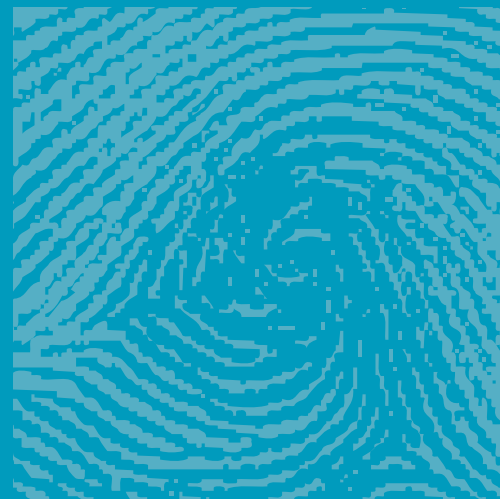


Snapshot

Dr Marcus Ford
Senior Dentist



What do I do?

I'm a community health dentist, responsible for a five-chair dental clinic. My primary role is that of clinician, treating patients, while overseeing the day-to-day running of the clinic. I'm also usually the chief coffee maker.

An average day here begins at around 8.00am, and I leave by 5.00pm. We have three sessions—two morning sessions (8.30-10.30am and 11am-1pm) and an afternoon session (2-4.30pm). We treat emergencies between 2 and 3pm, and we also provide a private practice here two afternoons and one evening per week.

What was my career path?

I did Year 12 at Melbourne's Scotch College and was keen to go into some sort of medical field, but was more interested in the 'hands on' health professions. I did a five-year dentistry degree at the University of Melbourne, then worked in the Air Force (RAAF) for ten years. I didn't know much about community dentistry, but after talking to some public dentists I thought it would be a good way to make a contribution to society, and a fantastic avenue to treat patients.

What do I like most about my job?

What I do is very tangible. After treating a patient I have actually done something with my brain and my hands to fix and help someone. It's very satisfying that you can quickly rectify often debilitating problems and really make a difference to people's wellbeing. In public dentistry you see the extreme, you see a lot of people with heavily broken down teeth that you rarely see in private practice. Because of the diversity of the people that come in, and the complexity of the treatment you provide, the experience is great, extremely interesting and clinically challenging.

What skills and characteristics do I need in my job?

Dentistry to me embraces a science, engineering and an artistic flair that requires good manual dexterity as well as using your brain. Very few careers can offer this.

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