How Many Dentists Are in Solo Practice?

ALL DENTISTS

FEWER DENTISTS ARE WORKING AS SOLO PRACTITIONERS. About 2 in 3 dentists were in solo practice in 1999. That proportion decreased to 1 in 2 in 2019.

BY GENDER

FEMALE VS. MALE DENTISTS

Female dentists are less likely to be in solo practice. Female dentists will make up a larger proportion of the dentist workforce in the future. In 2019, 50.6% of dental school graduates were female.

Sources: ADA Health Policy Institute Survey of Dental Practice (1999 – 2009) and Distribution of Dentists survey (2010 – 2019). Distribution of Dentists results are based on three pooled years of data collection per data point. Notes: Results are for dentists in private practice only. A solo dentist works in a dental practice with no other dentists. In the “All Dentists” graph, the line break denotes the change in data source. There was no Distribution of Dentists survey for 2016 or 2018. Historical results have been reweighted; percentages for years 2010 – 2017 will not match the previous version of this release. Published in January 2021.

For more information, visit ADA.org/HPI or contact the Health Policy Institute at hpi@ada.org.
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BY STATE 2019

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Notes: In graph By State, the diamond-shaped data points represent the estimated share of the dentist workforce composed of solo dentists. “Whisker” data points represent the 95% confidence interval for the estimated share. Results are for dentists in private practice only. A solo dentist works in a dental practice with no other dentists. Historical results have been reweighted; percentages for years 2010 – 2017 will not match the previous version of this release.

DENTISTS ARE INCREASINGLY PRACTICING IN GROUPS, PARTICULARLY YOUNGER DENTISTS.

In 2019, only 1 in 4 dentists under 35 was in solo practice.