

Disclaimer

Please be advised that this resource has been prepared by the Aboriginal Health and Medical Research Council of NSW (AH&MRC) to broadly meet the needs of AH&MRC's Member Organisations. This resource is a general guide and will need to be amended to suit your particular organisation.

AH&MRC cannot guarantee that this resource will meet all the requirements of your individual organisation and may not be relevant to particular patients or their circumstances. AH&MRC strongly recommends that you undertake your own independent skill or judgement or seek appropriate professional advice relevant to their own particular circumstances when so doing.

INTELLECTUAL PROPERTY AND COPYRIGHT

Unless otherwise expressly stated, the copyright of this resource is owned by AH&MRC. This resource may only be used by AH&MRC's Member organisations and cannot be used for any other purpose or by any other organisation or group.

This resource must not be published or replicated without AH&MRC's written permission. All other rights are reserved.

LIMITATION OF LIABILITY

AH&MRC takes reasonable steps to maintain the accuracy of information available in this resource, however, some or all of the information is current at the date of the first publication, and may, from time to time, be amended, or become superseded or otherwise inaccurate. AH&MRC is not responsible for ensuring that the information contained within this resource is accurate, current, suitable or complete, and offers no guarantee that this resource will meet your organisation's or particular patients needs.

Accordingly, where conditions and warranties implied by law cannot be excluded, the AH&MRC limits its liability where it is entitled to do so. Otherwise, AH&MRC, its employees and agents are not liable for any loss or damage (including consequential loss or damage) to any users of this resource, however caused, which may arise directly or indirectly from this resource.

GOVERNANCE AND IMPLEMENTATION

This resource should be reviewed and endorsed in accordance with the organisation's governance and document control processes prior to implementation.

Interview Guide – Dental Therapist

Position: Dental Therapist

Organisation: [Insert ACCHS Name]

Panel Chair: [Name]

Panel Members: [Names]

Date: [Insert date]

Applicant: [Name]

1. Introduction (for the Interview Panel to read aloud)

Thank you for coming in today. Before we start, we would like to acknowledge the Traditional Custodians of the land on which we meet and pay our respects to Elders past and present.

This interview is for the position of Dental Therapist with [ACCHS Name]. Today's discussion will help us understand your clinical experience, approach to culturally safe care, communication with children and families, restorative and preventive dental skills, oral health education capability, and your ability to work as part of a multidisciplinary dental team.

We will ask questions about your clinical practice, teamwork, health promotion, decision-making, working with children and adolescents, community understanding, and how you ensure high-quality oral health outcomes. Please take your time when responding, we may take notes during your answers.

Do you have any questions before we start?

2. Interview Panel Instructions

- Ensure at least one Aboriginal panel member is present.
- Use yarning-style, conversational questioning where appropriate.
- Avoid interrupting or rushing responses — allow silence and reflection.
- Focus on strength-based assessment (what they bring, not just what's missing).
- Note examples and assess responses using the rating scale.

3. Rating Scale (Example)

Score	Description
5 – Excellent	Exceeds expectations, provides strong, relevant examples.
4 – Very Good	Meets expectations, gives clear and thoughtful responses.
3 – Satisfactory	Adequate response, limited examples but some understanding.
2 – Limited	Superficial or incomplete understanding.
1 – Unsatisfactory	No relevant experience or understanding shown.

4. Core Interview Questions

1. Can you start by telling us about yourself and what has guided you into Dental Therapy work?

- *Prompt:* What motivates you to support oral health in community settings?
- *Indicators:* Values, passion for child/adolescent care, community focus

| 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |

2. What does culturally safe dental care mean to you, especially when working with Aboriginal children and families?

- *Prompt:* How do you build trust and ensure comfort during appointments?
- *Indicators:* Cultural safety, communication style, trauma-informed care.

| 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |

3. Can you describe your clinical experience providing preventive and restorative dental care?

- *Prompt:* Tell us about screening, examinations, fissure sealants, restorations, or working within your scope of practice.
- *Indicators:* Clinical competence, knowledge of scope, safety, decision-making.

| 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |

4. This role focuses heavily on children and adolescents. How do you engage with young patients who may be nervous or unsure?

- *Prompt:* Strategies for behaviour management or positive communication?
- *Indicators:* Child-centred practice, rapport building, gentle communication.

| 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |

5. Health promotion and oral health education are key responsibilities. How do you approach educating children and families about oral health?

- *Prompt:* Can you give an example of an activity or message you've used effectively?
- *Indicators:* Education skills, prevention focus, community engagement.

| 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |

6. Describe a time you identified a patient who required further care outside your scope. How did you manage the referral process?

- *Prompt:* What steps did you take to communicate with the broader dental/clinical team?
- *Indicators:* Referral practice, risk awareness, collaboration, documentation.

| 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |

7. Dental Therapists must work in close partnership with dentists, OHTs, dental assistants, and other clinicians. What does good teamwork look like to you?

- *Prompt:* How do you communicate clinical concerns or coordinate treatment?
- *Indicators:* Team collaboration, communication, multidisciplinary practice.

| 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |

8. Can you give an example of when you adjusted your approach to meet a child's or family's individual needs?

- *Prompt:* Cultural considerations? Anxiety? Family circumstances?
- *Indicators:* Flexibility, empathy, patient-centred practice.

| 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |

9. Describe how you ensure accurate clinical notes, reporting, and compliance with standards.

- *Prompt:* Experience with dental software or data systems?
- *Indicators:* Documentation, attention to detail, compliance, safety.

| 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |

10. Dental roles can be busy with full books, school screenings, and walk-ins. How do you manage your time and clinical workload?

- *Prompt:* Strategies for prioritising? Working efficiently without compromising care?
- *Indicators:* Organisation, resilience, workflow management.

| 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |

11. Why do you want to work with us?

12. What parts of dental therapy bring you the most satisfaction?

13. Where do you see yourself professionally in the next few years?

5. Optional Scenario Questions

Scenario 1 – Anxious Child Patient

A child becomes distressed during a restorative appointment and refuses to continue.

How do you manage the situation while keeping the child safe and supported?

Scenario 2 – Screening at a Community School

During a school screening you identify multiple cases of untreated decay.

How do you prioritise follow-up, engage families, and coordinate referral pathways?

Scenario 3 – Complex Social Circumstances

A family presents with inconsistent attendance due to social pressures.

How do you support continuity of care while remaining culturally sensitive?

Do you have any questions for us?

HR POST-INTERVIEW CHECKS

Item	Notes
References (x2)	
Working with Children Check	
National Police Check	
Start Date Availability	
Confirmation of Role (Fulltime, part time etc)	
Disclose of any health conditions that may affect duties	

4. Scoring

/ 50

Comments and Interview Reflection

5. Panel Summary and Recommendation

Strengths	Development Areas	Recommendation
		[Appoint / Consider / Not Suitable]