

Anne Kuffel – A Hygienist Story

Working together keeps everyone safe

Anne Kuffel followed her own unique path to finding her vocation: “I became a dental hygienist around age 30, a little later than most other hygienists. Right after high school, I worked in a bank and then took time off to have my children. When I was ready to return to work, I knew I wanted more education--I always had an interest in the dental field and was contemplating being a dentist, but after some additional research, I decided hygiene was a better fit for me.”

Anne found that she really loved her new role. “As a hygienist, I like working proactively to prevent issues, rather than reacting to them after the fact. Dentists usually have to fix something after a problem has occurred (for example, a crown needs to be put on or a filling needs to be done) but I like to work with patients on their oral healthcare to prevent issues from occurring in the first place.” Hygiene also proved to be a great fit for her life: “When I first started, my children were small and I needed regular daytime shifts. I looked at other healthcare fields, but they usually included evenings and weekends.”

Early on in her career, Anne worked at a private practice where she was the only hygienist. And while she persevered, the experience definitely felt tougher than it needed to be. Now that she’s at Midwest Dental, however, things are different. “I get to work with other hygienists locally and with more experienced hygienists on the regional level.” Another unique thing about Midwest Dental is that every practice has a designated Safety Officer, tasked with making sure everyone, including employees and patients, is as safe as possible. Anne stepped up to take on this role for her practice, and does so with gusto. “I focus on infection prevention and eliminating the risk of exposure. Protecting our patients and ourselves is like taking care of your family--we provide a high level of protection and care so no one is harmed.”

Safety within a dental practice is serious business and demands a high level of accountability. “Because of what we do for a living, I want to be sure I am doing no harm. Most injuries are preventable by correctly using the right equipment, and as the Safety Officer, I’m responsible for making sure the whole team is aware of protocols.” Safety has become even more crucial during the current pandemic, and Anne has been right there on the front lines: “I have been impressed with Midwest Dental’s follow-through on the CDC recommendations to safely return to the office. It is very nice to see the precautions being taken to offer the highest protection possible--not just the bare minimum needed to get people back in the door. The company had safety protocols in place before expecting me to return to work, and I think they did a really good job with the available resources.”

Despite a slightly late start, Anne is confident that she has found her people. "I think Midwest Dental is a good place for a hygienist to work because you have a company that provides a lot of resources, CE options, and other learning opportunities so you aren't on your own. Plus, you always have access to more experienced clinicians who can help you with additional training and knowledge."



midwestdentaljobs.com

© Midwest Dental, Inc. All rights reserved.