

Economic Outlook and Emerging Issues in Dentistry

Insights from Data from January 2022

Refreshed Polling

- Measuring the ongoing impact of the COVID-19 pandemic and other emerging issues in dentistry
- Approximately 2000 have opted to participate to date
- Data was collected January 18-23, 2022
- Complete reports with breakdowns available at [ADA.org/HPI](https://ada.org/HPI)

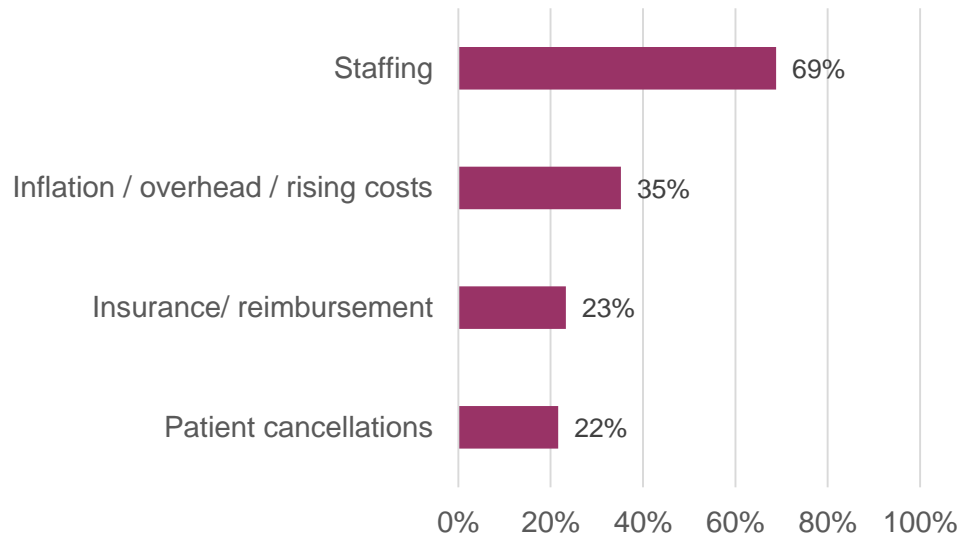
What's Keeping Dentists Up at Night?

Looking forward to the next six months, what are the top 3 challenges facing your dental practice?



Staffing and Inflation are the Top Challenges

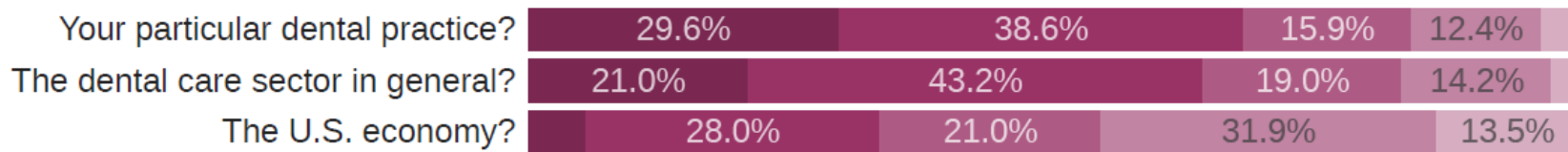
Looking forward to the next six months, what are the top 3 challenges facing your dental practice?



Nearly 70% of all dentists – including those not currently hiring – indicated that staffing issues are one of the biggest challenges they face right now. More than one-third are concerned about inflation, overhead, and rising costs.

Dentists Wary of Prompt U.S. Economic Recovery

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

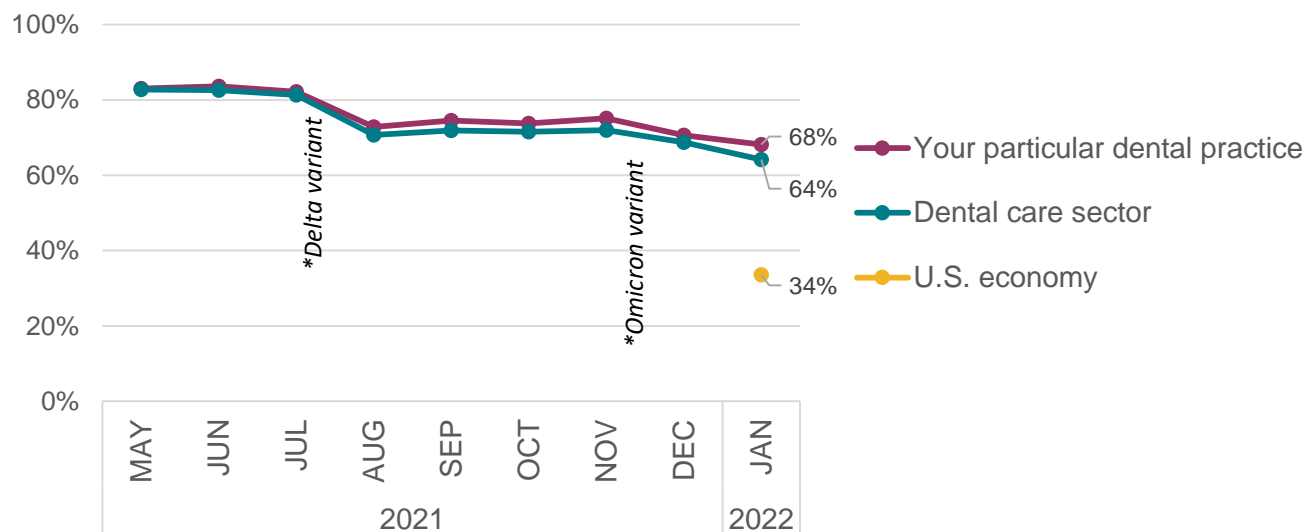


● Very confident ● Somewhat confident ● Neither confident nor skeptical ● Somewhat skeptical ● Very skeptical

Most dentists lack confidence in the recovery of the U.S. economy over the next six months. However, roughly 70% are at least somewhat confident in the recovery of their dental practice and approximately 65% have some level of confidence in the recovery of the dental care sector overall.

Recovery 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 sector's recovery has decreased slightly since November 2021.

Dental Practice Schedules

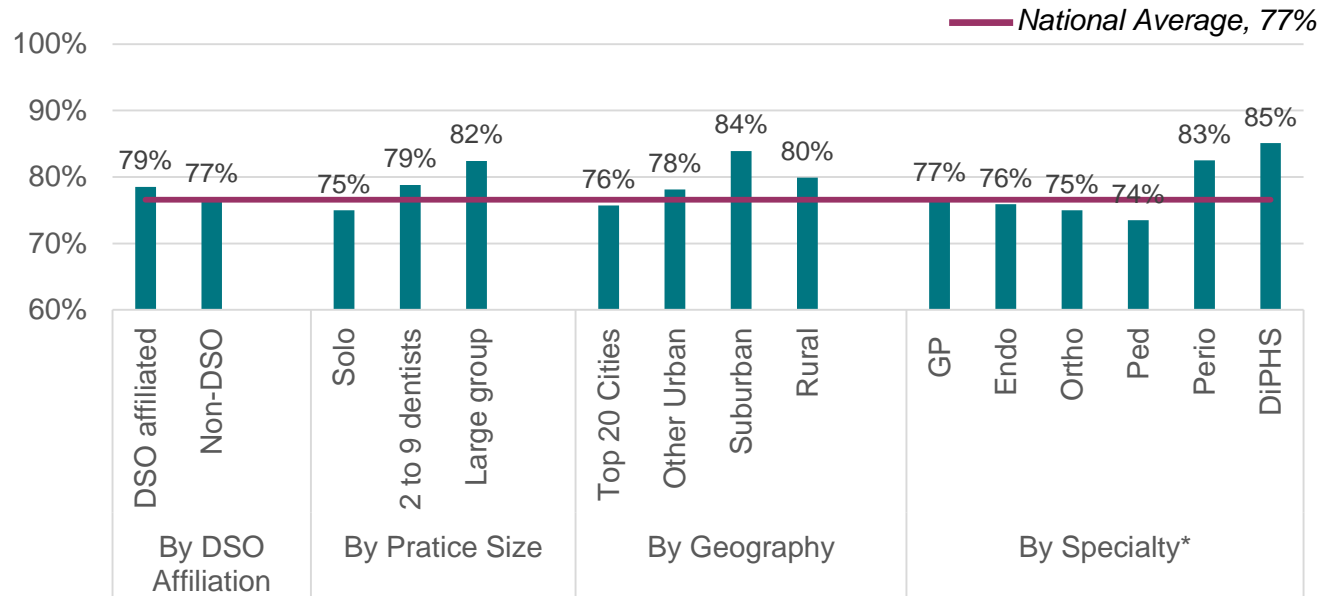
How full was your dental practice's appointment schedule last week?



Schedules in dental practices were 77% full in January, on average nationally.

Public Health Settings, Large Groups are Busier

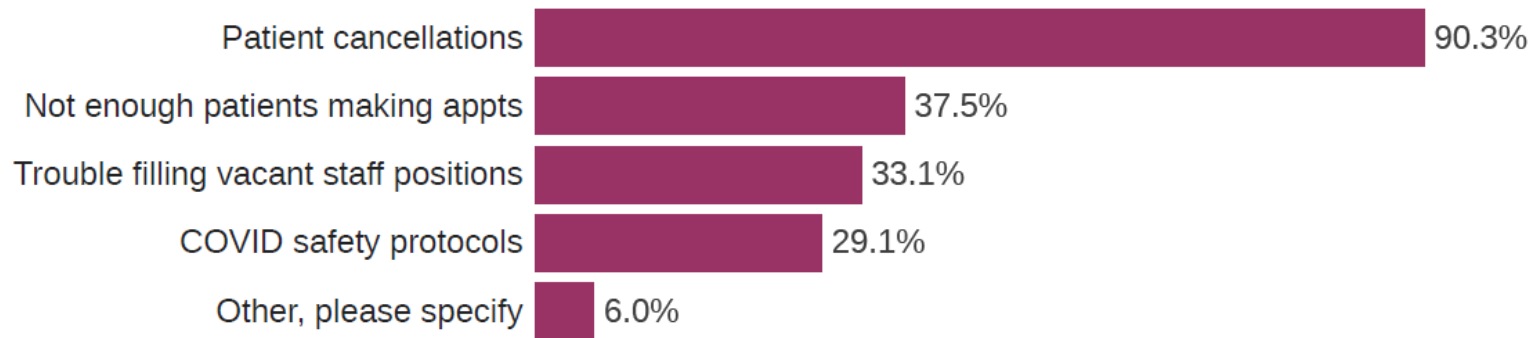
How full was your dental practice's appointment schedule last week?



Public health settings, large group practices, and practices in suburban areas were busier compared to other dental practices.

Patient Cancellations Prevented Full Schedules

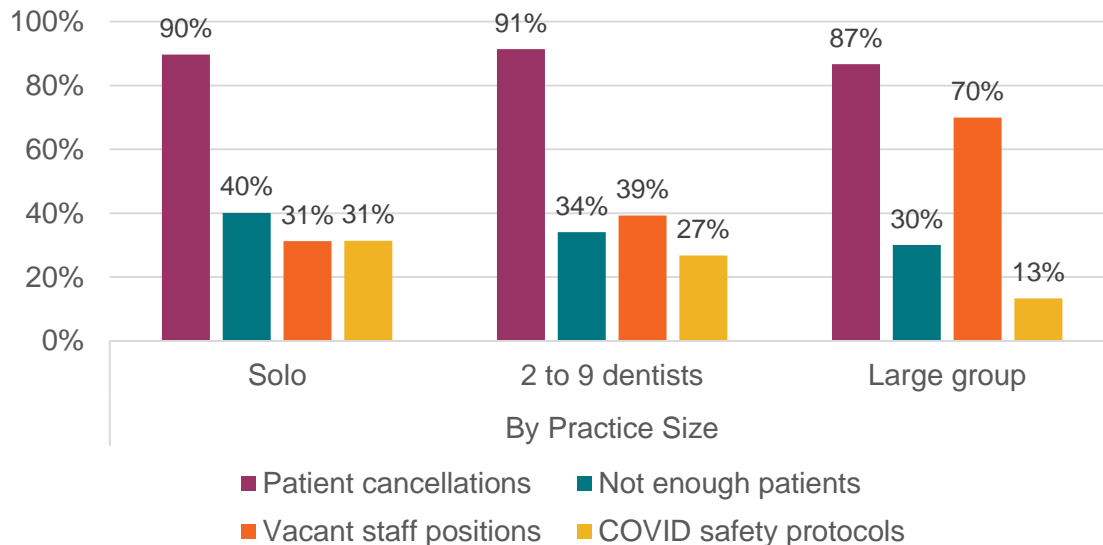
Which of the following factors prevented your dental practice's appointment schedule from reaching 100% last week? (Select all that apply.)



Patient cancellations were the primary reason schedules were not full in January.

Large Groups: More Trouble with Staff Vacancies

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



Filling vacant staff positions is a more common barrier to full schedules in large group practices, and COVID safety protocols are less of a hindrance for these dentists, relative to their colleagues in smaller group practices and practicing solo.

Dental Assistants and Hygienists in High Demand

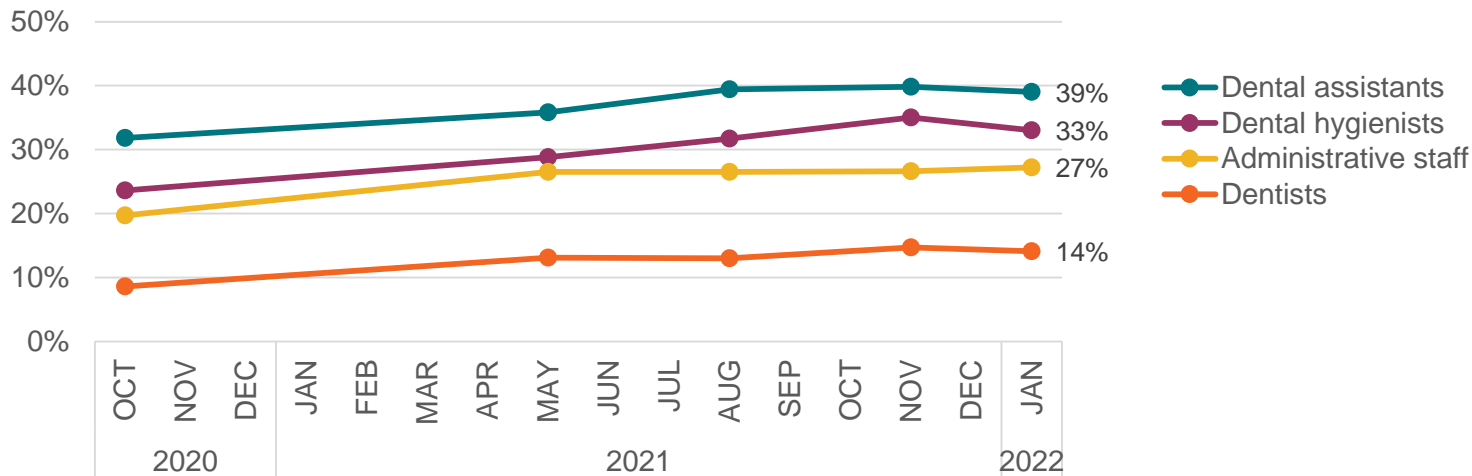
Have you recently or are you currently recruiting any of the following positions in your dental practice?



Dental assistants are currently the most in-demand member of the dental team; nearly 4 out of 10 dentists have recently or are seeking to fill these positions. One-third of dentists have recently recruited or are trying to recruit dental hygienists.

Dental Team Recruitment Needs Holding Steady

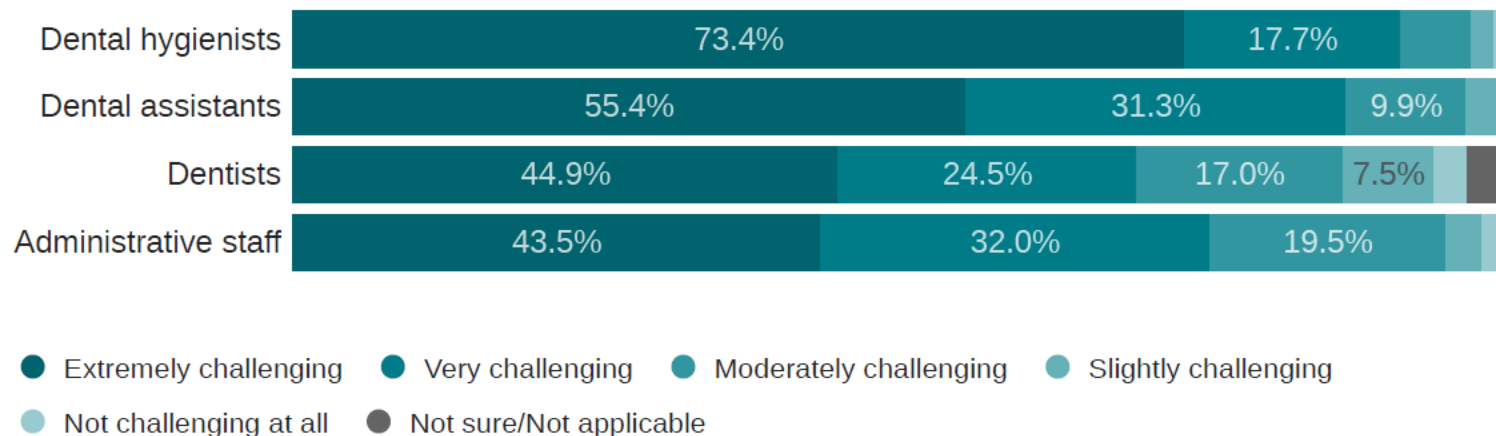
Have you recently or are you currently recruiting any of the following positions in your dental practice? (Percentages indicating “Yes.”)



Dental team recruitment needs have not changed significantly over the past couple months, since November 2021.

Hiring is a Major Challenge

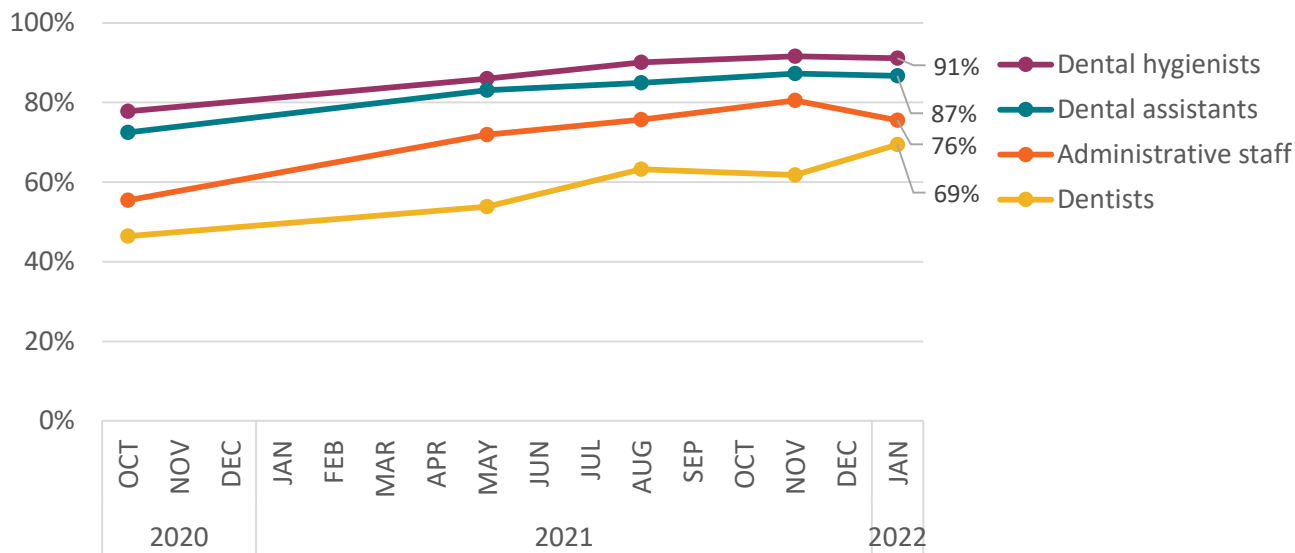
How challenging has it been to recruit the position(s) below?



Hiring for any dental team position is a major challenge. Over 90% of dentists recruiting dental hygienists indicate it has been “extremely” or “very” challenging.

Recruitment Challenges Persisting

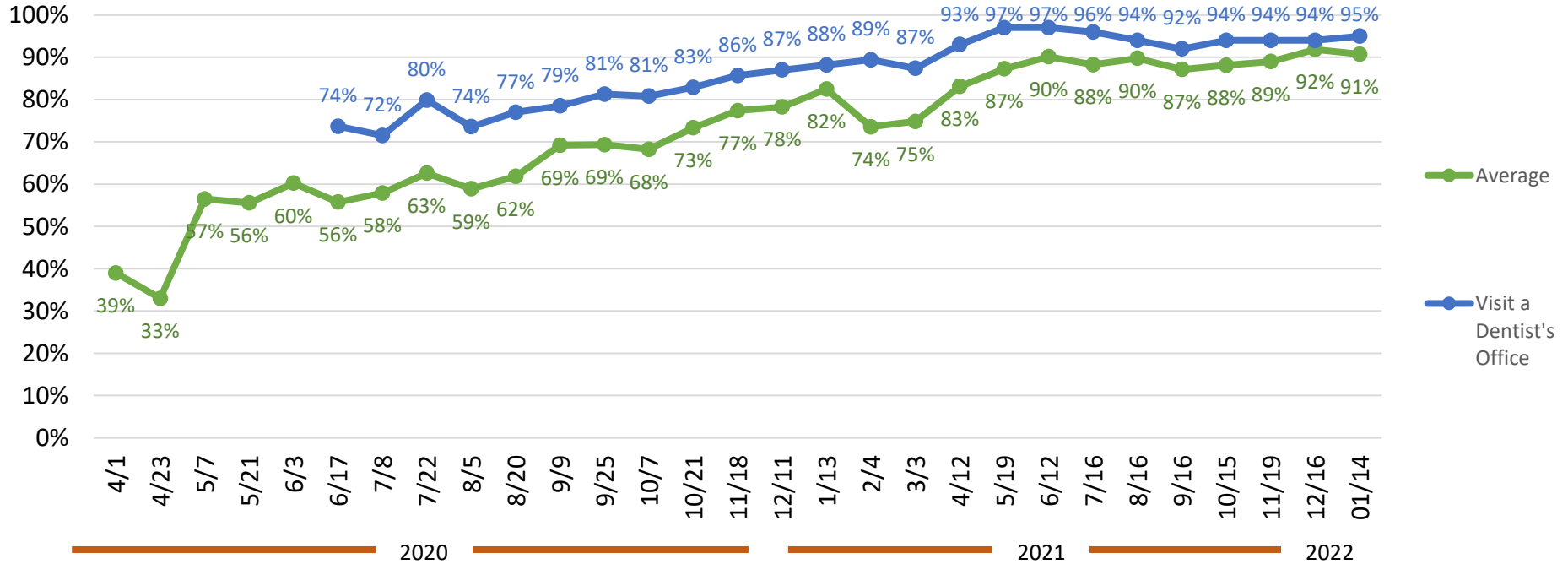
**How challenging has it been to recruit the position(s) below?
(Percentages indicating “extremely” or “very” challenging.)**



The difficulty of hiring dental hygienists and dental assistants has not eased up since November 2021. More hiring dentists indicate it has been challenging to recruit dentists than in 2021.

Consumers' readiness to engage with dentistry outpaces other activities

[Among those who have done this activity in the past 12 months:] For each of the following activities, please indicate which of the following conditions is closest to your current point of view: Recently active + Ready to go



Key Takeaways

- Staffing is the most significant concern among dentists as they look to the first half of 2022, followed by inflation/overhead/rising costs.
- Dentists' confidence in their own practices and in the dental care sector remains relatively high, but most dentists are wary of the U.S. economy.
- Schedules in dental practices were approximately 77% full in January, on average across the U.S. Patient cancellations were the most common reason for empty or incomplete appointment slots.
- Dental team recruitment remains a major challenge. Roughly 40% of dentists are recruiting dental assistants and one-third are recruiting dental hygienists.
- Consumers' readiness to engage with dentistry outpaces that of other sectors, with 95% indicating they are ready to visit the dental office.

Thank You!

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