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MCC adds dental assistant program

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Manchester Community College is adding a new dental assistance certification program this fall to help fill a shortage of those positions in eastern Connecticut, officials said.

The new certificate program will develop trained professionals for career opportunities in a rapidly growing field while supplying area dentists with a much-needed pool of assistants.

Dental assistants perform a variety of duties, including helping the dentist during procedures, exposing x-rays, taking impressions and overseeing the sterilization of instruments. Demand for properly trained and credentialed assistants is high throughout the nation and growing every year, the school said.

The new program puts students on the path to becoming certified by the Dental Assisting National Board – a professional benchmark dentists look for when hiring assistants.

Students can enroll in the academic portion of the program on a full- or part-time basis, completing the course work in as little as eight months. Students experience a mix of classroom work and hands-on practice in the training facility on the MCC campus that is fully equipped with three dental chairs, sterilization equipment and digital x-ray apparatus.

The second half of the training is a full-time, 300-hour semester of clinical practice in a local dentist's office.

Prospective applicants must have a high school diploma and have completed courses in basic college English and math.

MCC's first class begins August 29 and still has a few openings. A second class will be available in January.

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