

‘No two days are ever the same in dentistry!’



Amy Gardiner, 33, is a treatment coordinator and implant/sedation lead nurse at Cleobury Dental Practice on the Worcestershire/Shropshire border. Amy completed her NVQ Level 3 Dental Nursing in 2001 and NEBDN Conscious Sedation in 2017, and is married with three children.

I get up at 7 am and have breakfast with my children (two boys and a girl), usually porridge or crumpets. I am originally from Kidderminster and now live in Cleobury Mortimer in Shropshire. I walk to work which is less than a mile away, and work Monday to Thursday from 9 am to 4 pm.

For one or two days a week I am office based, offering treatment coordinator (TCO) appointments to new and existing patients. I spend the other days in surgery, mainly

implants and sedation but also general dentistry.

At my practice we have four general dentists providing a mixture of NHS and private care. We have an orthodontic specialist, an implant specialist and two dental hygienists. We have a practice manageress, a business manager and there are eight dental nurses working in rotation and also helping on reception (myself included) plus a full time receptionist.

We have a very diverse patient base,

predominantly NHS, but our principal dentist has fairly recently converted to Practice Plan which has been really well received and a great success. We have implant, IV sedation and orthodontic clinics regularly and they are very popular treatment options for many patients. We are also branching out to facial aesthetics and as of this month are now Cerezen providers.

My career path was inspired by my work experience placement while still at school, at a local dental practice. My Mum was

I have been fortunate enough to work in hospital settings, dental access centres, general dental practice, specialist referral practice and also as a locum nurse throughout my career which (so far) spans nearly 17 years! Working with everyone from foundation dentists to consultant level surgeons, no two days are ever the same in dentistry!

What I enjoy the most about my job is ensuring a bridge between patient and clinician, to enable our patients to get the best possible quality of care and thorough education towards making the right decisions in their treatment, and also providing support to patients who have dental anxiety.

2004 I completed my dental radiography post-graduation certificate; I used this a lot when I worked in an orthodontic specialist practice years ago, but not so much anymore. I also completed the fluoride varnish application course through my local deanery a couple of years ago and often use the skills from this. Our practice offers high caries risk children a three-monthly fluoride visit if deemed necessary. Those of us dental nurses who are trained in fluoride varnish application take it in turns to run the fluoride varnish clinics.

I am really lucky to have an extremely supportive employer who ensures we have access to online CPD training for all mandatory subjects. We have annual CPR and first aid training; cross infection training in-house; our fire marshal provides an annual update/refresher; and we always re-enact a medical emergency scenario during our monthly practice meetings. I attend ILS [Immediate Life Support] training annually in order to comply with sedation guidelines.

I'm home by 4.30 pm every day. I love spending time with my family; we have a busy week and the weekends are no different as my boys are off playing rugby and footy, husband included as he is a football coach. My daughter has a pony who keeps us very busy!

As a rule, I am careful with my family's diet and oral health regimes. My children are allowed treats and I do let them brush their own teeth, but I keep a beady eye on them. Mind you, our staff room is always laden with snacks so it can prove quite difficult to resist temptation when I'm at work!

This year I am looking forward to a couple of music festivals and hopefully a nice family holiday before my youngest starts school in September.

I have been working really hard over the last couple of years; while studying for my sedation exam I did promise myself I would NEVER do another postgraduate course... but I could maybe be persuaded. I am really happy in my work, feel satisfied in what I do, but definitely fancy a trip out for a treatment coordinator training day!

I usually go to bed between 10 and 11 pm - ideally closer to 10 pm - this girl needs her zzz's!

Interview by Kate Quinlan

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'MY MUM WAS MY INSPIRATION AS SHE WAS A DENTAL NURSE THROUGHOUT MY CHILDHOOD AND FOUND A LOT OF PLEASURE IN HER WORK, WHICH ENCOURAGED ME TO DO THE SAME.'

my inspiration as she was a dental nurse throughout my childhood and found a lot of pleasure in her work, which encouraged me to do the same. In year 11 at school I applied to become a trainee dental nurse at Birmingham Dental Hospital. My application was successful and the rest is history!

I find my job very rewarding and diverse.

When I'm in the practice I usually pop home for lunch to grab a bite to eat and check on my pets.

My role within the practice is very busy and outside of work I don't have a spare minute due to having young children, but I would like to consider dental education later on, when my children are less demanding of my time. In