

# Economic Outlook and Emerging Issues in Dentistry

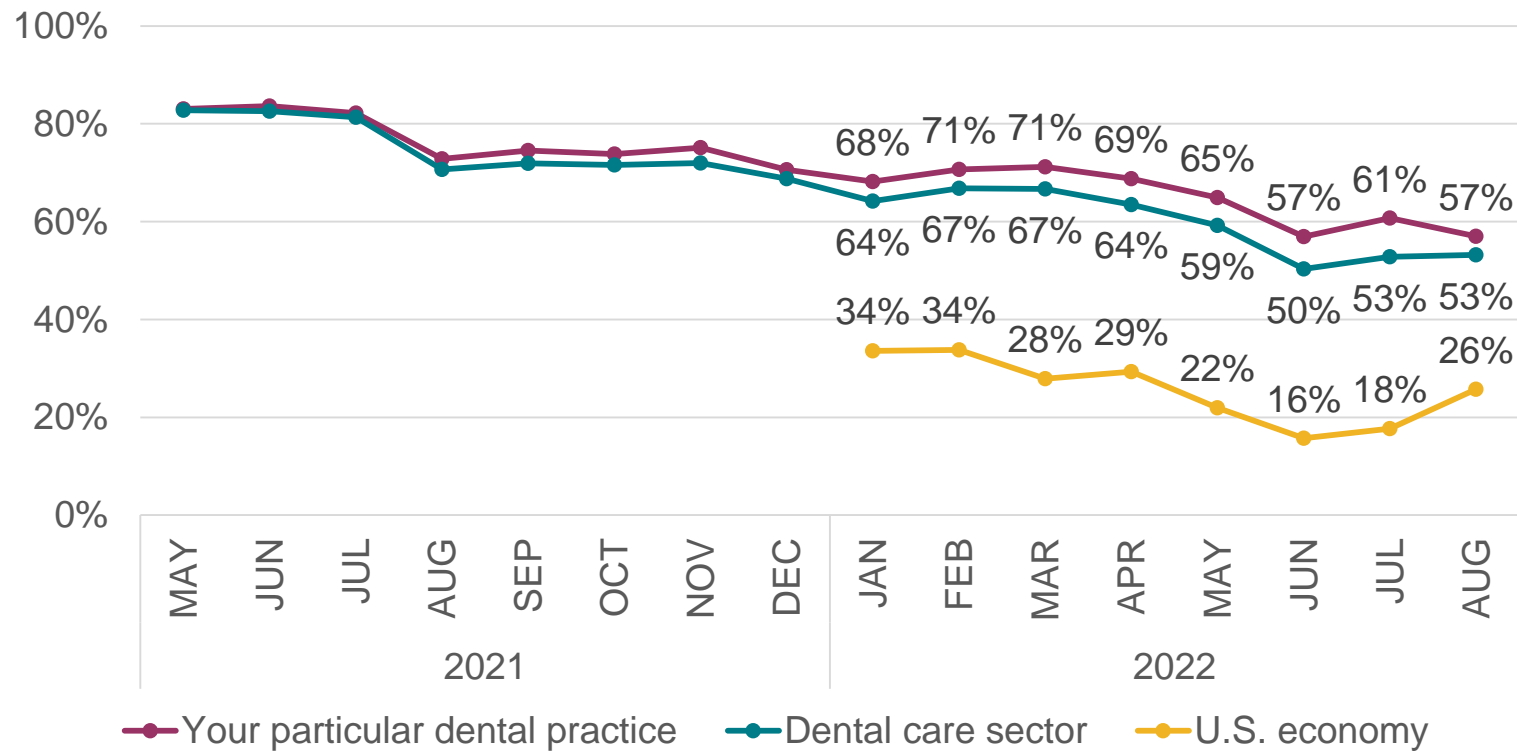
*Insights from Data from August 2022*

# Emerging Issues Polling

- Measuring the ongoing impact of the COVID-19 pandemic and other emerging issues in dentistry
- Over 3000 have opted to participate to date, roughly 1200 responded in the most recent wave
- Data was collected August 16-21, 2022
- Core measures: economic outlook, fullness of practice schedule, schedule barriers, recruitment needs and associated difficulty
- Questions of the month: changes in practice operating expenses, changes in insurance reimbursement
- Complete reports with breakdowns available at [ADA.org/HPI](https://ada.org/HPI)

# Economic Outlook

**Looking ahead to the next six months, how confident are you in the recovery of the following?** (Percentages indicating “very” or “somewhat” confident.)

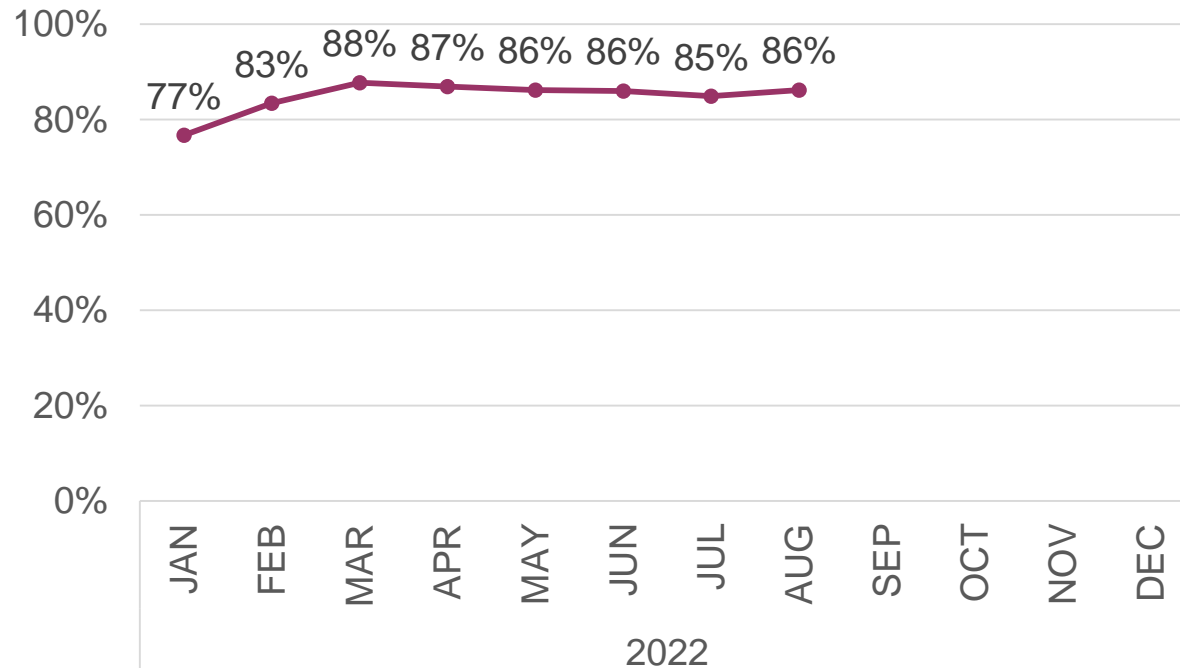


*Dentists’ confidence in their practices and the dental sector has been relatively low, but steady for a few months.*

*For the first time since April 2022, more than a quarter of dentists indicated they were “very” or “somewhat” confident in the US economic recovery.*

# Practice Schedules

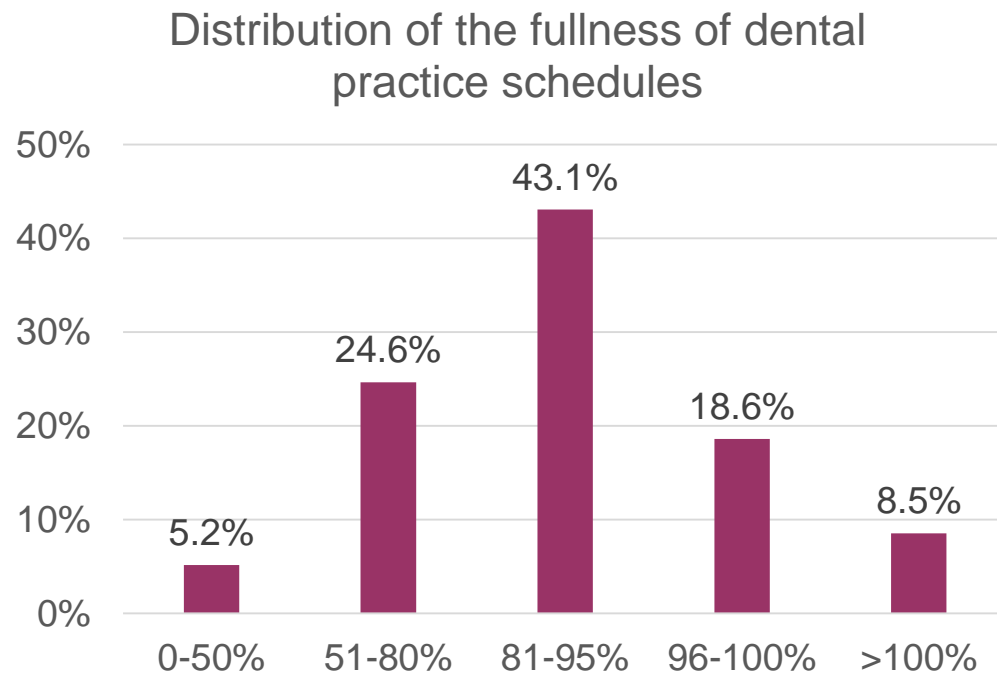
**How full was your dental practice's appointment schedule last week?**



*Dental practice schedules have been steady for the past six months. In August, dentists indicated that their schedules were 86% full, on average nationally.*

# Practice Schedules

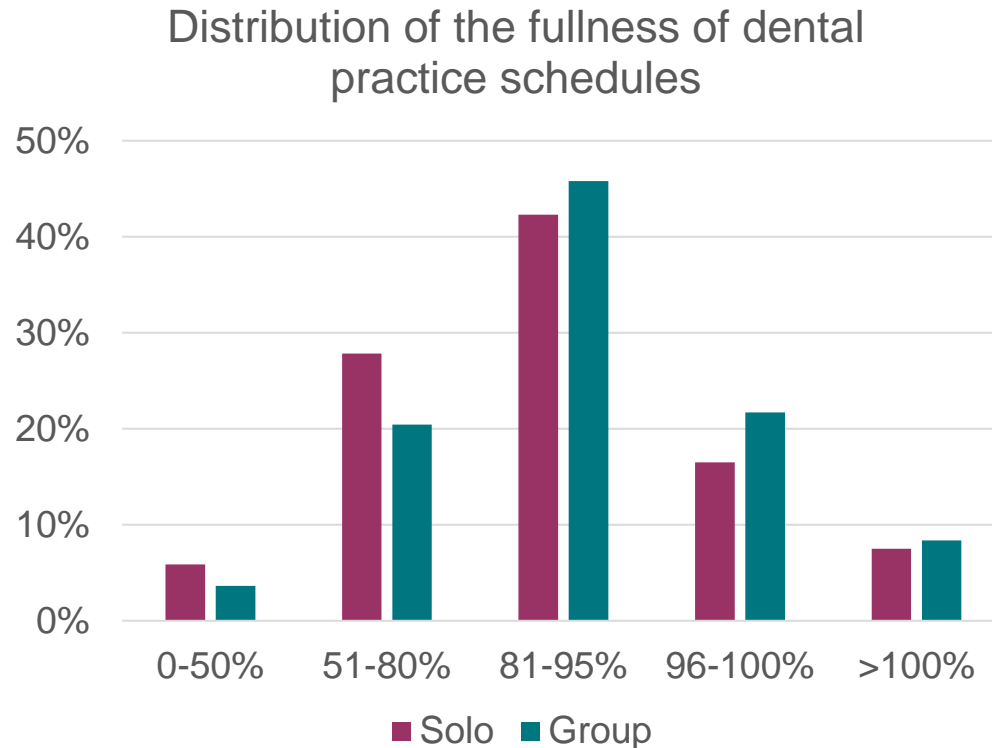
## How full was your dental practice's appointment schedule last week?



*About a third of dental practices were less than 80% full in August.*

# Practice Schedules

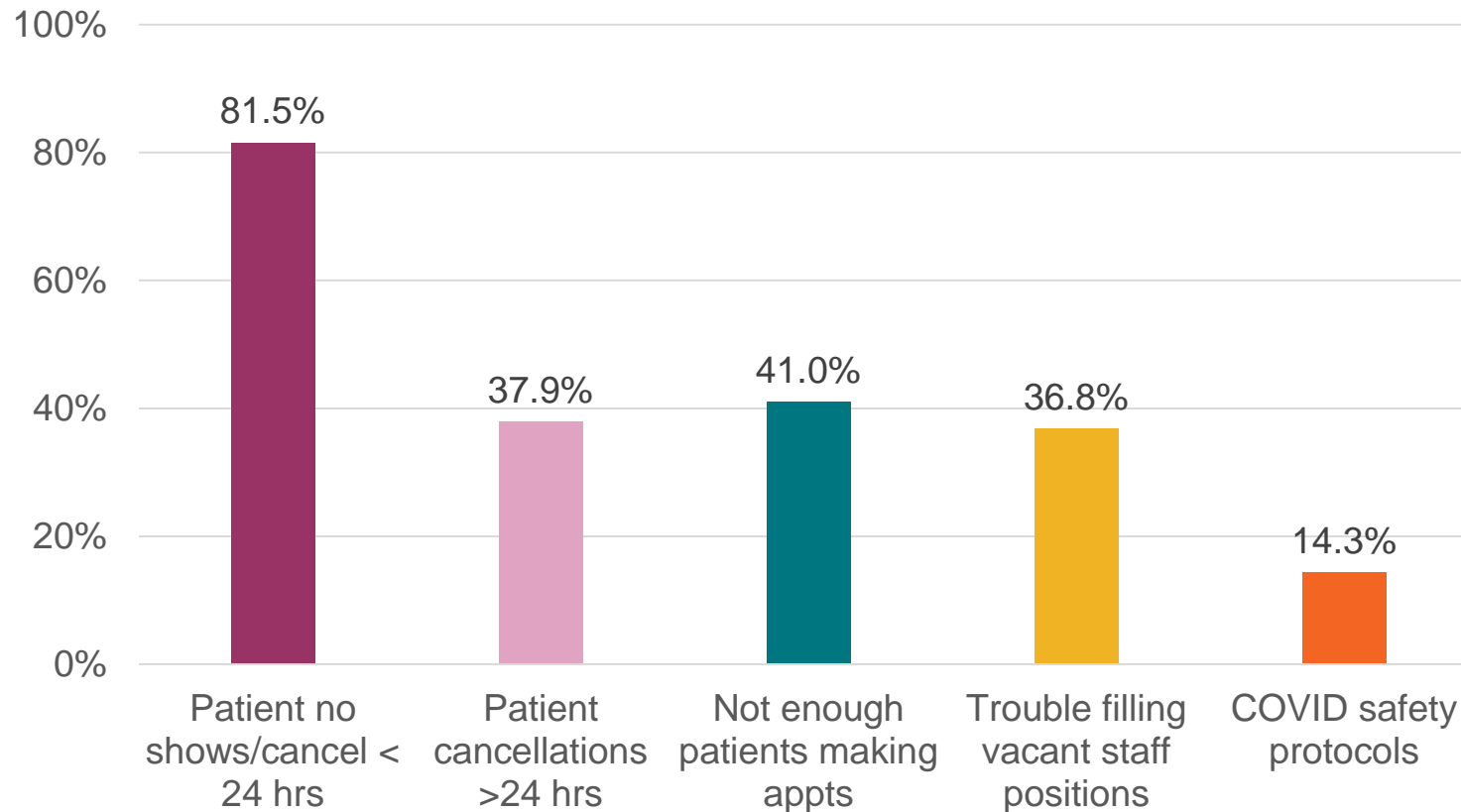
## How full was your dental practice's appointment schedule last week?



*Solo practice dentists are not quite as busy as their colleagues in group practice.*

# Scheduling Barriers

**Which of the following factors prevented your dental practice's appointment schedule from reaching 100% last week? (Select all that apply.)**

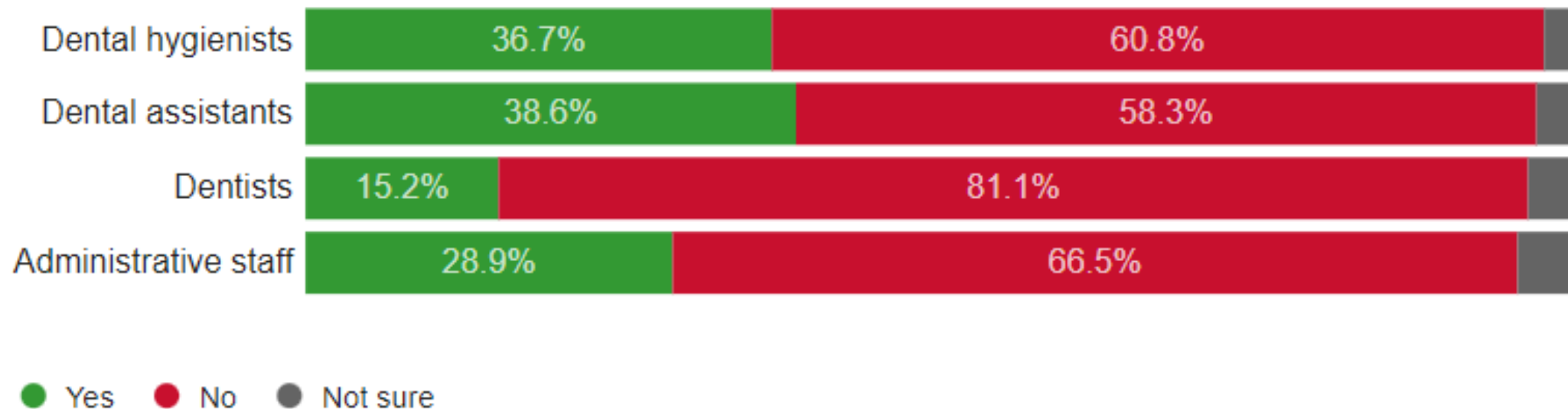


*Patient no-shows and late cancellations remained the predominant reason for unfilled practice schedules in August.*

*About 4 in 10 dentists also indicated they had low patient demand for appointments.*

# Dental Team Recruitment

Have you recently or are you currently recruiting any of the following positions in your dental practice?

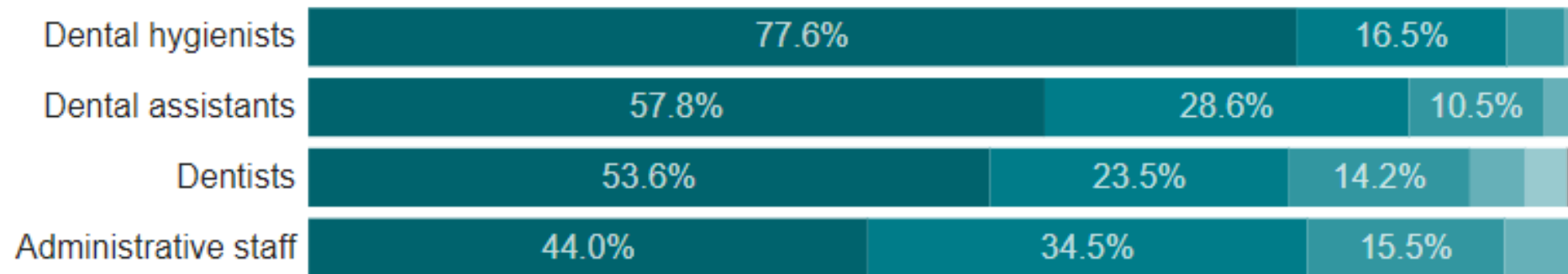


*Dental assistants and dental hygienists are the most in-demand members of the dental team, with about 4 out of 10 dentists currently or recently recruiting for these positions. Dental team recruitment needs have been steady for months.*



# Challenges Recruiting

How challenging has it been to recruit the position(s) below?

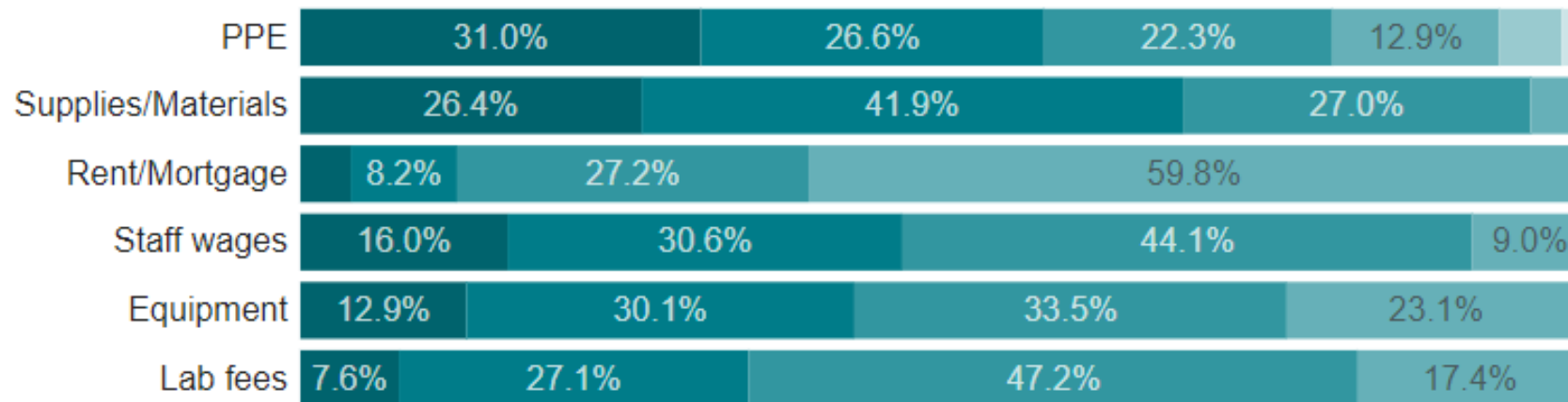


- Extremely challenging
- Very challenging
- Moderately challenging
- Slightly challenging
- Not challenging at all
- Not sure/Not applicable

*Recruiting dental hygienists and dental assistants continues to be the most challenging for dentists.*

# Increased Practice Operating Costs

How have prices changed for your practice in each of the following categories of expenses over the past 12 months?



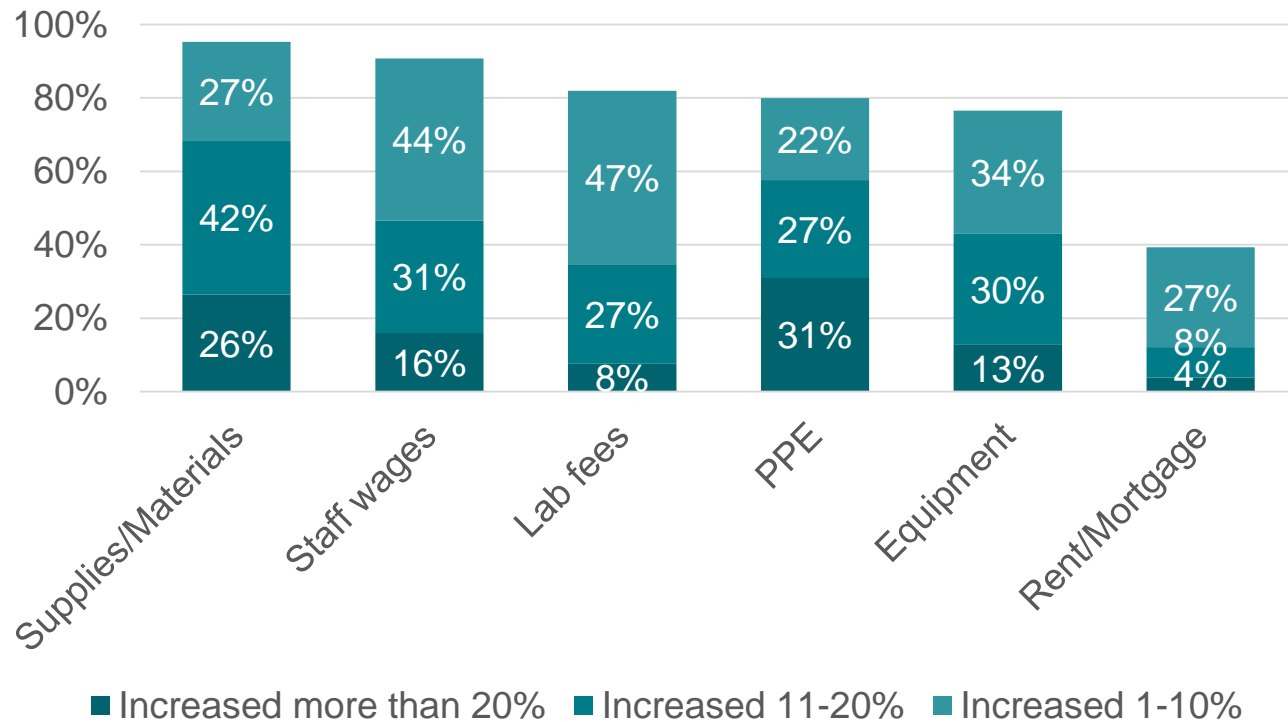
● Increased more than 20%  
 ● Increased 11-20%  
 ● Increased 1-10%  
 ● Stayed about the same  
● Decreased 1-10%  
 ● Decreased 11-20%  
 ● Decreased more than 20%

*Aside from rent and mortgage payments, the vast majority of dentists indicated increases in practice operating costs.*

*Supplies and materials, staff wages, and lab fees have had the most substantial increases in price.*

# Increased Practice Operating Costs

**How have prices changed for your practice in each of the following categories of expenses over the past 12 months? (Percentage indicating an increase in price.)**



*Nearly one-third of dentists indicated the price of PPE has increased more than 20%, and roughly 1 in 4 dentists indicate the cost of their supplies and materials has increased by at least 20% in the past year.*

# Insurance Reimbursement Steady for Majority

How has the average reimbursement level from all insurance companies in your practice changed in the last 12 months?



- Increased by more than 10%
- Increased by 6-10%
- Increased by 1-5%
- Stayed about the same
- Decreased by 1-5%
- Decreased by 6-10%
- Decreased by more than 10%
- My practice does not participate in any insurance networks

*Insurance reimbursement rates have stayed roughly the same over the past year. One in four dentists indicated that their insurance rates have decreased.*

# Key Takeaways

- **Practice Schedules:** Dental practice schedules have been very steady for the past six months. Schedules were 86% full on average in August. Patient no-shows and late cancellations are largely to blame for unfulfilled appointment slots, followed by low patient demand.
- **Recruitment Needs:** Dental team recruitment needs remain steady in August. Dental assistants are the most in-demand member of the dental team, while recruiting dental hygienists continues to present the most difficulty for dentists.
- **Increased Practice Operating Costs:** The vast majority of dentists indicate price increases for practice operations. Supplies and materials, staff wages, and lab fees have had the most substantial increases in price.
- **Insurance Reimbursement Steady:** The majority of dentists indicate their insurance reimbursement rates have stayed roughly the same over the past year. One in four dentists indicate that their insurance rates have decreased.
- **Economic Confidence:** Dentists' confidence in US economic recovery improved slightly in August. For the first time since April 2022, more than a quarter of dentists indicated they were “very” or “somewhat” confident in the US economic recovery.

# Thank You!

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