

CHAPTER 5

GETTING MORE INFORMATION

This book provides a foundation for anyone who is considering dentistry as a career and wants to know more about obtaining a dental education. Although the information included here is extensive, you probably will want additional details to answer questions that are specific to your situation. This chapter gives you lists of individuals, organizations, and references that can help answer those questions.

INDIVIDUALS WHO CAN HELP

One very effective way of getting more information is to talk to the individuals who are involved in dental education and are interested in encouraging others like you to consider dentistry as a career.

Practicing Dentists

Dentists are knowledgeable about the variety of careers in dentistry and about the education and skills needed. They can tell you what the day-to-day work is like, what kind of preparation is required, and the kinds of benefits they receive. In addition, one way to learn more about the profession and whether it feels right for you is to arrange for an internship or a “shadowing” opportunity in a dental office. To pursue such an opportunity, discuss the possibility with your own dentist or other practitioners in your area.

Prehealth Advisors

Prehealth advisors can assist in a broad range of issues about dental education and dental schools. They are especially important during the admissions process because they can inform you about the academic preparation necessary to be accepted into a dental school. In addition, these advisors are often involved in providing or coordinating letters of recommendation.

Science Professors

Science professors, especially those in the biological sciences, can be helpful in the same way as prehealth advisors in terms of academic preparation and letters of recommendation. They are particularly important to students at undergraduate schools that do not have an official prehealth advisor.

Dental School Admissions Officers

Admissions officers are especially knowledgeable about their own dental schools and the requirements to gain admission. They can provide you with catalogs and admission information. They can also describe the emphasis of the academic programs, provide information on support services to help students succeed, and other features of their schools.

Dental School Minority Affairs Officers

These officers play an important role in collecting and sharing information about what their dental schools are doing to increase minority enrollments and to make minority students who choose their schools feel welcome. They will also have information about the academic programs, support services, and other features of their schools.

Financial Aid Administrators

Financial aid administrators are very knowledgeable about how to pay the cost of attending dental school. They will be able to help you understand the financial aid application process and eligibility requirements for government, institutional, and private sources of financial aid. They can also assist in securing the funds for which you are eligible.

Dental Students

Dental students are usually forthright in sharing their perceptions of the education they are receiving at their schools. They will also tell you their views of the nonacademic aspects such as student support services and social atmosphere. Since these individuals' perspectives differ from each other, the information they share can be enormously helpful. You should not hesitate to approach them in order to benefit from their knowledge and points of view. There are also online discussion boards where future and current dental students talk about issues related to dental school. Keep in mind that all types of individual discussions are based on personal experience and do not reflect the whole perspective of a student body or school. It is always a good idea to base your decisions on information collected from a variety of sources.

ORGANIZATIONS THAT CAN HELP

A number of organizations offer information about careers in dentistry, preparing for admission, and financial aid for dental students.

EDUCATION

American Dental Education Association

1400 K Street, NW
Suite 1100
Washington, DC 20005
Phone: 202-289-7201
Fax: 202-289-7204
www.adea.org

The American Dental Education Association (ADEA) provides information about the application process for admission to dental school and postdoctoral programs. ADEA sponsors the ADEA Associated American Dental Schools Application Service (ADEA AADSAS), ADEA Postdoctoral Application Support Service (ADEA PASS), and ADEA Centralized Application for Advanced Placement for International Dentists (ADEA CAAPID). Visit the ADEA Division of Educational Pathways at www.adea.org to learn more about these services. In addition to the *ADEA Official Guide to Dental Schools*, ADEA publishes the *Journal of Dental Education (JDE)*, the *Bulletin of Dental Education Online (BDE)*, and the *ADEA Opportunities for Minority Students in U.S. Dental Schools*. Ordering information is available on the ADEA website.

Membership in ADEA is free for all dental students and includes networking and advocacy opportunities, free online access to the *JDE* and monthly delivery of the *BDE*. To become a member, visit www.adea.org/join.

American Student Dental Association

211 East Chicago Avenue
Suite 700
Chicago, IL 60611
Phone: 800-621-8099, ext. 2795/312-440-2795
Fax: 312-440-2820
www.asdanet.org

The American Student Dental Association (ASDA) is a student-run organization that offers educational resources, discounts on professional services, networking opportunities, and representation on issues that include education financing, dental student rights and

research, and advocacy. ASDA is a national organization but also represents the interests of dental students on the local and regional levels.

ExploreHealthCareers.org

American Dental Education Association
1400 K Street, NW
Suite 1100
Washington, DC 20005
Phone: 202-289-7201, 347-365-9253
www.explorehealthcareers.org

ExploreHealthCareers.org (EHC) is a multidisciplinary, free website that allows the user to explore more than 100 health careers, including all pertaining to dentistry and allied dentistry. EHC's database of 500 plus resources includes information about dental scholarships and pre dental enrichment programs.

International Federation of Dental Educators and Associations

2155 Webster Street
San Francisco, CA 94115
www.ifdea.org

The International Federation of Dental Educators and Associations (IFDEA) is a global community of dental educators who have joined together to improve oral health worldwide by sharing knowledge and raising standards. IFDEA contributes to improving global health by improving oral health. IFDEA serves as an axis of information, best practices, exchange programs, news, and professional development for the many regional dental education associations, academic dental institutions, and individual dental educators worldwide.

SPECIALTY

Academy of General Dentistry

211 East Chicago Avenue
Suite 900
Chicago, IL 60611
Phone: 888-AGD-DENT/888-243-3368
Fax: 312-440-0559
www.agd.org

The Academy of General Dentistry (AGD) is the only organization dedicated exclusively to serving the community of general dentists. The AGD provides resources, continuing education programs, advocacy, professional and career services, and networking opportunities. The academy also promotes the oral health of the public and offers a 24-hour, online message board for consumers to post dental-related questions and a dentist referral service.

American Academy of Oral and Maxillofacial Pathology

214 North Hale Street
Wheaton, IL 60187
Phone: 888-552-2667
Fax: 630-510-4501
www.aaomp.org

Representing the specialty of dentistry and pathology that deals with the nature, identification, and management of diseases affecting the oral and maxillofacial regions, the American Academy of Oral and Maxillofacial Pathology (AAOMP) promotes the profession and provides educational and scholarly resources. In conjunction with the North American Society of Head and Neck Pathology (NASHNP), AAOMP edits the *Head and Neck Pathology Journal*.

American Academy of Oral and Maxillofacial Radiology

P.O. Box 231422
Evans, GA 30809
Phone: 706-721-2607
Fax: 706-721-4937
www.aaomr.org

The American Academy of Oral and Maxillofacial Radiology (AAOMR) promotes the art and science of radiology in dentistry through scholarly and educational resources, and advocacy. AAOMR provides resources for educators and additional information on advanced education programs in oral and maxillofacial radiology.

American Academy of Pediatric Dentistry

211 East Chicago Avenue
Suite 1700
Chicago, IL 60611
Phone: 312-337-2169
Fax: 312-337-6329
www.aapd.org

The American Academy of Pediatric Dentistry (AAPD) represents the specialty of pediatric dentistry. Its members serve as primary care providers for millions of children from infancy through adolescence and provide advanced, specialty care for patients of all ages with special health care needs. The AAPD advocates policies, guidelines, and programs that promote optimal oral health and oral health care for children. AAPD also serves and represents its membership in the areas of professional development and governmental and legislative activities.

American Academy of Periodontology

737 North Michigan Avenue
Suite 800
Chicago, IL 60611
Phone: 312-787-5518
Fax: 312-787-3670
www.perio.org

The American Academy of Periodontology (AAP) specializes in the prevention, diagnosis, and treatment of diseases affecting the gums and supporting structures of the teeth and in the placement and maintenance of dental implants. AAP works to advance the periodontal and general health of the public and promote excellence in the practice of periodontics through a variety of services and resources for its community and information for the public.

American Association of Endodontists

211 East Chicago Avenue
Suite 1100
Chicago, IL 60611
Phone: 800-872-3636 (North America), 312-266-7255 (International)
Fax: 866-451-9020 (North America), 312-266-9867 (International)
www.aae.org

The American Association of Endodontists (AAE) is the professional association representing endodontists, the dental specialists who save teeth through root canal treatment. The AAE provides a forum for the exchange of ideas in the field of endodontics and stimulates research studies among its members through publications, professional development and continuing education opportunities, and meetings and events.

American Association of Hospital Dentists

401 North Michigan Avenue
 Suite 2200
 Chicago, IL 60611
 Phone: 312-527-6764
 Fax: 312-673-6663
www.scdonline.org

The American Association of Hospital Dentists (AAHD) operates under the auspices of the Special Care Dentistry Association (SCDA). The AAHD helps hospital dentists develop the skills, knowledge, creativity, and leadership they need to advance their practices and the profession. As part of SCDA, the association also helps shape national health policy on hospital dentistry by providing advocacy at the federal and state levels.

American Association of Oral and Maxillofacial Surgeons

9700 West Bryn Mawr Avenue
 Rosemont, IL 60018
 Phone: 847-678-6200, 800-822-6637
 Fax: 847-678-6286
www.aaoms.org

The American Association of Oral and Maxillofacial Surgeons (AAOMS) represents the surgeons who provide a broad range of diagnostic services and treatments for diseases, injuries, and defects of the neck, head, jaw, and associated structures that include problem wisdom teeth, facial pain, oral cancer, and facial cosmetic surgery. The mission of the AAOMS is to promote, protect, and advance oral and maxillofacial surgery to assure excellence for surgeons and their patients.

American Association of Orthodontists

401 North Lindbergh Boulevard
 St. Louis, MO 63141
 Phone: 314-993-1700/800-424-2841
 Fax: 314-997-1745
www.aaortho.org

The American Association of Orthodontists (AAO) is the organization for specialists who diagnose, prevent, and treat dental and facial irregularities. The AAO provides information to the public on the need and benefits of orthodontic treatment and supports research and education leading to quality patient care.

American Association of Public Health Dentistry

3085 Stevenson Drive
 Suite 200
 Springfield, IL 62703
 Phone: 217-529-6941
 Fax: 217-529-9120
www.aaphd.org

The American Association of Public Health Dentistry (AAPHD) provides a focus for meeting the challenge to improve the oral health of the public. Its broad base of membership provides a fertile environment and numerous opportunities for the exchange of ideas and experiences.