health services over the past five years, the ageing population has strengthened demand across the board. With rapidly increasing patient volumes, health services revenue is forecast to grow.

A career in health means working in a diverse and growing sector, where a number of opportunities in both public and private services incorporating acute and non-acute settings are available in community health, hospitals, private practice, and residential or aged care facilities.

Studying Health and Wellbeing can lead a to a career in Aged Care, Allied Health, Dental Care, and Nursing just to name a few.

**JOB EXAMPLE: DENTAL ASSISTANT**

Dental Assistants prepare patients for dental examination and assist Dental Practitioners, Hygienists and Therapists in providing care and treatment. A dental chairside assistant (sometimes known as a dental nurse) works closely with the dentist in all stages of the patient's treatment.

Duties include reception of the patient and preparation for treatment, sterilising instruments and setting them out for the dentist, mixing materials, developing and mounting x-rays and chairside assistance by passing instruments and using suction apparatus.

Most dental assistants are employed by dentists in private practices and clinics or in health. Some dental assistants undertake further study to become dental therapists or dental hygienists. There are good job opportunities for dental assistants due to demand for dental services.

- Receiving and preparing patients
- Arranging and handing instruments, medication, and other dental requisites to Dental Practitioners
- Preparing dental materials and processing X-rays
- Using suction devices and water sprays
- Performing routine maintenance on equipment
- Sterilising and preventing cross infection of equipment
- Advise patients on dental health education and post-operative care and procedures
- Answering telephones, making appointments, maintaining patient records, ordering supplies
- Preparing accounts and collecting payments.

**Job Prospects**

- The number of job openings for Dental Assistants is expected to be high
- Employment for this occupation rose very strongly in the past five years and rose moderately in the long-term (ten years). Looking forward, employment for Dental Assistants is expected to grow very strongly.
- The most common level of educational attainment is Certificate III/IV (42.6 per cent).
- Dental Assistants are nearly all employed in Health Care and Social Assistance.

**NURSING SUPPORT AND PERSONAL CARE WORKERS**

Nursing Support and Personal Care Workers need to be understanding and helpful with patients and be able to perform a variety of functions and services such as assistance, support and direct care to patients in a variety of health, welfare and community settings. Jobs may include hospital orderly, nursing Support Worker, personal care assistant, therapy aide.

- Assisting patients with their personal care needs such as showering, dressing and eating
- Assisting patients with their mobility and communication needs
- Participating in planning the care of individuals
- Following therapy plans such as interventions to assist those with dementia and behavioural problems
- Observing and reporting changes in patients’ condition, and reporting complaints about care
- Assisting with rehabilitation exercises, basic treatment and providing assistance with medications
- Providing direct support and assistance to therapists.

**Job Prospects**

- The number of job openings for Nursing Support and Personal Care Workers is expected to be high
- Employment for this occupation rose very strongly in the past five years and rose moderately in the long-term (ten years). Looking forward, employment for Nursing Support and Personal Care Workers is expected to grow very strongly.
- The most common level of educational attainment is Certificate III/IV (42.6 per cent).
- Nursing Support and Personal Care Workers are nearly all employed in Health Care and Social Assistance.

Bachelor of Nursing, Health Science, or Oral Health

Many university courses offer students with TAFE qualifications credit towards their studies.

Certificate III
Health Services Assistance
(Generic) (HLT32512)

Employment as a dental assistant in a private dental practice or public clinic

Certificate III
Dental Assisting (HLT31812)

Certificate IV
Dental Assisting
(HLT43012)

Employment as a senior dental assistant, or in other oral health promotion roles

Certificate IV
Allied Health Assistance (HLT42512)

Work as an EN in a public or private hospital or an aged care facility.

Certificate IV
Aged Care (CHC40108)

Employed as a team leader in an aged care facility. Assistant to allied health professionals such as physiotherapists, speech pathologists, nutritionists, dieticians, podiatrists and occupational therapists

Diploma
Nursing (Enrolled – Division 2 Nursing) (HLT51612)

Employment in an acute care setting in a hospital in emergency, or the operating theatre, in post operative, general medical or surgical wards and renal unit.

Advanced Diploma
Nursing (Enrolled – Division 2 Nursing) (HLT61107)

Specialist EN position in any discipline or health, mental, palliative or aged care

Bachelor of Nursing, Health Science, or Oral Health

Many university courses offer students with TAFE qualifications credit towards their studies.

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