About this Study

To better understand the economic and operational conditions in dental practices and public health clinics over time, and to measure the impact of the COVID-19 pandemic and other emerging issues in dentistry, the ADA Health Policy Institute launched a tracking poll in January 2022. For this initial wave over the week of January 17, 2022, we invited nearly 80,000 dentists from across the U.S. to join a panel in which they will complete a survey once a month; over 3,000 have opted to participate.

This report features results from the latest wave of this study broken out by the following practice areas/specialties:

- General practice (GP)
- Pediatric dentistry (PED)

Additionally, results are reported for dentists that practice in public health settings (DiPHS), regardless of specialty. (Please note that this group should not be confused with dental public health specialists.) Please note that we only include graphics representing at least 30 responses. Because of this, we were not able to include results for the following specialties in this report: oral and maxillofacial surgery, endodontics, orthodontics and dentofacial orthopedics, periodontics, prosthodontics. The number of respondents in each practice area/specialty can be found at the end of this report.

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For more information on other publications, products, and services, please visit our website, ADA.org/HPI.
Economic Confidence

Looking ahead to the next six months, how confident are you in the recovery of:

General Practice
999 Responses

- Your particular dental practice?
  - Very confident: 27.0%
  - Somewhat confident: 35.2%
  - Neither confident nor skeptical: 19.2%
  - Somewhat skeptical: 14.0%

- The dental care sector in general?
  - Very confident: 15.3%
  - Somewhat confident: 39.6%
  - Neither confident nor skeptical: 22.9%
  - Somewhat skeptical: 16.9%

- The U.S. economy?
  - Very confident: 25.3%
  - Somewhat confident: 20.0%
  - Neither confident nor skeptical: 30.4%
  - Somewhat skeptical: 19.2%

Pediatric Dentistry
57 Responses

- Your particular dental practice?
  - Very confident: 22.8%
  - Somewhat confident: 45.6%
  - Neither confident nor skeptical: 17.5%
  - Somewhat skeptical: 8.8%

- The dental care sector in general?
  - Very confident: 21.1%
  - Somewhat confident: 33.3%
  - Neither confident nor skeptical: 28.1%
  - Somewhat skeptical: 12.3%

- The U.S. economy?
  - Very confident: 26.3%
  - Somewhat confident: 28.1%
  - Neither confident nor skeptical: 28.1%
  - Somewhat skeptical: 17.5%

Dentists in Public Health Settings
51 Responses

- Your particular dental practice?
  - Very confident: 39.2%
  - Somewhat confident: 41.2%
  - Neither confident nor skeptical: 9.8%

- The dental care sector in general?
  - Very confident: 19.6%
  - Somewhat confident: 39.2%
  - Neither confident nor skeptical: 25.5%

- The U.S. economy?
  - Very confident: 9.8%
  - Somewhat confident: 25.5%
  - Neither confident nor skeptical: 9.8%
Appointment Schedule

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

Mean % of schedule filled

Dentists in Private Practice

1157 Responses

GP  85.7
PED  83.4

Dentists in Public Health Settings

50 Responses

DiPHS  97.5
Factors Preventing a Full Schedule

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

### General Practice

**818 Responses**

- Trouble filling vacant staff positions: 30.2%
- Not enough patients making appts: 38.8%
- COVID safety protocols: 7.7%
- No shows/cancellations < 24 hours: 82.8%
- Cancellations 24+ hours prior: 48.2%
- Other, please specify: 5.7%

### Pediatric Dentistry

**51 Responses**

- Trouble filling vacant staff positions: 25.5%
- Not enough patients making appts: 37.3%
- COVID safety protocols: 5.9%
- No shows/cancellations < 24 hours: 88.2%
- Cancellations 24+ hours prior: 58.8%
- Other, please specify: 5.9%
Patient Wait Times

[Owners only] Currently, how many business days does the average patient of record have to wait for an appointment (excluding emergencies)?

Mean number of days

Dentists in Private Practice
1059 Responses

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Type</th>
<th>Mean Number of Days</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>GP</td>
<td>10.8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>PED</td>
<td>12.7</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Dentists in Public Health Settings
51 Responses

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Type</th>
<th>Mean Number of Days</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>DIPH</td>
<td>25.6</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
[Owners only] Currently, how many business days does the average *new patient* have to wait for an initial appointment (excluding emergencies)?

### Mean number of days

**Dentists in Private Practice**

- 1059 Responses

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Type</th>
<th>Days</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>GP</td>
<td>19.5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>PED</td>
<td>15.3</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Dentists in Public Health Settings**

- 51 Responses

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Type</th>
<th>Days</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>DiPH</td>
<td>51.8</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Staff Recruitment

General Practice

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

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Position</th>
<th>Yes</th>
<th>No</th>
<th>Not sure</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Dental hygienists</td>
<td>35.5%</td>
<td>63.2%</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Dental assistants</td>
<td>33.4%</td>
<td>63.9%</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Dentists</td>
<td>12.1%</td>
<td>85.3%</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Administrative staff</td>
<td>23.6%</td>
<td>72.9%</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

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

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Position</th>
<th>Extremely challenging</th>
<th>Very challenging</th>
<th>Moderately challenging</th>
<th>Slightly challenging</th>
<th>Not challenging at all</th>
<th>Not sure/Not applicable</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Dental hygienists</td>
<td>82.8%</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>13.2%</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Dental assistants</td>
<td>53.9%</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>32.3%</td>
<td>11.1%</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Dentists</td>
<td>60.3%</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>19.0%</td>
<td>14.0%</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Administrative staff</td>
<td>47.5%</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>32.2%</td>
<td>15.7%</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Pediatric Dentistry

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

- Dental hygienists: 19.3% Yes, 80.7% No
- Dental assistants: 45.6% Yes, 54.4% No
- Dentists: 21.1% Yes, 78.9% No
- Administrative staff: 26.3% Yes, 71.9% No

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

- Dental hygienists: 72.7% Extremely challenging, 27.3% Very challenging
- Dental assistants: 46.2% Extremely challenging, 42.3% Very challenging, 11.5% Moderately challenging
- Dentists: 50.0% Extremely challenging, 25.0% Very challenging, 25.0% Slightly challenging
- Administrative staff: 46.7% Extremely challenging, 33.3% Very challenging, 20.0% Slightly challenging
**Dentists in Public Health Settings**

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

51 Responses

- **Dental hygienists**: 37.3% Yes, 56.9% No, 5.8% Not sure
- **Dental assistants**: 64.7% Yes, 31.4% No, 3.9% Not sure
- **Dentists**: 60.8% Yes, 37.3% No, 1.9% Not sure
- **Administrative staff**: 39.2% Yes, 51.0% No, 9.8% Not sure

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

41 Responses

- **Dental hygienists**: 78.9% Extremely challenging, 15.8% Very challenging, 5.3% Slightly challenging
- **Dental assistants**: 48.5% Extremely challenging, 33.3% Very challenging, 9.1% Slightly challenging
- **Dentists**: 38.7% Extremely challenging, 22.6% Very challenging, 25.8% Slightly challenging
- **Administrative staff**: 30.0% Extremely challenging, 20.0% Very challenging, 30.0% Slightly challenging
Questions of the Week

Dropping Dental Insurance Networks

[Private practitioners only] Since January 1, 2023, has your practice dropped out of any dental insurance networks?
1164 Responses

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>GP</th>
<th>PED</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>16.2%</td>
<td>10.5%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>No or not currently participating</td>
<td>82.2%</td>
<td>89.5%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Not sure</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

[If yes] Approximately what percentage of the patient base was in the dropped insurance networks?

Mean % of patient base
162 Responses

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>GP</th>
<th>PED</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>16.9%</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>22.8%</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
[Private practitioners only] Looking ahead the next three months, does your practice intend to drop out of any dental insurance networks?

1164 Responses

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Yes</th>
<th>No or not currently participating</th>
<th>Not sure</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>GP</td>
<td>21.8%</td>
<td>57.2%</td>
<td>21.0%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>PED</td>
<td>19.3%</td>
<td>63.2%</td>
<td>17.5%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

[If yes] Approximately what percentage of the patient base are in the insurance networks your practice intends to drop out of?

Mean % of patient base

219 Responses

<p>| | |</p>
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>GP</td>
<td>24.3%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>PED</td>
<td>27.9%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Dentists in private practice

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Specialty</th>
<th>Choice Count</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>General Practice (GP)</td>
<td>1,003</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Pediatric dentistry (PED)</td>
<td>57</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Periodontics (PERIO)</td>
<td>29</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Oral and maxillofacial surgery (OMS)</td>
<td>25</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Endodontics (ENDO)</td>
<td>20</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Orthodontics (ORTHO)</td>
<td>20</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Prosthodontics (PROS)</td>
<td>10</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Dental public health (DPH)</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Dental anesthesiology (DENTANES)</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Orofacial pain (OROFPAIN)</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Practice Setting

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Practice Setting</th>
<th>Choice Count</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Dentist in private practice</td>
<td>1,168</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Dentist in public health setting</td>
<td>51</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Other occupation, not practicing dentistry/treating patients (please describe)</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>