

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 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 can help you understand the financial aid application process and eligibility requirements for governmental, 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 are all different, 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, such as ADEA's GoDentalSM (www.godental.org), 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 advanced dental 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 and GoDentalSM, the official web resource for up-to-date and cutting-edge information for people on the pathway to dental education and exciting oral health careers. 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 or 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 or 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 or 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 or 630-510-4552
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 profes-

sion and provides educational and scholarly resources. In conjunction with the North American Society of Head and Neck Pathology (NASHP), AAOMP edits the *Head and Neck Pathology Journal*.

American Academy of Oral and Maxillofacial Radiology

P.O. Box 231422
 New York, NY 10023
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, as well as advocacy. AAOMR provides resources for educators and additional information on advanced dental 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, as well as in the placement and maintenance of dental implants. AAP works both to advance the periodontal and general health of the public and to promote excellence in the practice of periodontics. The academy achieves its objectives by making a variety of services and resources available to the periodontal community and by providing information to the public.

American Association of Endodontists

211 East Chicago Avenue
 Suite 1100
 Chicago, IL 60611
 Phone: 800-872-3636 (North America) or +1-312-266-7255 (International)
 Fax: 866-451-9020 (North America) or +1-312-266-9867 (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, as well as 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 or 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 or 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.

American College of Prosthodontists

211 East Chicago Avenue
 Suite 1000
 Chicago, IL 60611
 Phone: 312-573-1260
 Fax: 312-573-1257
www.prosthodontics.org

The American College of Prosthodontists (ACP) is the professional association of dentists with advanced specialty training in creating optimal oral health, both in function and appearance, including through the use of dental implants, dentures, veneers, crowns, and teeth whitening. The ACP represents the needs and interests of prosthodontists—within organized dentistry and to the public—by providing a means for stimulating awareness and interest in the field.

Special Care Dentistry Association

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

The Special Care Dentistry Association (SCDA) brings together three organizations with mutual interests: the American Association of Hospital Dentists (AAHD), the Academy of Dentistry for Persons with Disabilities (ADPD), and the American Society for Geriatric Dentistry (ASGD). SCDA works with oral health professionals and other organizations to promote the oral health of individuals with special needs. SCDA provides a variety of resources and opportunities for individuals interested in advancing the oral health of special needs patients.

RESEARCH

American Association for Dental Research

1619 Duke Street
 Alexandria, VA 22314
 Phone: 703-548-0066
 Fax: 703-548-1883
www.aadronline.org

The American Association for Dental Research (AADR) advances research and increases knowledge for the improvement of oral health. The association also sponsors student research fellowships to encourage dental students to conduct research.

International Association for Dental Research

1619 Duke Street
 Alexandria, VA 22314
 Phone: 703-548-0066
 Fax: 703-548-1883
www.iadr.com

The International Association for Dental Research (IADR) supports dental, oral, and craniofacial research in an effort to improve oral health worldwide. The association also supports numerous student awards and fellowships in a variety of dental research areas.

National Institute of Dental and Craniofacial Research

National Institutes of Health
 Bethesda, MD 20892
 Phone: 301-496-4261
 Fax: 301-480-4098
www.nidcr.nih.gov

The National Institute of Dental and Craniofacial Research (NIDCR) provides grants for research training for high school, college, dental, and postgraduate dental students. It is the major source of research funding to dental schools and offers both intramural and extramural research grants and training opportunities.

PROFESSIONAL**American Association of Women Dentists**

216 West Jackson Boulevard
 Suite 625
 Chicago, IL 60606
 Phone: 800-920-2293
 Fax: 312-750-1203
www.aawd.org

The American Association of Women Dentists (AAWD) celebrates the rich history of women dentists. AAWD represents women dentists across the United States, internationally, and in the uniformed services. The organization provides support and education to women in the dental industry and is constantly striving toward “becoming the recognized resource for connecting and enriching the lives of women dentists.”

American College of Dentists

839J Quince Orchard Boulevard
 Gaithersburg, MD 20878
 Phone: 301-977-3223
 Fax: 301-977-3330
www.acd.org

The American College of Dentists (ACD) is the oldest national honorary organization for dentists. Its mission is to promote excellence, ethics, professionalism, and leadership in dentistry. ACD’s activities include conferences, programs, and online resources. Membership is by invitation only.

American Dental Association

211 East Chicago Avenue
 Chicago, IL 60611
 Phone: 312-440-2500
 Fax: 312-440-7494
www.ada.org

The American Dental Association (ADA) is the professional association of dentists committed to the public’s oral health, as well as to ethics, science, and professional advancement. The ADA has information about dental licensure and advanced dental study. In addition, the ADA sponsors the Dental Admission Test (DAT), which every applicant to a U.S. dental school must take (see Chapter 2).

Association of Schools of Public Health

1900 M Street, NW
 Suite 710
 Washington, DC 20036
 Phone: 202-296-1099
 Fax: 202-296-1252
www.asph.org

The Association of Schools of Public Health (ASPH) represents the deans, faculty, and students of the accredited member schools of public health and other programs seeking accreditation as schools of public health. The ASPH collects information on careers in public health.

Hispanic Dental Association

3085 Stevenson Drive
 Suite 200
 Springfield, IL 62703
 Phone: 217-529-6517
 Fax: 217-529-9120
 www.hdassoc.org

The Hispanic Dental Association (HDA) provides a voice for the Hispanic oral health professional, promotes the oral health of the Hispanic community, fosters research and knowledge concerning Hispanic oral health problems, and encourages the entry of Hispanics into the oral health profession. The HDA offers scholarships for predoctoral and advanced dental students and provides a membership category for students.

National Dental Association and Student National Dental Association

3517 16th Street, NW
 Washington, DC 20010
 Phone: 202-588-1697
 Fax: 202-588-1244
 www.ndaonline.org

The National Dental Association (NDA), which is made up of African American dentists, sponsors minority student scholarships for both undergraduate and advanced dental education students, includes a student organization (SNDA), and distributes career development tools that are available for use by schools, dentists, and other groups. The NDA's mission is to represent the concerns of ethnic minorities in dentistry; to elevate the global oral health concerns of underserved communities; to enhance educational and financial opportunities, as well as public policy awareness, for its members; and to recruit underrepresented minorities into the profession through advocacy and mentorship.

Society of American Indian Dentists

1225 Sovereign Row
 Oklahoma City, OK 73108
 Phone: 405-946-7072
 Fax: 405-946-7651
<http://www.aaip.org/?page=SAID>

In addition to encouraging American Indian youth to pursue careers in dentistry, the Society of American Indian Dentists (SAID) promotes dental health in the American Indian community, as well as American Indian heritage and traditional values. SAID also promotes and supports the unique concerns of American Indian dentists. Resources are available for high school and undergraduate students, and dental students are eligible for membership.

ORAL HEALTH CARE ADVOCACY

Oral Health America

410 North Michigan Avenue
 Suite 352
 Chicago, IL 60611
 Phone: 312-836-9900
 Fax: 312-836-9986
 www.oralhealthamerica.org

Oral Health America (OHA) is a fully independent nonprofit organization supported through contributions from individuals who believe that oral health should be recognized as one of the lifetime factors critical to overall health. OHA develops, implements, and facilitates educational and service programs designed to improve the oral health of all Americans.

OTHER RESOURCES

College, university, and public libraries generally have a range of publications about careers, undergraduate and graduate education, and financial aid. As a result, it is worthwhile to visit a library to gather information about careers in dentistry, dental educational programs, and sources of student assistance. Some of the publications you may find there include the following information. If you prefer to acquire copies yourself, contact the organizations as noted.

■ Dental Admission Testing Program Application and Preparation Materials

In addition to the application form that students must complete to take the DAT, this publication contains information that will help students prepare for the test.

Available from:

ADA Department of Testing Services
211 East Chicago Avenue
Suite 600
Chicago, IL 60611
Phone: 800-232-1694
www.ada.org/dat.aspx

■ Getting Through Dental School: American Student Dental Association's (ASDA) Guide for Dental Students

This biennial reference volume includes information on scholarships and loans, grants, public health and international opportunities, as well as ASDA membership benefits and leadership opportunities.

■ Getting into Dental School: American Student Dental Association's (ASDA) Guide for Pre dental Students

This resource guide specifically targets the needs of pre dental students and those considering careers in dentistry. It is a reference volume of facts on applying to dental school, seeking financial aid, taking advantage of ASDA membership benefits, learning about debt management, and more. The handbook also includes career options in the dental field and a survival guide for passing the DAT.

■ American Student Dental Association's (ASDA) Guides to Advanced Dental Programs, Vol. 1-3

This set of publications offers information about general practice residencies, advanced education in general dentistry, and other advanced dental training programs.

Available from:

American Student Dental Association
211 East Chicago Avenue
Suite 700
Chicago, IL 60611
312-440-2795 or 800-621-8099, ext. 2795
www.asdanet.org

ON TO PART II

The five chapters in Part I have helped you learn the basics about careers in dentistry, meeting criteria for acceptance into dental school, paying for the costs of a dental education, deciding to which dental schools to apply, and finding additional information to answer the particular questions you have. Part II, Learning about Dental Schools, will give you an opportunity to put this general information to use by introducing you to every dental school in the United States and Canada.