—Dental hygienist

(Continued from Page 18)

Most programs grant an associate degree; others lead to a bachelor's degree. Some institutions offer both types of programs. Eighteen schools offer master's degree programs in dental hygiene or related fields.

Completion of an associate degree program usually is sufficient for the dental hygienist who wants to practice in a private dental office.

In order to do research, teach and work in public or school health programs, at least a baccalaureate degree usually is required.

Dental hygienists with a master's degree work as teachers or administrators in dental hygiene and dental assisting training programs, public health agencies and in associated research.

Competition is keen for admission to dental hygiene schools. The minimum requirement for admission to a school of dental hygiene is graduation from high school.

Several schools that offer the abachelor's degree admit students to the dental hygiene program only after they have completed two years of college.

Many schools also require that applicants take an aptitude test given by the American Dental Hygienists' Association. Dental hygiene training given in the Armed Forces does not fully prepare one to pass the licensing exam, but credit for that training may be granted to those who seek admission to accredited dental hygiene programs.

The curriculum in a dental hygiene program consists of courses in the basic sciences, dental sciences, clinical science and liberal arts.

Dental hygienists working full time in private offices earned average salaries of about $12,900 a year in 1976, according to the limited data available.

This salary was slightly above the average for all nonsupervisory workers in private industry, except farming.

In 1977, the federal government paid dental hygienists with no experience starting salaries of $8,316 a year.

Experienced dental hygienists working for the federal government earned average annual salaries of $10,500.

Dental hygienists employed full time in private offices usually worked between 35 and 40 hours a week. They may work on Saturdays or during evening hours. Some hygienists work for two dentists or more.

Dental hygienists usually work in clean, well-lighted offices. Important health protections for persons in this occupation are regular medical checkups and strict adherence to established procedures for using X-ray equipment and for disinfection.

Dental hygienists who work for school systems, health agencies and the federal or state governments have the same hours, vacation, sick leave, retirement and health insurance benefits as other workers in these organizations.

For information about accredited programs and the educational requirements to enter this occupation, contact:

Office of Education, American Dental Hygienists' Association, 211 E. Chicago Ave., Chicago, Ill. 60611.

Other material on opportunities for dental hygienists is available from:

Division of Dentistry, Public Health Service, U.S. Department of Health, Education and Welfare, 9000 Rockville Pike, Bethesda, Md. 20014.

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—Licensed practical

(Continued from Page 21)

before they can enter the profession of nursing the sick.

For graduate LPNs, there are opportunities in advance professionally through various forms of continuing education.

The age for admission to most schools starts at 17. Beyond that there are no age barriers and everyone is eligible, including the recent high school graduate, the woman re-entering the work force after years of full-time family life, or the individual who is thinking in terms of switching careers.

Who is suited to a career in practical nursing.

According to Mrs. Lucille L. Etheridge, R.N., Executive Director of the National Association for Practical Nurse Education and Service, Inc., the most likely candidate is the man or woman who likes people, has a genuine desire to help them and can work with and for them.

In short, LPNs must be ready, willing and able to devote themselves to meeting human needs.

Among the personal qualifications she considers extremely important are intelligence, patience, a strong sense of responsibility, good judgment, a sense of humor, enthusiasm, good mental health, and physical stamina.

Mrs. Etheridge frankly admits that a practical nursing career calls for dedication and hard work.

She also points out that it is sometimes difficult, often demanding and always challenging. "But, on the other hand," she says, "few professions are more rewarding or offer such unlimited opportunity for personal satisfaction."

Those interested in obtaining further information about practical nursing as a career should write to NAPNES, 122 East 42nd Street, New York, New York 10017.

—Occupational therapist

(Continued from Page 19)

salary of experienced occupational therapists was 1 ½ times the average earnings for all nonsupervisory workers in private industry, except farming.

In 1977, beginning therapists employed by the Veterans Adminstration (VA) earned starting salaries of $10,370 a year. The average salary paid occupational therapists working for the VA was about $16,000 at that time.

Many part-time positions are available for occupational therapists. Many therapists work for more than one employer and must travel between job locations.

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Nature of Work

Dietitians plan nutritious and appetizing meals to help people maintain or recover good health.

They also supervise the food service personnel who prepare and serve the meals, manage dietetic purchasing and accounting, and give advice on good eating habits.

Clinical dietitians form the largest group in this occupation; the others are administrative, teaching and research dietitians. Nutritionists also are included in this field.

Administrative dietitians apply the principles of nutrition and sound management to large-scale meal planning and preparation, such as that done in hospitals, universities, schools and other institutions.

They supervise the planning, preparation and service of meals; select, train and direct food service supervisors and workers.

Budget for and purchase food, equipment and supplies; enforce sanitary and safety regulations; and prepare records and reports.

Dietitians who are directors of a dietetic department also decide on departmental policy; coordinate dietetic service with the activities of other departments; and are responsible for the dietetic department budget, which in large organizations may amount to millions of dollars annually.

Clinical dietitians, sometimes called therapeutic dietitians, plan diets and supervise the service of meals to meet the nutritional needs of patients in hospitals, nursing homes or clinics.

Among their duties, clinical dietitians confer with doctors and other members of the health care team about patients' nutritional care, instruct patients and their families on the requirements and importance of their diets and suggest ways to keep on these diets after leaving the hospital or clinic.

In a small institution, one person may be both the administrative and clinical dietitian.

Research dietitians conduct, evaluate and interpret research to improve the nutrition of both healthy and sick people.

This research may be in nutrition science and education, food management or food service systems and equipment.

They may conduct studies of how the body uses food.

Research projects may investigate the nutritional needs of the aging, or persons with a chronic disease or space travelers.

Research dietitians usually are employed in medical centers or education facilities, but also may work in community health programs.

Dietetic educators teach dietetics to dietetic, medical, dental and nursing students and to interns, residents and other members of the health care team. They usually work in medical and educational institutions.

Nutritionists may counsel individuals and groups on sound nutrition practices to maintain and improve health or they may engage in teaching and research.

This work covers such areas as special diets, meal planning and preparation and food budgeting and purchasing.

Nutritionists in community health may be responsible for the nutrition components of preventive health and medical care services.

This includes planning, developing, coordinating and administering a nutrition program or a nutrition component as an integral part of a community health program.

Nutritionists work in such diverse areas as food industries, educational and health facilities, and agricultural and welfare agencies, both public and private.

An increasing number of dietitians work as consultants to hospitals and to health-related facilities. Others act as consultants to commercial enterprises, including food processors and equipment manufacturers.

Places of Employment

About 45,000 persons worked as dietitians last year.

More than one-half work in hospitals, nursing homes, and clinics, including about 1,100 in the Veterans Administration and the U.S. Public Health Service. Colleges, universities and school systems employ a large number of dietitians as teachers or in food service systems.

Most of the rest work for health-related agencies, restaurants or cafeterias, and large companies that provide food service for their employees.

Some dietitians are commissioned officers in the Armed Forces.

A bachelor's degree, preferably with a major in foods and nutrition or institution management, is the basic educational requirement for dietitians.

This degree can be earned in about 240 colleges and universities, usually in departments of home economics.

College courses usually required are in food and nutrition, institution management, chemistry, bacteriology, physiology, and related courses such as mathematics, data processing, psychology, sociology and economics.

For a dietitian to qualify for professional recognition, the American Dietetic Association (ADA) recommends the completion after graduation of an approved dietetic internship or an approved individual traineeship program.

The internship lasts 6 to 12 months and the traineeship program 1 to 2 years.

Both programs combine clinical experience under a qualified dietitian with some classroom work. In 1976, 68 internship programs were approved by the American Dietetic Association.

A growing number of coordinated undergraduate programs, located in schools of medicine and in allied health and home economics departments of both colleges and universities, enable students to complete both the requirements for a bachelor's degree and the clinical experience requirement in 4 years.

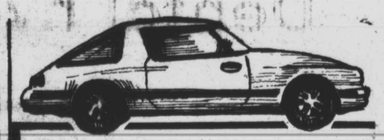
The ADA approves coordinated undergraduate programs.

Persons meeting the qualifications established by the ADA's Commission on Dietetic Registration can become Registered Dietitians (R.D.'s). Registration with the ADA is acknowledgement of a dietitian's competence.

Experienced dietitians may advance to assistant or associate director or director of a dietetic department. Advancement to higher level positions in teaching and research usually requires graduate education; public health nutritionists must earn a graduate degree in this field.

Graduate study in institutional or business administration is valuable to those interested in administrative dietetics.

Persons who plan to become dietitians should have organizational and administrative ability, as well as high scientific aptitude, and should be able to work well with a variety of people.



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