DENTISTRY

CARING
COMMITMENT
RESPECT

VA CAREER OPPORTUNITIES
VA – The career you want, the future you deserve
To Care for Those Who Shall Have Borne the Battle ...
- Abraham Lincoln, March 1865

WHY VA?

THE BEST CARE

VA – Keeping the Promise to Those Who Served

More than a century ago, President Lincoln made a promise to America’s servicemen and women, pledging the care and concern of a grateful Nation for the sacrifices they made to preserve freedom. Since 1930, the mission of the Department of Veterans Affairs (VA) has kept that promise. Today, VA offers Veterans one of the largest, most comprehensive health care systems in the United States with 157 medical centers or major divisions, and almost 900 clinics located nationwide.

THE BEST EMPLOYMENT

VA and Dentistry

A career as a dentist with VA offers a future that is dynamic, innovative, and collaborative. As valued members of an interdisciplinary health care team, VA dentists enjoy the flexibility to move within the VA structure and the freedom to practice wherever an opening exists in more than 200 dental locations in sites ranging from tertiary care medical centers to community-based health care clinics. In return for their commitment to quality health care for our Nation’s Veterans, VA offers its dentists competitive salaries, first-rate employment benefits, educational support, and tuition reimbursement programs. Consider a career as a VA dentist and be rewarded by the essential role you’ll play in helping VA keep the promise to those who served.
THE BEST PATIENTS

Young or old, male or female, it doesn’t matter: Veterans have a special camaraderie with each other, and they extend that bond to their clinical care team. From injured active duty personnel to Veterans of all ages, our patients rely on their VA caregivers to deliver unique and resourceful treatment, often for complex medical conditions. Regardless of financial resources, the enrolled Veteran is assured treatment until maximum benefit is achieved. As a result, VA dentists and the entire care team form strong bonds with many brave, grateful individuals who have served our Nation.

THE BEST ENVIRONMENT

The practice of hospital dentistry offers opportunities and challenges that typically are not found in other environments. VA dentists and other dental professionals utilize the full scope of their skills and knowledge in their daily practice and are regularly challenged by patients who can be medically, physically, and/or emotionally compromised. They also work in an environment that adheres to the strictest protocols for infection control and assurances for quality patient care.

"After ten years in private practice, I was bored to tears. Fourteen years in VA and every day presents new and interesting challenges."

— Lea Erickson, DDS, MSPH
Chief, Dental Service
Salt Lake City, UT

THE BEST TECHNOLOGY

VA is committed to a philosophy of technology-driven care that enhances staff performance and improves patient results. VA dentists work with today’s state-of-the-art technology that directly pertains to patient treatment. Digital imaging, clinical operating microscopes, dental implantology, and CAD cams are but a few of the advances that VA dentists use on a daily basis.

After years of development, VA now has the most comprehensive electronic health record (EHR) in the Nation. The health record puts each Veteran’s medical records, lab results, x-rays, EKGs, and much more at the fingertips of dentists and the entire patient care team as they work together to design treatment interventions. The dental record component of the electronic health record is a sophisticated program that allows the clinician to view treatment plans, write notes, and monitor progress while seamlessly recording production data and other administrative tasks. Since the system is linked to every VA facility across the country, the care team can instantaneously pull up a traveling Veteran’s records to examine critical components (e.g., medications, medical problem list, etc.), while making informed patient care decisions.

VA utilizes technology to enhance professional development as well. Computer-based networking (mail groups), regular teleconferences, and online training enable VA dentists across the country to learn new information, share research, and exchange best practices.

Urban Beat
Modern living doesn’t get any better than when you live in urban America. VA offers employment opportunities in the most cosmopolitan of cities to America’s most livable small towns.
OPPORTUNITIES

OFFERING A WIDE RANGE OF CLINICAL CARE OPPORTUNITIES FOR DENTAL PROFESSIONALS

As one of the largest health care systems in the Nation, VA provides a wide range of opportunities across the continuum of clinical care practice settings to include:

- Comprehensive Restorative Dentistry
- Prosthodontics
- Periodontics
- Maxillofacial Prosthodontics
- Endodontics
- Oral and Maxillofacial Surgery
- Oral Pathology
- Oral Medicine
- Geriatric Dentistry
- Dental Hygiene
- Dental Assisting
- Expanded-Function Dental Auxiliaries (EFDA)
- Dental Laboratory Technology

Did you know that:

- VA handles more than 1.2 million dental treatment visits each year at medical centers and supporting facilities.
- VA currently employs nearly 800 dentists (655 full time) and supports 360 dental residency positions.
- VA has pioneered the development of ingestible fluoride gels for unique patient needs, stannous fluoride (Tin-gel) for radiation oncology patients, and other preventive dentistry products.
- VA provides medical and dental care backup to military hospitals during national emergencies.
- Oral health problems are the leading reason military personnel are removed from duty.
- VA offers a loan repayment program for recent dental school graduates with professional loan obligations.
- VA supports a post-residency Fellowship in Dental Research.

PROVIDING A RICH ENVIRONMENT FOR CLINICAL RESEARCH AND TRAINING

Dentists with a special interest in clinical research or training find a rich environment at VA. Many VA dentists help guide students’ fieldwork experiences. Others conduct ongoing research in such areas as dental implantology. VA dentists are well published in nationally recognized professional journals, and many have been elected to leadership positions in regional and national health care organizations. These education and research missions are further strengthened by VA’s affiliations with all Schools of Dentistry and 107 of the 125 Schools of Medicine.

“There is no greater reward than to be able to meet the physical and spiritual needs of our Veterans. The professional camaraderie and expertise of fellow dentists in the VA system has greatly expanded my scope of practice beyond that of my peers.”

— Doug Richardson, DDS
Dayton, OH
VA’s mission is to provide the best possible care for the Nation’s Veterans. In recognition of the contributions made by dentists and dental professionals in helping achieve this goal, VA offers extensive employment benefits.

**LEAVE AND HOLIDAYS**
- VA dentists earn 26 days of paid annual (vacation/personal) leave each year and may accumulate up to 86 days. Annual leave begins to accrue immediately and can be used as it is earned with supervisory approval.
- Dentists earn 15 days of sick leave each year with no limit on accumulation.
- There are 10 paid Federal holidays.
- The Voluntary Leave Transfer Program allows other Federal employees to donate annual leave for a medical emergency of an employee or family member.
- The Family and Medical Leave Act and the Family Friendly Leave Act allow employees to balance their work and family lives by taking reasonable amounts of leave for medical reasons, for the birth or adoption/foster care of a child, and for the care of a child, spouse, or parent who has a serious health problem.
- Military leave is authorized up to 15 days a year for active reservists and National Guard members.

“*It has been my privilege to interact with highly talented and dedicated dentists from across the country, conduct basic and clinical research, plan and conduct VA-wide dental implant studies, train dental and medical residents, and travel internationally. What more could anyone want?*

— Paul Lambert, DDS
Chief, Dental Service
Dayton, OH

**BENEFITS**
HEALTH AND LIFE INSURANCE

- VA offers a variety of group health insurance plans with premiums partially paid by the Federal Government. You may change plans yearly.
- Term life insurance with coverage based on salary is available with the cost shared by the Federal Government. Family and additional coverage options are available.
- Long-term care insurance is available as an option.

LIAIBILITY PROTECTION

The United States Government accepts responsibility and liability for the actions of its employees during the exercise of their official duties. VA dentists, therefore, are protected by the Federal Government in instances of alleged malpractice or negligence resulting from the performance of their duties in or for the Veterans Health Administration.

RETIREMENT

Newly hired dentists are covered by the Federal Employees Retirement System (FERS). FERS is a three-tier retirement plan composed of Social Security benefits, FERS basic benefits, and the Thrift Savings Plan (TSP). Similar to the 401(k) savings plans widely available in the private sector, the TSP allows employees to tax defer as much as 15 percent of their income each year, subject to the requirements of the Internal Revenue Service. The Federal Government also provides a basic contribution and matching, depending on the amount of the employee contribution. For retired military personnel, these benefits are in addition to your full monthly retirement pay or pension. Retirement health care insurance is also available.

MOBILITY

VA health care facilities are located in all 50 states, the District of Columbia, Puerto Rico, and the Philippines. An employee may seek employment at any location where there is a vacancy and if hired, transfer without loss of benefits and usually no loss in pay. Only one active state license is necessary to practice in any VA facility.

AWARDS AND HONORS

Opportunities to receive both monetary and honorary recognition for overall superior performance and special or unique achievements are available. In addition, substantial monetary awards can be earned through participation in VA’s Employee Suggestion Program when employees offer creative solutions to problems, or ideas for improving procedures and services.

ADDITIONAL BENEFITS

- Direct Federal membership to ADA without local dues
- Smoke-free and drug-free workplace
- Free parking at most facilities
- Credit unions
- Child care at some facilities
- Medical libraries
- Flexible Spending Accounts
The Department of Veterans Affairs recognizes the importance of ongoing education and the benefit it provides to both Veteran patients and employees. VA encourages career development for dental professionals through the following programs:

**Continuing Dental Education Programs** – These programs are offered through the VA Employee Education System (EES). Financial support may be available to those dentists who pursue continuing dental education programs. In addition, VA dentists can enroll in accredited, computer-based training through VA’s in-house eLearning offering.

**Tuition Support Program** – Employees in health care disciplines identified as VA shortage categories are eligible for funding to enroll in job-related courses.

Additional educational opportunities for VA dentists include:

- Preceptorships for dental students in affiliated clinical education programs
- Facility-based continuing dental education
- Participation in VA funded research programs
- Executive development through administrative and management education
- Paid time off for approved continuing education programs
- Continuing education available at national meetings of VA Dentistry

**Employee Incentive Scholarship Program (EISP)** – This scholarship program allows VA employees to further their education and obtain degrees qualifying them for health care positions for which recruitment and retention is difficult.

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“The Heartland Choice
Sun-soaked prairies in summer, snow-covered rolling hills in winter – the Midwest is a nature lover’s dream. Working for VA, you have a broad choice of locations in the Nation’s heartland.

— Marco Rand, DMD
Chief, Dental Service
Jacksonville, FL
QUALIFICATIONS AND REQUIREMENTS

Minimum qualifications and requirements for appointment as a VA dentist are:

• Degree of doctor of dental surgery or dental medicine or an equivalent degree from an institution approved by the Council on Dental Education, American Dental Association for the year in which the degree was granted*

• One Post Graduate Year (PGY 1) of training or equivalent

• Current, full, active, and unrestricted license to practice dental medicine in any State, Territory, or Commonwealth (e.g., Puerto Rico) of the United States or the District of Columbia

• U.S. citizenship (noncitizens may be appointed when qualified citizens are not available)

• English language proficiency

• Successful professional record for experienced dentists

• Personal interview

• Satisfactory physical examination

* Also schools (including foreign schools) accepted by the licensing body of a State, Territory, Commonwealth, or the District of Columbia as qualifying for full and unrestricted licensure.

“...The concept of teamwork is never more apparent than in a VA medical center where each health care discipline interacts to manage the overall health of the patient. That is what drew me to the Veterans Administration.

I would not want to work anywhere else.”

— Terry R. Schmidt, DDS
Chief, Dental Service
Tampa, FL

SALARY INFORMATION

• Starting salaries are recommended by a Dentist Compensation Panel based on professional education, training, and experience. Dentists are awarded base pay increases based on length of service.

• In addition to base pay, dentists receive “Market Pay,” which is specialty driven and dependent on geographic factors, as well as performance pay, which is dependent on one’s performance and roles in the VA.

• National starting base pay ranges are available at www.va.gov/OHRM.
**HOW TO APPLY**

You should apply directly to the Human Resources Management Service at the VA health care facility where you desire employment consideration, as hiring decisions are made locally. However, information about VA dentistry programs and application procedures may be obtained from any VA facility. Arrangements can be made to have the required personal interview and physical examination conducted at the facility most convenient to you.

Employment information can also be obtained by contacting the Department of Veterans Affairs, Placement Service, 1555 Poydras Street, Suite 1971, New Orleans, LA 70112. The toll-free number is **1-800-949-0002**. Employment information can also be found on the Internet at [www.VACareers.va.gov](http://www.VACareers.va.gov).

Learn more about practicing as a VA dentist by visiting [www.va.gov/dental](http://www.va.gov/dental).
To gain a first-hand view of VA health care, you are invited and encouraged to visit any of our VA Medical Centers or ambulatory and community-based outpatient clinics. Please call or write to arrange an appointment.

Telephone numbers are listed below for each medical center. Also, telephone numbers are listed for every VA facility in local telephone directories under “U.S. Government.” You can also address correspondence to: Human Resource Management Service, VA Medical Center, [City, State, ZIP Code] (listed below).

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VA HEALTH CARE FACILITIES

Learn more online about our VA Health Care facilities at www.VAcareers.va.gov

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