

Position Description | Te whakaturanga ō mahi

Health New Zealand | Te Whatu Ora

Title	Dental Assistant			
Reports to	Team Leader, Dental Assistants			
Location	Christchurch Outpatients			
Department	Hospital Dental Service			
Direct Reports	Nil	Total FTE	Nil	
Budget Size	Opex	Nil	Capex	Nil
Delegated Authority	HR	Nil	Finance	Nil
Date	April 2026			
Job band (indicative)	PSA ALT Core group B step 3-7			

The Health System in Aotearoa is entering a period of transformation as we implement the Pae Ora/Healthy Futures vision of a reformed system where people live longer in good health, have improved quality of life, and there is equity between all groups.

We want to build a healthcare system that works collectively and cohesively around a shared set of values and a culture that enables everyone to bring their best to work and feel proud when they go home to their whānau, friends and community. The reforms are expected to achieve five system shifts. These are:

1. The health system will reinforce Te Tiriti principles and obligations.
2. All people will be able to access a comprehensive range of support in their local communities to help them stay well.
3. Everyone will have equal access to high quality emergency and specialist care when they need it.
4. Digital services will provide more people the care they need in their homes and communities.
5. Health and care workers will be valued and well-trained for the future health system.

Te Mauri o Rongo – The New Zealand Health Charter

The foundation for how we ensure our people are empowered, safe and supported while working to deliver a successful healthcare system, is Te Mauri o Rongo – the New Zealand Health Charter. It guides all of us as we work towards a healthcare system that is more responsive to the needs of, and accessible to all people in Aotearoa New Zealand.

It applies to everyone in our organisation and sits alongside our code of conduct as our guiding document.

Te Mauri o Rongo consists of four pou (pillars) within it, including:

Wairuatanga – working with heart, the strong sense of purpose and commitment to service that health workers bring to their mahi.

Rangatiratanga – as organisations we support our people to lead. We will know our people; we will grow those around us and be accountable with them in contributing to Pae Ora for all.

Whanaungatanga – we are a team, and together a team of teams. Regardless of our role, we work together for a common purpose. We look out for each other and keep each other safe.

Te Korowai Āhuru – a cloak which seeks to provide safety and comfort to the workforce.

These values underpin how we relate to each other as we serve our whānau and communities.

Together we will do this by:

- caring for the people
- recognising, supporting and valuing our people and the work we all do
- working together to design and deliver services, and
- defining the competencies and behaviours we expect from everyone.

About the role

The primary purpose of the role is to:

To deliver high-quality, reliable assistance to dentists, specialists and technicians across the Hospital Dental Service, and to strengthen a collaborative, patient-centred dental assistant team.

Key Result Area	Expected Outcomes / Performance Indicators
Chairside assistance	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Clinical sessions are well organised and run efficiently. • Works effectively as an inclusive team member, maintaining infection control standards. • Responds appropriately to unexpected changes. • Provides supportive, compassionate care for patients. • Performs other duties as agreed with the line manager.
Rostered duties	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Participates in treatment sessions including: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Paediatric consultations and/or treatment under LA, RA, IV sedation or GA - Treatment for patients with special needs under LA, RA, IV sedation or GA - Orthodontic treatment - Prosthodontic treatment - Treatment for patients under the care of the Department of Corrections

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Each clinician has a rostered assistant for every clinical session. • Daily housekeeping tasks are completed efficiently. • Assists at onsite or offsite GA sessions for adults with special needs or paediatric patients. • Prepares instruments, equipment, and consumables for procedures. • Provides chairside assistance in outpatient clinics or operating theatres. • Processes digital intraoral radiographs. • Adapts to roster changes at short notice, including relieving staff at satellite clinics. • Participates in regular dental assistant team meetings.
Clinical equipment & materials	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Surgeries are stocked according to standard requirements. • Requests for supplies, returns, or repairs are communicated to the Team Leader, Dental Assistants. • Stocktaking is completed to maintain adequate supply levels. • Premises are closed and secured at appropriate times.
Administration related to patient care	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Clinical sessions are fully booked, prosthetic bookings are accurate, and recalls are completed within required timeframes. • All appointments are made using Titanium (electronic patient management system).
Te Tiriti o Waitangi	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Remain focused on the pursuit of Māori health gain as well as achieving equitable health outcomes for Māori. • Supports tangata whenua- and mana whenua-led change to deliver mana motuhake and Māori self-determination in the design, delivery and monitoring of health care. • Actively supports kaimahi Māori by improving attraction, recruitment, retention, development, and leadership.
Equity	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Commit to helping all people achieve equitable health outcomes. • Demonstrates awareness of colonisation and power relationships. • Demonstrates critical consciousness and on-going self-reflection and self-awareness in terms of the impact of their own culture on interactions and service delivery. • Shows a willingness to personally take a stand for equity. • Supports Māori-led and Pacific-led responses.
Innovation & Improvement	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Is open to new ideas and create a culture where individuals at all levels bring their ideas on how to 'do it better' to the table. • Models an agile approach – tries new approaches, learns quickly, adapts fast. • Develops and maintains appropriate external networks to support current knowledge of leading practices.

<p>Collaboration and Relationship Management</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Models good team player behaviour, working with colleagues to not allow silo thinking and behaviour at decision making level to get in the way of doing our best and collegially supports others to do the same. • Works with peers in Hauora Māori Service and Pacific Health Business Unit to ensure the voice of and direct aspirations of Māori and Pacific People are reflected in planning and delivery of services.
<p>Health & safety</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Participates in Health and Safety matters and ensures the successful implementation of Health and Safety initiatives. • Takes all reasonably practicable steps to eliminate and mitigate risks and hazards in the workplace that could cause harm, placing employee, contractor and others' health, safety, and wellbeing centrally, alongside high-quality patient outcomes. • Leads, champions, and promotes continual improvement in health and wellbeing to create a healthy and safe culture.
<p>Compliance and Risk</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Takes responsibility to ensure appropriate risk reporting, management and mitigation activities are in place and followed. • Ensures compliance with all relevant statutory, safety and regulatory requirements applicable to the Business Unit. • Understands, and operates within, the financial & operational delegations of their role, ensuring peers and team members are also similarly aware.

Matters which must be referred to the Team Leader, Dental Assistants:

- Failure or breakages of equipment
- Leave requests
- Health & Safety concerns

Relationships

External	Internal
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Patients, parents, carers and visitors to the service • Private dental and medical practitioners • Suppliers and contractors 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Team Leader, Dental Assistants • Practice Co-ordinator • Clinical Director and Service Manager of Hospital Dental • Hospital Dental staff • Clinical teams throughout the hospital • Occupational Health & Safety • Infection Prevention & Control

About you – to succeed in this role

You will have

Essential:

- Experience working as a Dental Assistant
- Understanding of dental /oral procedures and terminology
- Excellent organisational and time management skills
- Strong interpersonal and communication skills
- Experience using electronic patient management systems
- Experience complying with Infection Control practices in a clinical setting

Desired:

- NZDA Certificate in Dental Surgery Assisting (or equivalent)
- Strong literacy and numeracy skills
- Knowledge of hospital related health systems

You will be able to

Essential:

- Demonstrate an understanding of the significance of and obligations under Te Tiriti o Waitangi, including how to apply Te Tiriti principles in a meaningful way in your role.
- Take care of own physical and mental wellbeing, and have the stamina needed to go the distance.
- Maximise the quality and contributions of individuals and teams to achieve the organisation's vision, purpose and goals.
- Establish and maintain positive working relationships with people at all levels within the public and private sectors, related industry and community interest groups and the wider national and international communities.
- Demonstrate a strong drive to deliver and take personal responsibility.
- Demonstrate self-awareness of your impact on people and invests in your own leadership practice to continuously grow and improve.
- Demonstrate the highest standards of personal, professional and institutional behaviour through commitment, loyalty and integrity.

This position description is intended as an insight to the main tasks and responsibilities required in the role and is not intended to be exhaustive. It may be subject to change, in consultation with the job holder.