



# Advance your career in the dental sector



**Sam Williams,**  
People Director for Bupa

Dental Care, busts some of the common myths that might be holding people back from making a new start.

**W**hether you're joining from another industry or looking to take your skills to the next level, the dental sector provides many different opportunities to advance your career.

New Bupa research shows more than two in five people want a new role, either to increase their job satisfaction (40%), try a new challenge (35%), or do something more meaningful (42%). But for a quarter of people (27%), a lack self-belief is holding them back, while others are worried about starting again, learning the skills required, or having to take time out to study.

## 'I've left it too late to make a change' MYTH

It's never too late to pursue your passions in life! I often hear people worrying that they should stick with the path they committed to when they first entered the world of work, or that they're too old to make a change. However, the career that suited you well at first may no longer complement your ambitions or family life now. At Bupa we see people of all ages come to us to start something new, so trust me you won't be alone.

Georgina Hilton (pictured), a dental



Georgina Hilton

that they will have more transferrable skills than they think, and that no one is expected to know everything on their first day.

### 'I can't afford to stop work while I retrain' MYTH

For many people, the prospect of having to take a pay cut or risk time without a steady wage while retraining can hold them back from changing careers. In fact, this is a major concern for a quarter of people (26%). But apprenticeships can be a great way of overcoming this, as they offer opportunities to 'earn while you learn', and many apprentices end with a job and a pay rise, in recognition of their new skills.

Sometimes, changing careers can mean

*'I love taking care of patients and making a difference in people's lives. It's a fulfilling and rewarding career that offers constant learning opportunities and I get wrap around support from my team.'*

nurse at Bupa Dental Care Great Dunmow, said: 'I made a change from an estate agency administrator to a dental nurse apprentice in 2022. I would encourage any aspiring dental nurses to believe in themselves and embrace the chance to never stop learning. There will be challenges along the way, but know you are capable of anything you set your mind to.'

### 'I won't be able to learn the new skills required' MYTH

This is a common concern I hear when it comes to changing careers. For many of us, it might feel like a long time since we were in a classroom, so the idea of learning new things can be daunting. I always try to remind people

a short-term drop in earnings, leading to greater earning potential in the future. During this time, look for any schemes or benefits to which you might be entitled and which your employer should signpost.

### 'My skills are too niche to transfer to another job' MYTH

Changing careers can be daunting, even if you're moving between similar sectors. But you'd be surprised how many skills you have that will be relevant to a new role. For those looking to move into the health and social care sector, having natural empathy, compassion and enthusiasm are invaluable and will stand you in good stead.

### 'There won't be enough support' MYTH

Considering what support is available is a really good thing to do when looking for a new job, especially if you're moving into a new sector. It's a good idea to look at whether your new company offers wellbeing services, like Employee Assistance Programmes (EAPs),<sup>1</sup> Remote GP appointments<sup>2</sup> or health assessments,<sup>3</sup> or if they operate a buddy or mentor system to help you find your feet. If you're planning on doing some learning alongside your career change, for example doing an apprenticeship, you should be able to access support from your line manager, apprenticeships team and from your learning provider too.

Portia Martin, a dental nurse at Bupa Dental Care Worcester City, St Mary's Street, said: 'Before joining Bupa, I felt lost, but my apprenticeship has helped me find purpose and direction. I love taking care of patients and making a difference in people's lives. It's a fulfilling and rewarding career that offers constant learning opportunities and I get wrap-around support from my team.'

For more information about jobs at Bupa Dental Care, visit <https://jobs.bupadentalcare.co.uk/work-with-us/>.

For more on careers, visit <https://www.bdjjobs.com/careers/>.

### References

1. Bupa. EAP – Employee Assistance Programme. Available at: <https://www.bupa.co.uk/business/health-wellbeing-services/employee-assistance-programme> (accessed February 2024).
2. Bupa. Private GP appointments. Available at: <https://www.bupa.co.uk/health/payg/gp-services> (accessed February 2024).
3. Bupa. Health assessments. Available at: <https://www.bupa.co.uk/health/health-assessments> (accessed February 2024).

<https://doi.org/10.1038/s41407-024-2563-9>