

Coordinating Commission for Postsecondary Education Review of Existing Instructional Programs

Institution: Central Community College **Program:** Dental Hygiene

I certify the following:

- the information provided regarding this program is accurate
- the above-named institution has in place a procedure for reviewing instructional programs
- such review took place and was presented to the institution's governing board on **May 15, 2025** **PENDING**
- the governing board's action was: **Approved** **PENDING**

Signed: _____
(Chief Academic Officer or designated representative) (Date)

Evidence of Demand and Efficiency

		19-20	20-21	21-22	22-23	23-24	5 yr avg*
Student Credit Hours (SCH)		669	737	711	780	764	732.20
Faculty Full-time Equivalency (FTE)		3.00	3.03	2.83	4.07	4.07	3.40
SCH/Faculty FTE		223.00	243.23	251.24	191.65	187.71	215.35
Number of Degrees and Awards <i>(list degrees/awards separately)</i>	AAS	15	13	12	15	15	14.00
	Diploma						
	Certificate						
	Total Awards	15	13	12	15	15	14.00

*By term analysis combined to conduct an annual review. Numbers reported reflect 3 negotiated contract periods (FA17-SU20, FA20-SU22, FA22-SU25). Numbers for 22-23 and 23-24 FTE reflect updated tracking method for part-time instructors.

Evidence of Need (provide a detailed explanation below or attach documentation)

See attached

Justification if the program is below either of the CCPE thresholds—complete page 2

For CCPE use: reviewer/date

Justification if the program is below CCPE thresholds—check one or more boxes and provide a detailed explanation or attach a document

☒ Program is critical to the role and mission of the institution (detailed explanation).

The Central Community College Dental Hygiene Program, established in 1977, plays a critical role in fulfilling CCC's mission to serve the educational and workforce development needs of its region. Offering a rigorous, comprehensive education that blends general education, sciences, and hands-on clinical training, the program prepares students for successful careers in diverse settings from private dental practices and hospitals to public health agencies and rural clinics. With a strong emphasis on service to underserved populations, especially in rural Nebraska, the program directly addresses regional healthcare gaps and supports improved access to oral health services. By training professionals who often return to their communities, the program strengthens local healthcare systems and helps reduce disparities in dental care across the state.

The program operates below the 275 FTE threshold, admitting 15 students annually in a cohort model. This design is rooted in accreditation standards and a commitment to maintaining educational quality. Physical space limitations in clinic and lab facilities, mandated low faculty-to-student ratios set by the Commission on Dental Accreditation (CODA), and limited availability of compliant clinical sites all support the need for a smaller cohort size. These constraints ensure that students receive individualized instruction, high-quality patient experiences, and safe learning environments. Despite its small size, the program consistently achieves high retention, graduation, and employment outcomes. Its most recent accreditation visit in Fall 2023 resulted in no findings, reinforcing its compliance and excellence. A 2–3-year waitlist reflects strong demand for the program and its graduates, making it a vital contributor to CCC's mission and to oral health across Nebraska.

☐ Program contains courses supporting general education or other programs (detailed explanation).

☐ Interdisciplinary program (providing the program meets the requirements set in the existing policy for interdisciplinary programs) (explain).

☐ Student or employer demand, or demand for intellectual property is high and external funding would be jeopardized by discontinuing the program (explain).

☒ Program provides unique access to an underserved population or geographical area (explain).

A key strength of the program is its ability to supply skilled dental hygiene professionals to rural communities across Nebraska, where access to oral health care is often limited. By training students who live in or return to these areas, the program directly supports improved health outcomes and helps fill a gap in care for underserved populations. This rural focus not only strengthens local healthcare systems

but also contributes to community stability and public health equity.

☒ Program meets a unique need in the region, state, or nation (explain).

There is a strong and ongoing demand for dental hygienists in Nebraska, as they are an essential part of the oral health care team. Graduates of the Central Community College Dental Hygiene Program are employed across a wide range of dental and medical settings, including both rural areas and metropolitan cities such as Lincoln and Omaha. They work in private single-practitioner offices as well as large corporate dental practices. In addition, many graduates serve in public health departments and federally funded clinics throughout the state. Their work extends to nursing homes, public and private elementary schools, Head Start programs, and WIC clinics.

Employers consistently hire graduates from Central Community College due to their strong work ethic and team-oriented mindset. According to 2024 EMSI Lightcast data, our region is considered a hotspot for dental hygiene jobs. While an area of similar size typically has about 225 job openings, our region currently has 293 which is significantly higher than the average. This robust job market improves employment prospects for those entering the field. Although retirement risk in the region is about average - 54 annually compared to the national average of 58, the sustained turnover still contributes to ongoing demand.

Importantly, overall diversity in the dental hygiene field remains low in our region. While this presents a challenge, it also highlights a unique opportunity for the program to meet a regional need: by attracting and supporting a more diverse student body, the program can help broaden representation in the workforce and better serve Nebraska's increasingly diverse population.

☐ Program is newly approved within the last five years (no additional justification needed).

☐ Other (detailed explanation).



Dental Hygiene

Coordinating Commission Seven-Year Review 2025

Information in this report reviewed and recommended to cabinet:

Central Community College Educational Services, 04/24/2025

Recommended continuation of programs without monitoring:

Central Community College College Cabinet, 05/01/2025

Central Community College Board of Governors, 05/15/2025 **PENDING**

Dr. Wanda Cloet - Program Director
Ashley Herringer - Program Instructor
Patricia Kirkegaard -Program Instructor

Dr. Sarah Kort - Dean of Instruction, Health Sciences
Dr. Marcie Kemnitz - Division Vice President, Health Sciences

Dental Hygiene Program

Program Review Summary – Dr. Sarah Kort

The Dental Hygiene Program prepares graduates to sit for the national and regional board exams required to become Registered Dental Hygienists, a credential necessary for practice in Nebraska. The program not only offers a pathway to licensure but also provides continuing education for practicing professionals and is actively involved in delivering community services.

Dental hygienists are in high demand in Nebraska, both in rural and urban areas, as they are vital members of the oral health team and the broader healthcare system. Our graduates are employed across a variety of settings, including private dental offices, corporate practices, public health departments, federally funded clinics, nursing homes, elementary schools, and community programs like Head Start and WIC. This broad employment base speaks to the program's ability to produce skilled professionals who meet the diverse needs of the state's healthcare system.

The program's graduates are known for their strong work ethics, effective team collaboration, and proficiency in clinical skills such as sterilization techniques. In our region, dental hygienists earn a median salary of \$76,663, with an expected 4.6% job growth by 2029, further demonstrating the program's relevance in the workforce.

The program is academically rigorous, consistently exceeding the CCPE threshold with an average of over 10 awards per year. Over the last five years, we have averaged 14 graduates annually, supported by a low faculty-to-student ratio of 15:1. This allows for personalized instruction and better student support. Our faculty and program director are dedicated to continually improving the curriculum, incorporating new technologies, and engaging in professional development to stay aligned with advancements in dental hygiene practices.

Technologically, the program is at the forefront. It is the only one in Nebraska featuring an endoscope in its clinic, and it collaborates on research using this tool. Central Community College is also among the first to use digital impression scanning and 3D printing in the classroom, enhancing student learning and clinical treatment options for patients. We have also invested in cutting-edge equipment like diode lasers to treat various oral conditions.

The program has demonstrated exceptional student outcomes, with a 99% course completion rate, bolstered by strong admission criteria and effective academic support systems. Personalized interventions and tutoring help students overcome challenges, ensuring high retention and success.

Looking ahead, the program is poised for continued success. It enjoys strong demand, as evidenced by a typical 2–3-year waitlist. Most recently, the program passed its accreditation site visit in Fall 2023 with no findings, affirming its compliance and effectiveness.

In conclusion, the Dental Hygiene Program at Central Community College continues to exceed expectations, providing a high-quality education that prepares students for success in a variety of settings. Its commitment to excellence, student success, and alignment with workforce needs ensures its ongoing impact on Nebraska's healthcare system. With this, we recommend continuation of the program.

- I. **Program:** **Dental Hygiene**
- II. **College Mission:** Central Community College maximizes student and community success.
- III. **College Vision:** The Best Choice –
- for students to achieve their educational goals.**
- quality education
 - personal service and individualized attention
 - exceptional and passionate faculty and staff
 - extraordinary value
- for developing a skilled workforce.**
- employability and/or successful credit transfers
 - graduates who advocate for CCC
 - business and industry partnerships
 - state-of-the-art facilities and technologies
- for advancing communities.**
- educational partnerships
 - strong alumni support
 - foster economic development
 - sustainability leaders
- IV. **Program Mission Statement:** The dental hygiene program enables graduates to become academically eligible for national and regional board exams that are required to become a Registered Dental Hygienists (R.D.H.). An R.D.H. license is required in Nebraska to practice dental hygiene in Nebraska. The program offers continuing education for practicing dental professionals and is active in providing community services.
- V. **Program Vision Statement:** The dental hygiene program will provide students with a quality educational program using state-of-the-art technology and equipment. Continuous quality improvement principles, with on-going support from the dental community will be utilized to assure the program exceeds the standards set forth by the Commission on Dental Accreditation.
- We value:**
- Student success.
 - On-going relationships with graduates as lifelong learners and supporters of the program.
 - Providing articulation agreements with senior institutions for graduates to pursue higher degrees.

- Providing continuing education to dental professionals for licensure renewal.
- Partnering with high schools that provide a career pathway for health careers.
- Collaboration with other dental hygiene programs, CCC health programs, and employers.
- Maintaining professional relationships with clinical sites.
- Providing professional development opportunities for faculty and staff.
- Providing opportunities for leadership development and professional contacts for students through SADHA.
- Partnering with other health programs at other colleges and universities.

VI. Program/Discipline Environmental Scan (Program Need):

A. Industry or college need

Programs - A summary of industry need include EMSI or State data, information from advisory committees

Disciplines – data of college usage and a summary statement

There is a strong need for dental hygienists in Nebraska as they are an integral part of the oral health team as well as the total health team. Dental Hygiene graduates from Central Community College are employed in many areas of the dental and medical facilities. They are employed in the rural areas of Nebraska as well as the metropolitan cities of Lincoln and Omaha. They are employed in private single dental offices as well as large corporate dental offices. In addition, the graduates are also employed with local public health departments as well as federally funded clinics in Nebraska. They are providing care in nursing homes, public and private elementary schools as well as Head Start and WIC. Graduates from Central Community College Dental Hygiene Program are hired because of their strong team commitment to work ethics as an employee. They are also hired because of the strong ability to perform sterilization techniques as well as being a team player.

Lightcast (EMSI) Q4 2024 Data Set

Lightcast data is a hybrid dataset derived from official government sources such as the US Census Bureau, Bureau of Economic Analysis, and Bureau of Labor Statistics. Leveraging the unique strengths of each source, our data modeling team creates an authoritative dataset that captures more than 99% of all workers in the United States. This core offering is then enriched with data from online social profiles, resumés, and job postings to give you a complete view of the workforce.

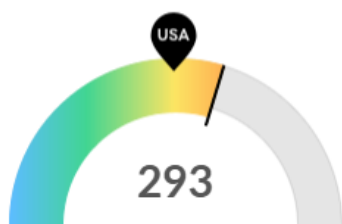
REPORT PARAMETERS

1 Occupation

- **29-1292 Dental Hygienists:** Administer oral hygiene care to patients. Assess patient oral hygiene problems or needs and maintain health records. Advise patients on oral health maintenance and disease prevention. May provide advanced care such as providing fluoride treatment or administering topical anesthesia. **Sample of Reported Job Titles:** Dental Hygienist, Hygienist, Licensed Dental Hygienist, Dental Nurse, Oral Hygienist, Pediatric Dental Hygienist, Pediatric Dental Hygienist

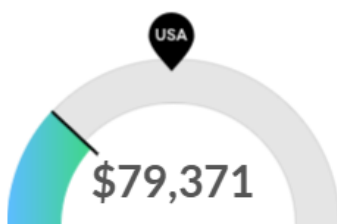
EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

Light Job Posting Demand Over a Deep Supply of Regional Jobs



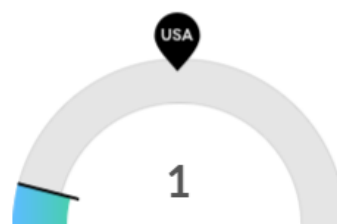
Jobs (2024)

Your area is a hotspot for this kind of job. The national average for an area this size is 225* employees, while there are 293 here.



Compensation

Earnings are low in your area. The national median salary for Dental Hygienists is \$87,375, compared to \$79,371 here.



Job Posting Demand

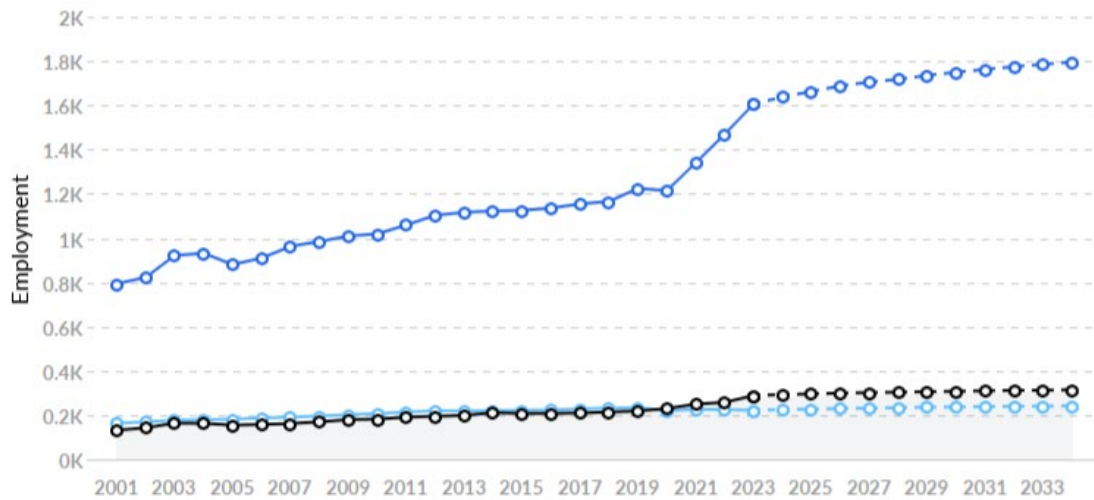
Job posting activity is low in your area. The national average for an area this size is 4* job postings/mo, while there is 1 here.

*National average values are derived by taking the national value for Dental Hygienists and scaling it down to account for the difference in overall workforce size between the nation and your area. In other words, the values represent the national average adjusted for region size.

JOBS

Regional Employment Is Higher Than the National Average

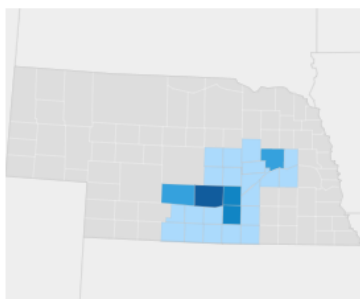
An average area of this size typically has 225* jobs, while there are 293 here. This higher than average supply of jobs may make it easier for workers in this field to find employment in your area.



	Region	2024 Jobs	2029 Jobs	Change	% Change
●	CCC Service Area	293	306	14	4.6%
●	National Average	225	236	10	4.6%
●	State of Nebraska	1,638	1,736	97	5.9%

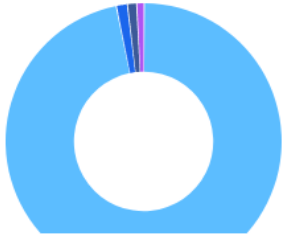
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Regional Breakdown



County	2024 Jobs
Buffalo County, NE	87
Hall County, NE	54
Adams County, NE	48
Platte County, NE	23
Dawson County, NE	19

Most Jobs are Found in the Offices of Dentists Industry Sector

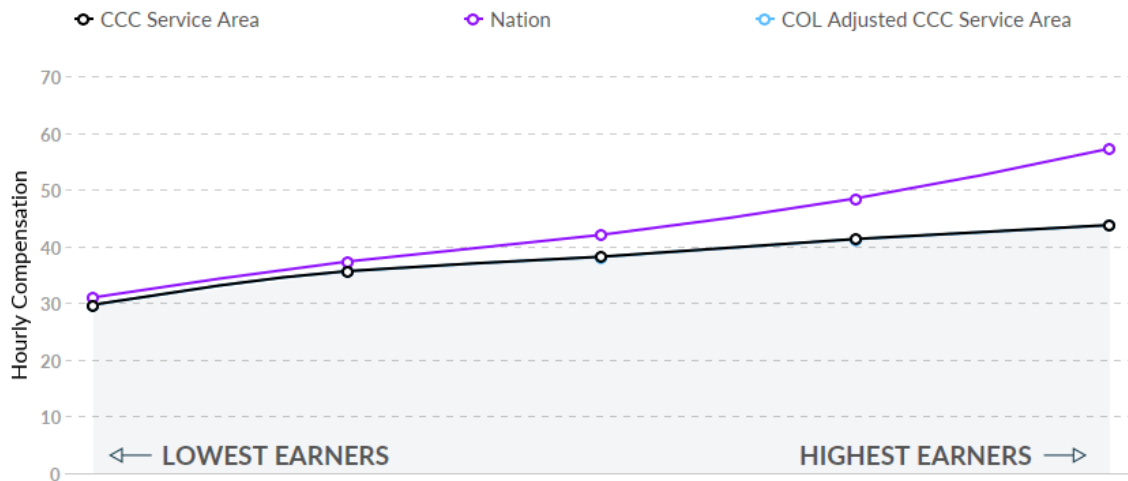


Industry	% of Occupation in Industry (2024)
Offices of Dentists	96.8%
Outpatient Care Centers	1.3%
Offices of Physicians	1.1%
Other	0.9%

COMPENSATION

Regional Compensation Is 9% Lower Than National Compensation

For Dental Hygienists, the 2023 median wage in your area is \$38.16/hr, while the national median wage is \$42.01/hr.



JOB POSTING ACTIVITY



6 Unique Job Postings

The number of unique postings for this job from Jan 2024 to Dec 2024.



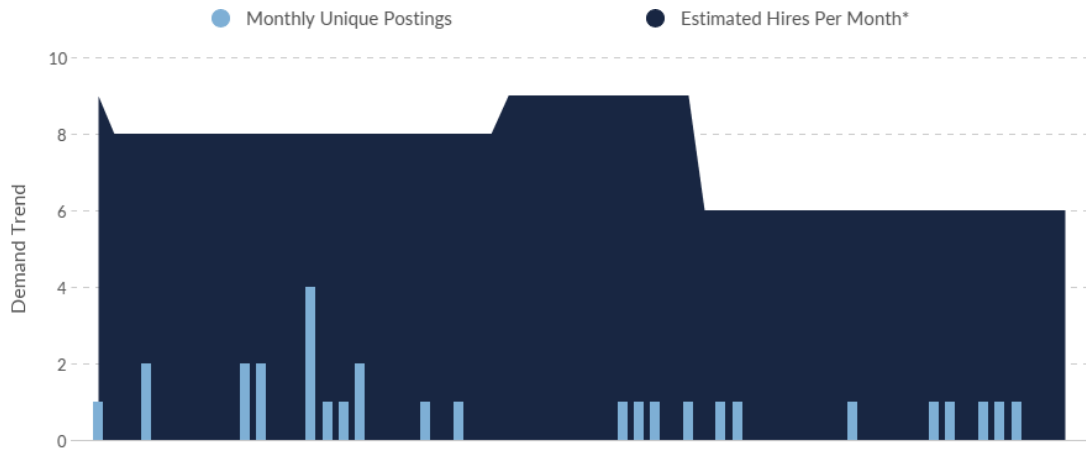
5 Employers Competing

All employers in the region who posted for this job from Jan 2024 to Dec 2024.



20 Day Median Duration

Posting duration is 3 days shorter than what's typical in the region.



Occupation	Avg Monthly Postings (Jan 2024 - Nov 2024)	Avg Monthly Hires (Jan 2024 - Nov 2024)
Dental Hygienists	0	6

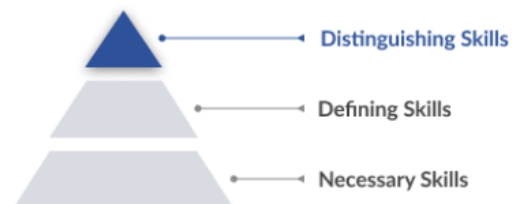
*A hire is reported by the Quarterly Workforce Indicators when an individual's Social Security Number appears on a company's payroll and was not there the quarter before. Lightcast hires are calculated using a combination of Lightcast jobs data, information on separation rates from the Bureau of Labor Statistics (BLS), and industry-based hires data from the Census Bureau.

Top Companies	Unique Postings	Top Job Titles	Unique Postings
Downtown Dental	2	Registered Dental Hygienists	3
Barefoot Spas	1	Dental Hygienists	1
Hecox Dentistry PC	1		
Pedersen Dental, P.C.	1		

TOP SPECIALIZED SKILLS

Top Distinguishing Skills by Demand

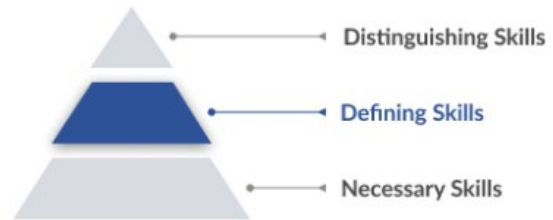
An occupation's Distinguishing Skills are the advanced skills that are called for occasionally. An employee with these skills is likely more specialized and able to differentiate themselves from others in the same role.



Skill	Salary Boosting	Job Postings Requesting	Projected Growth	Growth Relative to Market
Prophylaxis	✓	0	+4.6%	Stable
Dental Plaque Removal	✓	0	+3.9%	Lagging
Voice Command Devices	✗	0	+6.8%	Stable

Top Defining Skills by Demand

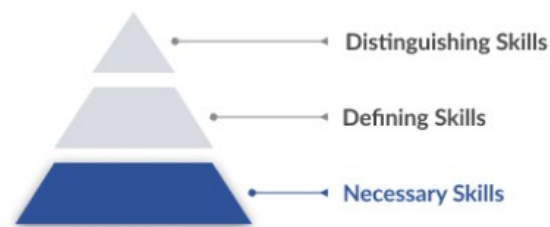
An occupation's Defining Skills represent the day-to-day tasks and responsibilities of the job. An employee needs these skills to qualify for and perform successfully in this occupation.



Skill	Salary Boosting	Job Postings Requesting	Projected Growth	Growth Relative to Market
Dental Hygiene	✓	5	+13.6%	Growing
Oral Hygiene	✓	3	+11.7%	Growing
Dentistry	✗	2	+8.0%	Stable
Preventive Care	✗	2	+2.1%	Lagging
Oral Health	✗	1	+6.6%	Stable
Velscope	✓	1	+7.1%	Stable
Cardiopulmonary Resuscitation (CPR) Certification	✗	1	+14.8%	Growing
Dental Health	✗	1	+15.7%	Growing
Patient Education And Counseling	✗	1	+11.6%	Growing
Virtual Training	✗	1	+10.6%	Growing

Top Necessary Skills by Demand

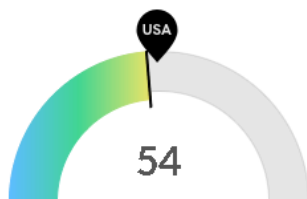
An occupation's Necessary Skills are the specialized skills required for that job and relevant across other similar jobs. An employee needs these skills as building blocks to perform the more complex Defining Skills.



Skill	Salary Boosting	Job Postings Requesting	Projected Growth	Growth Relative to Market
Patient Preparation	×	2	+15.8%	Growing
Dental Procedures	×	2	+5.7%	Stable
Sterilization	×	2	+9.2%	Growing
Clinical Experience	×	1	+9.4%	Growing
Patient Advocacy	×	1	+22.2%	Rapidly Growing
Patient Evaluation	×	0	+12.8%	Growing
Radiography	×	0	+8.3%	Stable

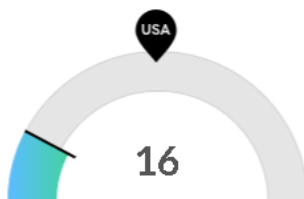
DEMOGRAPHICS

Retirement Risk Is About Average, While Overall Diversity Is Low



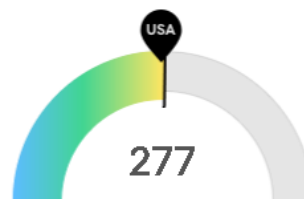
Retiring Soon

Retirement risk is about average in your area. The national average for an area this size is 58* employees 55 or older, while there are 54 here.



Racial Diversity

Racial diversity is low in your area. The national average for an area this size is 66* racially diverse employees, while there are 16 here.



Gender Diversity

Gender diversity is about average in your area. The national average for an area this size is 273* female employees, while there are 277 here.

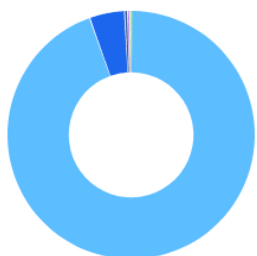
*National average values are derived by taking the national value for Dental Hygienists and scaling it down to account for the difference in overall workforce size between the nation and your area. In other words, the values represent the national average adjusted for region size.

Occupation Age Breakdown



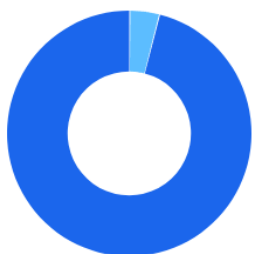
	% of Jobs	Jobs
14-18	0.2%	1
19-24	6.1%	18
25-34	27.5%	79
35-44	30.1%	87
45-54	17.4%	50
55-64	14.0%	40
65+	4.7%	13

Occupation Race/Ethnicity Breakdown



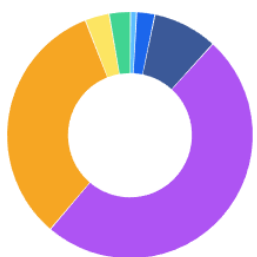
	% of Jobs	Jobs
White	94.5%	273
Hispanic or Latino	4.6%	13
Asian	0.4%	1
Black or African American	0.3%	1
Two or More Races	0.2%	1
American Indian or Alaska Native	0.1%	0
Native Hawaiian or Other Pacific Islander	0.0%	0

Occupation Gender Breakdown



	% of Jobs	Jobs
Males	3.9%	11
Females	96.1%	277

National Educational Attainment



	% of Jobs
Less than high school diploma	0.8%
High school diploma or equivalent	2.4%
Some college, no degree	8.5%
Associate's degree	49.5%
Bachelor's degree	32.9%
Master's degree	3.2%
Doctoral or professional degree	2.8%

GRADUATE PIPELINE



1 Program

Of the programs that can train for this job, 1 has produced completions in the last 5 years.



15 Completions (2023)

The completions from all regional institutions for all degree types.



25 Openings (2023)

The average number of openings for an occupation in the region is 28.

CIP Code	Top Programs	Completions (2023)
51.0602	Dental Hygiene/Hygienist	15
Top Schools	Completions (2023)	
Central Community College	15	

2025 Summary of Lightcast Q4 2024 Data Set:

The retirement of dental hygienists during the COVID-19 pandemic has led to a significant number of job openings, not only throughout Nebraska but also across the United States. While the tri-city areas (Grand Island, Hastings, and Kearney) have fewer job opportunities, this is largely due to the smaller number of dental facilities compared to larger cities like Lincoln and Omaha. Openings are available in a variety of settings, including private dental offices, corporate dental facilities, and public health departments. Nationally, there are also opportunities in federally funded dental facilities, correctional institutions, and other dental-related companies.

In the tri-city areas, hourly wages for dental hygienists generally range from \$35 to \$40. In contrast, wages in other regions of the U.S. can vary significantly, with rates ranging from \$45 to \$60 per hour depending on location.

B. Supporting Data

Data indicates that the job market is reflective of an increase of hygienists now and upcoming years. Trends in CCC hygienists data show a more increased demands in the metropolitan area rather than our rural communities.

a. Awards

Degree/ Credential Awarded	2019-20	2020-21	2021-22	2022-23	2023-24	5-yr avg
AAS	15	13	12	15	15	14.0
Diploma				-		
Certificate				-		
Total Awards	15	13	12	15	15	14.0
# of Graduates	15	13	12	15	15	14.0

	2019-20	2020-21	2021-22	2022-23	2023-24	5-yr avg
Degrees	15	13	12	15	15	14.00
Total awards	15	13	12	15	15	14.00
FT program faculty	3.00	3.03	2.83	4.07	4.07	3.40
Degrees/ FT faculty	5.00	4.29	4.24	3.69	3.69	4.12
Awards/ FT faculty	5.00	4.29	4.24	3.69	3.69	4.12

2025 Summary of Awards:

The Dental Hygiene program at Central Community College consistently exceeds the CCPE threshold, averaging more than 10 awards per year. The program maintains a strong graduation rate, with a five-year average of 14 graduates from 2019 to 2024. This success can be attributed to the program's faculty-to-student ratio, which is limited to 15 students per year as mandated by the Commission on Dental Accreditation. The manageable class sizes foster individualized instruction, allowing for effective supervision and personalized guidance. Additionally, the program director and faculty have scheduled office hours that provide students with extra clinical time, further enhancing their educational experience.

The program continues to evolve with advancements in dental hygiene practices. Faculty and the program director are actively engaged in revising and improving the curriculum, incorporating new technologies, and integrating evidence-based practices to stay aligned with the changing profession. Faculty also participate in professional development activities, such as webinars and workshops, to keep up with the latest trends in technology and evidence-based products.

Central Community College's Dental Hygiene program was recently the only one in Nebraska to feature an endoscope in its clinic, a unique tool that has enabled collaboration with other dental hygiene programs nationwide on research involving the dental endoscope. Local dental offices also refer patients to the clinic for treatments utilizing this technology. The program has

invested in expanding its technological capabilities, securing grant funding to purchase a second digital impression scanner, an additional printer, and two diode lasers for dental treatments. Central Community College is among the first in the nation to implement digital impression scanning and printing in its program, using these devices to produce dental models for patients, including study models and whitening trays. The diode lasers are employed to treat conditions such as aphthous ulcers, herpetic lesions, and periodontal pockets.

b. Student Credit Hours Produced per Faculty FTE

	2019-20	2020-21	2021-22	2022-23	2023-24	5 yr avg*
Student Credit Hours (SCH)	669	737	711	780	764	732.20
Faculty Full-time Equivalency (FTE)	3.00	3.03	2.83	4.07	4.07	3.40
SCH/Faculty FTE	223.00	243.23	251.24	191.65	187.71	215.35

Source: Program Stats by Alpha and Instructor-Student FTE reports.

*By term analysis combined to conduct an annual review. Numbers reported reflect 3 negotiated contract periods (FA17-SU20, FA20-SU22, FA22-SU25). Numbers for 22-23 and 23-24 FTE reflect updated tracking method for part-time instructors.

2025 Summary of the Student Credit Hours per Faculty FTE:

The dental hygiene labs are maintained at a 5:1 student/faculty ratio in compliance with the American Dental Association Commission on Dental Accreditation. Therefore the SCH/Faculty FTE average is below the CCPE threshold.

2025 Summary Statement:

The Central Community College Dental Hygiene Program, established in 1977, has consistently provided a comprehensive education in general education, basic sciences, dental sciences, and dental hygiene sciences. A well-rounded approach, incorporating traditional classroom instruction, laboratory work, and clinical experience, ensures students can effectively apply theoretical knowledge throughout their coursework. The program prepares graduates for successful careers in a variety of clinical settings, including dental offices, schools, hospitals, clinics, nursing homes, government agencies, and public health facilities.

The program is committed to maintaining high standards of excellence and utilizes a variety of processes to continuously review and improve the curriculum. Regular curriculum reviews occur at the start of each academic year, where full-time and part-time faculty collaborate to assess and refine courses. Full-time faculty meet weekly to address relevant issues, while bi-annual faculty meetings, including both full and part-time instructors, provide a platform for comprehensive program evaluation. In addition, the program incorporates feedback from student assessments, advisory committees, graduate surveys, employer surveys, patient evaluations, as well as results from American Dental Association National Boards and Regional Clinical Boards to inform ongoing revisions.

The Dental Hygiene Program boasts impressive retention, graduation, and employment rates, supported by the strong network of resources and support systems in place. Faculty dedication, personalized student interventions, and ongoing professional development contribute to the program's ability to maintain these high standards. The program's robust support systems such as academic advising, tutoring, and career counseling ensure that students remain engaged and motivated throughout their educational journey. This commitment to student success is further reflected in the program's consistently high employment rates, with graduates finding positions in both rural and urban areas across Nebraska, as well as in public health and federally funded dental clinics.

Due to its reputation and track record of excellence, the program typically has a 2–3-year waitlist, illustrating the demand for its training. Most recently, the program successfully completed its accreditation site visit in Fall 2023, resulting in no findings and confirming that the program is fully compliant and effective in all areas. These accomplishments underscore the ongoing success of the program, as it continues to meet and exceed the expectations of students, faculty, and employers alike.