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.

This report was published in June 2023 by the American Dental Association’s Health Policy Institute.

211 E. Chicago Avenue
Chicago, Illinois 60611
312.440.2928
hpi@ada.org

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
951 Responses

- Your particular dental practice?
  - Very confident: 27.9%
  - Somewhat confident: 38.7%
  - Neither confident nor skeptical: 17.5%
  - Somewhat skeptical: 12.5%

- The dental care sector in general?
  - Very confident: 15.8%
  - Somewhat confident: 42.8%
  - Neither confident nor skeptical: 21.9%
  - Somewhat skeptical: 15.4%

- The U.S. economy?
  - Very confident: 27.0%
  - Somewhat confident: 20.7%
  - Neither confident nor skeptical: 29.4%
  - Somewhat skeptical: 17.1%

Pediatric Dentistry
54 Responses

- Your particular dental practice?
  - Very confident: 27.8%
  - Somewhat confident: 44.4%
  - Neither confident nor skeptical: 18.5%

- The dental care sector in general?
  - Very confident: 22.2%
  - Somewhat confident: 42.6%
  - Neither confident nor skeptical: 22.2%
  - Somewhat skeptical: 7.4%

- The U.S. economy?
  - Very confident: 22.2%
  - Somewhat confident: 31.5%
  - Neither confident nor skeptical: 33.3%
  - Somewhat skeptical: 11.1%

Dentists in Public Health Settings
58 Responses

- Your particular dental practice?
  - Very confident: 36.2%
  - Somewhat confident: 36.2%
  - Neither confident nor skeptical: 19.0%

- The dental care sector in general?
  - Very confident: 20.7%
  - Somewhat confident: 39.7%
  - Neither confident nor skeptical: 31.0%

- The U.S. economy?
  - Very confident: 13.8%
  - Somewhat confident: 27.6%
  - Neither confident nor skeptical: 25.9%
  - Somewhat skeptical: 12.1%
Appointment Schedule

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

Mean % of schedule filled

Dentists in Private Practice

- GP: 88.2%
- PED: 86.8%

Dentists in Public Health Settings

- DiPHS: 91.4%
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**
746 Responses

- Trouble filling vacant staff positions: 31.0%
- Not enough patients making appts: 34.5%
- COVID safety protocols: 4.7%
- No shows/cancellations < 24 hours: 82.2%
- Cancellations 24+ hours prior: 41.6%
- Other, please specify: 7.8%

**Pediatric Dentistry**
43 Responses

- Trouble filling vacant staff positions: 32.6%
- Not enough patients making appts: 34.9%
- COVID safety protocols: 4.7%
- No shows/cancellations < 24 hours: 81.4%
- Cancellations 24+ hours prior: 44.2%
- Other, please specify: 9.3%

**Dentists in Public Health Settings**
37 Responses

- Trouble filling vacant staff positions: 40.5%
- Not enough patients making appts: 10.8%
- COVID safety protocols: 2.7%
- No shows/cancellations < 24 hours: 83.8%
- Cancellations 24+ hours prior: 32.4%
- Other, please specify: 2.7%
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

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Type</th>
<th>Mean Number of Days</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>GP</td>
<td>12.1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>PED</td>
<td>15.1</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Dentists in Public Health Settings

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Type</th>
<th>Mean Number of Days</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>DiPHS</td>
<td>24.9</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

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Type</th>
<th>Mean Number of Days</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>GP</td>
<td>23.9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>PED</td>
<td>18.1</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Dentists in Public Health Settings

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Type</th>
<th>Mean Number of Days</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>DiPHS</td>
<td>49.4</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?
951 Responses

- **Dental hygienists**: 40.0% Yes, 58.4% No, 14.7% Not sure
- **Dental assistants**: 37.3% Yes, 59.6% No, 3.1% Not sure
- **Dentists**: 14.7% Yes, 82.5% No, 2.8% Not sure
- **Administrative staff**: 24.2% Yes, 71.6% No, 4.2% Not sure

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

- **Dental hygienists**: 80.3% Extremely challenging, 14.2% Very challenging, 1.2% Not challenging at all
- **Dental assistants**: 53.5% Extremely challenging, 31.3% Very challenging, 13.0% Not challenging at all
- **Dentists**: 60.7% Extremely challenging, 17.1% Very challenging, 10.7% Not challenging at all
- **Administrative staff**: 37.4% Extremely challenging, 31.7% Very challenging, 24.8% Not challenging at all
Pediatric Dentistry

Have you recently or are you currently recruiting any of the following positions in your dental practice?
54 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>31.5%</td>
<td>68.5%</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Dental assistants</td>
<td>59.3%</td>
<td>40.7%</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Dentists</td>
<td>27.8%</td>
<td>68.5%</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Administrative staff</td>
<td>35.2%</td>
<td>63.0%</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

How challenging has it been to recruit the position(s) below?
43 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>76.5%</td>
<td>11.8%</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Dental assistants</td>
<td>53.1%</td>
<td>18.8%</td>
<td>21.9%</td>
<td>6.3%</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Dentists</td>
<td>60.0%</td>
<td></td>
<td>33.3%</td>
<td>6.7%</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Administrative staff</td>
<td>36.8%</td>
<td>26.3%</td>
<td>26.3%</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Dentists in Public Health Settings

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

58 Responses

- **Dental hygienists**: 44.8% Yes, 50.0% No, 5.2% Not sure
- **Dental assistants**: 72.4% Yes, 25.9% No, 1.7% Not sure
- **Dentists**: 46.6% Yes, 51.7% No, 1.7% Not sure
- **Administrative staff**: 39.7% Yes, 51.7% No, 8.6% Not sure

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

51 Responses

- **Dental hygienists**: 46.2% Extremely challenging, 30.8% Very challenging, 23.1% Moderately challenging
- **Dental assistants**: 47.6% Extremely challenging, 26.2% Very challenging, 21.4% Moderately challenging
- **Dentists**: 48.1% Extremely challenging, 25.9% Very challenging, 18.5% Moderately challenging
- **Administrative staff**: 17.4% Extremely challenging, 26.1% Very challenging, 43.5% Moderately challenging, 13.0% Not challenging at all
Questions of the Week

**Recruitment tools**

[Owners only] What tools have you used to find applicants for your dental hygienist and/or dental assistant positions? (Select all that apply.)

**General practice**
474 Responses

- Dental society classifieds or ads: 12.0%
- Online recruitment websites: 22.8%
- Dental-specific job matching site: 5.5%
- Social media: 14.7%
- Local hygiene or assisting programs: 15.3%
- Used a staffing agency or recruiter: 6.4%
- Word of mouth: 23.1%
- Other, please specify: 0.2%

**Pediatric Dentistry**
34 Responses

- Dental society classifieds or ads: 11.6%
- Online recruitment websites: 24.0%
- Dental-specific job matching site: 6.6%
- Social media: 9.9%
- Local hygiene or assisting programs: 14.9%
- Used a staffing agency or recruiter: 8.3%
- Word of mouth: 24.8%
- Other, please specify: -
**Dental Hygienist and Dental Assistant Wages**

**General Practice**

[Owners only] When did you last give dental hygienists and dental assistants on your staff a wage increase?

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Within the past year</th>
<th>1-2 years ago</th>
<th>3-4 years ago</th>
<th>5 or more years ago</th>
<th>Never</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Dental hygienists</td>
<td>81.1%</td>
<td>15.2%</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Dental assistants</td>
<td>81.8%</td>
<td>15.7%</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**How much was the wage increase, on average?**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>1-3%</th>
<th>4-6%</th>
<th>7-9%</th>
<th>10% or more</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Dental hygienists</td>
<td>25.6%</td>
<td>35.8%</td>
<td>15.1%</td>
<td>23.5%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Dental assistants</td>
<td>22.1%</td>
<td>41.8%</td>
<td>15.6%</td>
<td>20.5%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Pediatric Dentistry

[Owners only] When did you last give dental hygienists and dental assistants on your staff a wage increase?

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Within the past year</th>
<th>1-2 years ago</th>
<th>3-4 years ago</th>
<th>5 or more years ago</th>
<th>Never</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Dental hygienists</td>
<td>89.7%</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Dental assistants</td>
<td>90.0%</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>8.0%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

How much was the wage increase, on average?

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>1-3%</th>
<th>4-6%</th>
<th>7-9%</th>
<th>10% or more</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Dental hygienists</td>
<td>34.0%</td>
<td>18.0%</td>
<td>24.0%</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Dental assistants</td>
<td>36.0%</td>
<td>12.0%</td>
<td>36.0%</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Dentists in Public Health Setting

When did you last give dental hygienists and dental assistants on your staff a wage increase?

- Dental hygienists:
  - Within the past year: 63.6%
  - 1-2 years ago: 24.2%
  - 3-4 years ago: 6.1%
  - 5 or more years ago: 6.1%
  - Never: 6.1%

- Dental assistants:
  - Within the past year: 78.4%
  - 1-2 years ago: 18.9%

How much was the wage increase, on average?

- Dental hygienists:
  - 1-3%: 54.1%
  - 4-6%: 21.6%
  - 7-9%: 13.5%
  - 10% or more: 10.8%

- Dental assistants:
  - 1-3%: 41.0%
  - 4-6%: 33.3%
  - 7-9%: 12.8%
  - 10% or more: 12.8%
**Current Employee Benefits**

[Owners only] Which of the following benefits do you offer to your employees? (Select all that apply.)

### General Practice

875 Responses

- Paid vacation: 91.7%
- Paid sick time: 70.3%
- Paid holidays: 88.3%
- Retirement savings: 75.8%
- Health insurance: 42.7%
- Dental benefits: 93.5%
- CE or professional development: 72.0%
- Paid leave: 20.3%
- Membership in professional association: 15.3%
- Licensure or certificate fees: 32.6%
- Other, please specify: 9.9%

### Pediatric Dentistry

50 Responses

- Paid vacation: 90.0%
- Paid sick time: 86.0%
- Paid holidays: 92.0%
- Retirement savings: 84.0%
- Health insurance: 60.0%
- Dental benefits: 88.0%
- CE or professional development: 74.0%
- Paid leave: 28.0%
- Membership in professional association: 22.0%
- Licensure or certificate fees: 58.0%
- Other, please specify: 16.0%
[Owners only] Which of the following benefits do you offer to your employees? (Select all that apply.) (continued)

Dentists in Public Health Settings
44 Responses

- Paid vacation: 95.5%
- Paid sick time: 88.6%
- Paid holidays: 95.5%
- Retirement savings: 88.6%
- Health insurance: 93.2%
- Dental benefits: 68.2%
- CE or professional development: 75.0%
- Paid leave: 84.1%
- Membership in professional association: 34.1%
- Licensure or certificate fees: 50.0%
- Other, please specify: 11.4%
Dentists in private practice

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Specialty</th>
<th>Choice Count</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>General Practice (GP)</td>
<td>944</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Oral and maxillofacial surgery (OMS)</td>
<td>15</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Endodontics (ENDO)</td>
<td>18</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Orthodontics (ORTHO)</td>
<td>19</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Pediatric dentistry (PED)</td>
<td>52</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Periodontics (PERIO)</td>
<td>28</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Prosthodontics (PROS)</td>
<td>9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Dental public health (DPH)</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Dental anesthesiology (DENTANES)</td>
<td>2</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>1,103</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Dentist in public health setting</td>
<td>58</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>