

(U)499.—WRNS—Ratings—Introduction of Dental Hygienist Specialisation
(NP2/N/MDG 356/1/65/C—28 Apr 1967)

1. Dental Hygienists have been introduced into the WRNS with effect from 1st April 1967, for employment in Dental Clinics ashore.

2. Dental Hygienists are a comparatively recent addition to the professions employed in the health field. They are responsible, under the supervision of a dental surgeon, for minor treatments in the mouth, such as scaling and polishing teeth, periodontal treatments and advising patients on oral care and hygiene. Their use has led to major changes in the treatment of periodontal diseases and in the teaching of oral hygiene and preventive dentistry. In consequence they are now widely employed in civilian practice and in the other two Services.

Recruitment

3. The lowest rate for qualified Dental Hygienists will be as Acting Leading Wren Dental Hygienist. Recruitment will normally be from among suitable Acting Leading Wren Dental Surgery Attendants and above and Dental Surgery Attendants passed for Leading rate. There will, however, be two exceptions to this rule. Recruits who have the requisite academic qualifications on entry will be eligible for Dental Hygienist training provided there are no more senior Dental Surgery Attendants with equivalent academic qualifications waiting for training. The other exception will be recruits who are already qualified Dental Hygienists when they join the WRNS. Although they will join as Probationary Wrens in the Dental Surgery Attendant category, they will be re-categorised to Dental Hygienists and advanced on a day by day basis to Acting Leading Wren on successful completion of Part I training at HMS DAUNTLESS and one month's Part II training at RN Barracks, Portsmouth.

Qualifications Required for Training

4. The General Dental Council recommends that candidates should have the equivalent of 3 GCE "O" levels, in English Language and two other academic subjects, one of which should be a science subject from the following list: Physics, Chemistry, Zoology, Botany or combined Sciences such as Biology or Physics with Chemistry. Exemption can be granted, however, to Wrens who display the necessary qualities but lack the full academic qualifications. Only WRNS ratings who have obtained a good pass in their previous Dental Surgery Attendants professional examination will be considered for exemption.

5. Candidates for training from serving DSAs will be required to pass an aptitude test and be considered suitable in all respects by the Director of Dental Services (Navy).

Training

6. Selected candidates will be trained at the Dental Clinic, RN Barracks, Portsmouth. The course will follow the syllabus approved by the General Dental Council and will take about ten months. On completion of the course, candidates will take the examination set by the General Dental Council for Dental Hygienist and if successful will be awarded the professional Certificate of Proficiency in Dental Hygiene. Should a Dental Surgery Attendant prove unsatisfactory she will be taken off course and returned to her former duties.

Advancement

7. All candidates will stay in the Dental Surgery Attendant category and will be eligible for roster advancement in the usual way while undergoing training. On successful completion of the course, Acting Leading Wrens and above will be transferred to the Dental Hygienist category in their existing rate and with existing seniority; all others will be advanced on a day by day basis to Acting Leading Wren Dental Hygienist. There will be a common roster for Dental Hygienists and Dental Surgery Attendants.

Pay

8. Pay will be as for Dental Surgery Attendants.

Applications for Transfer

9. Applications for training and transfer to the Dental Hygienist category should be made through Commanding Officers to Superintendent Training and Drafting, WRNS, HMS DAUNTLESS, in the usual way.

10. BR 1077 will be amended in due course.

(BR 1077)