

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 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. In 2024 the survey distribution schedule was changed from monthly to quarterly.

The survey for the fourth quarter of 2025 was sent December 8, 2025, to 2,432 panel members; 839 responded, for an adjusted response rate (excluding undeliverable email addresses) of 34.7%. The number of dentists by specialty and practice setting can be found at the end of this report.

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 December 2025 by the American Dental Association's Health Policy Institute.

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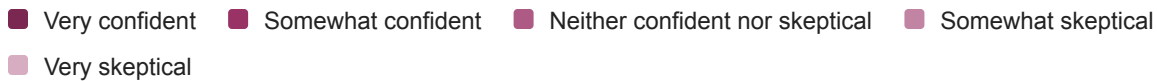
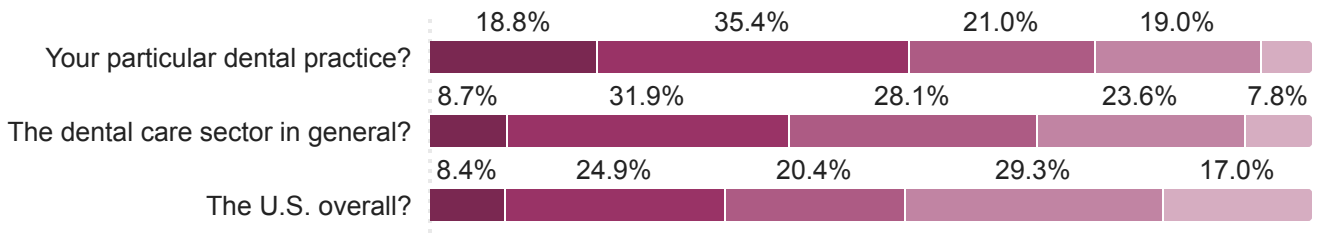
For more information on other publications, products, and services, please visit our website, ADA.org/HPI.

Economic Confidence

Looking ahead the next 6 months, how confident are you in the economic conditions in:

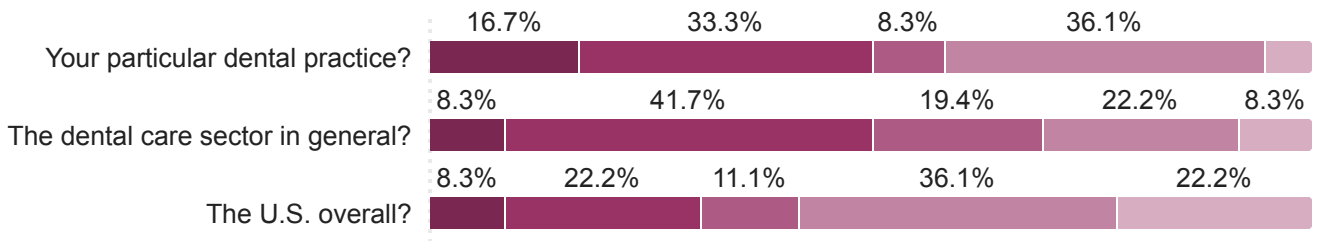
General Practice

670 Responses



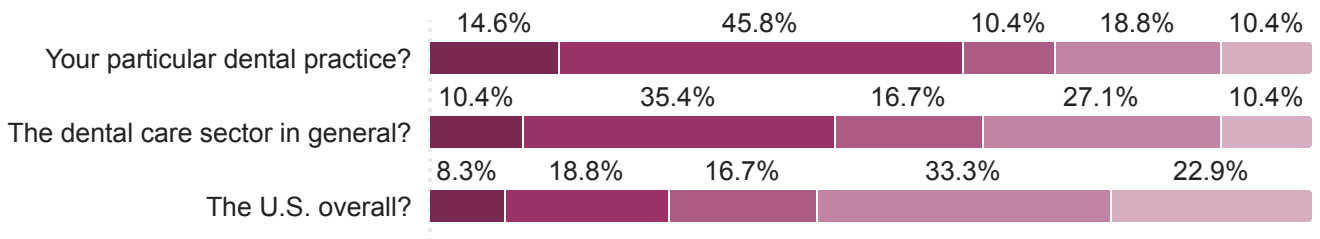
Pediatric Dentistry

36 Responses



Dentists in Public Health Settings

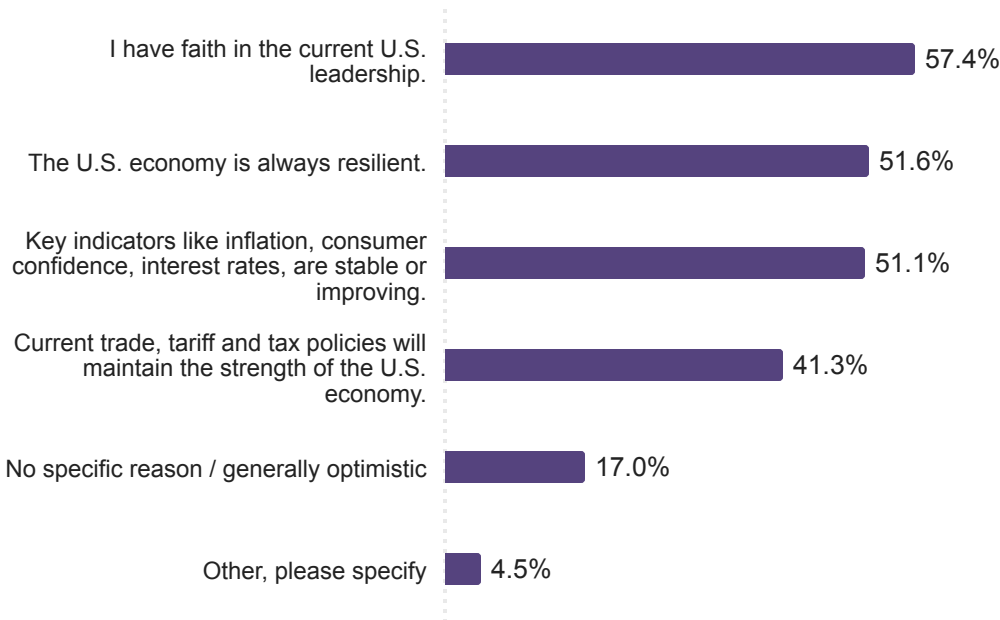
48 Responses



Please select the reason(s) for your confidence in the overall U.S. economic conditions.
(Select all that apply.)

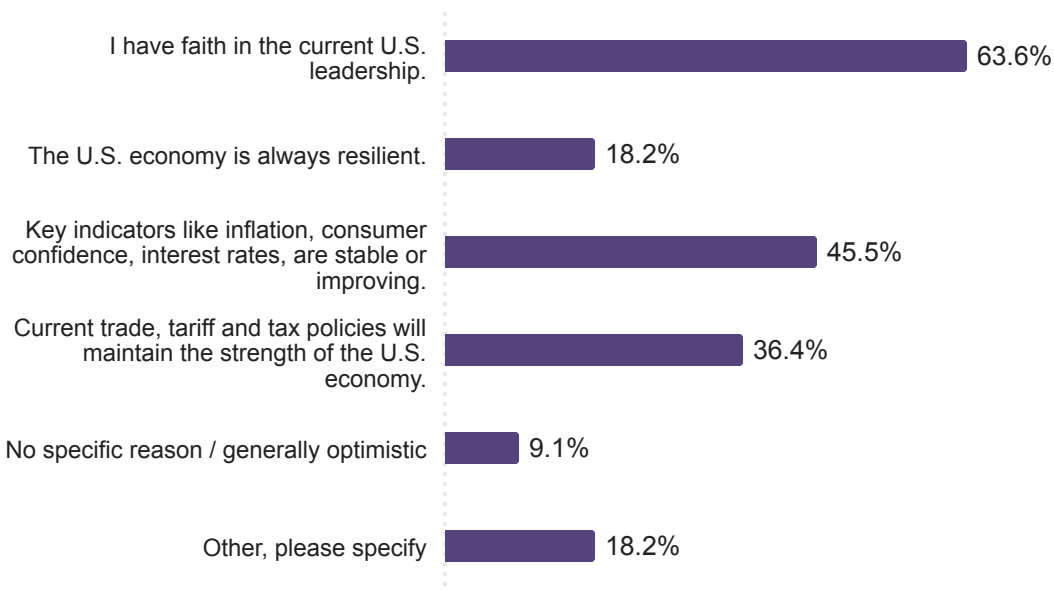
General Practice

223 Responses



Pediatric Dentistry

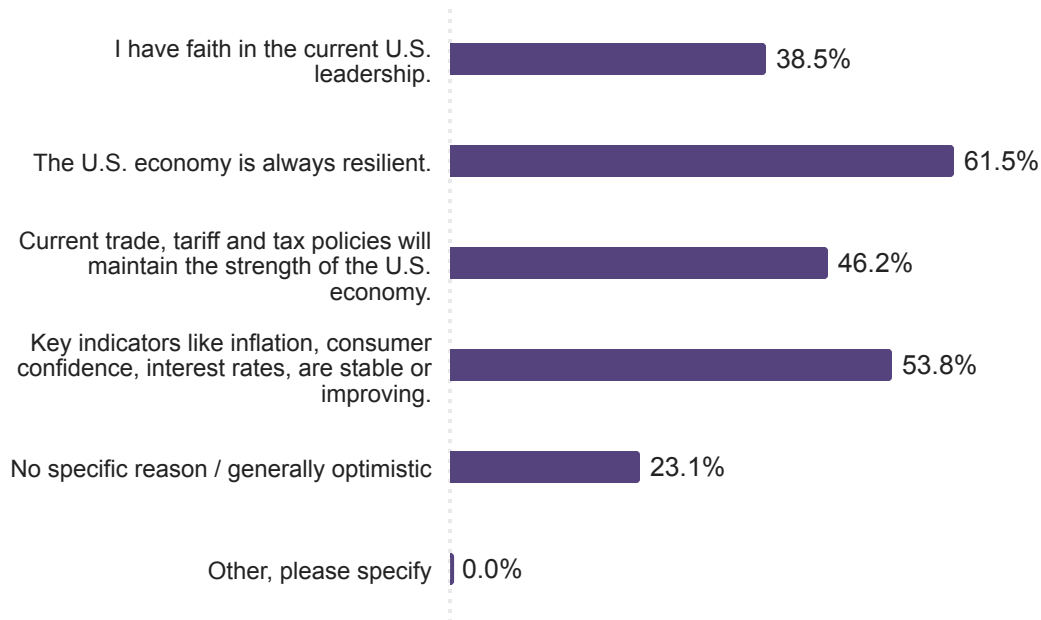
11 Responses



Please select the reason(s) for your confidence in the overall U.S. economic conditions.
(Select all that apply.) (continued)

Dentists in Public Health Settings

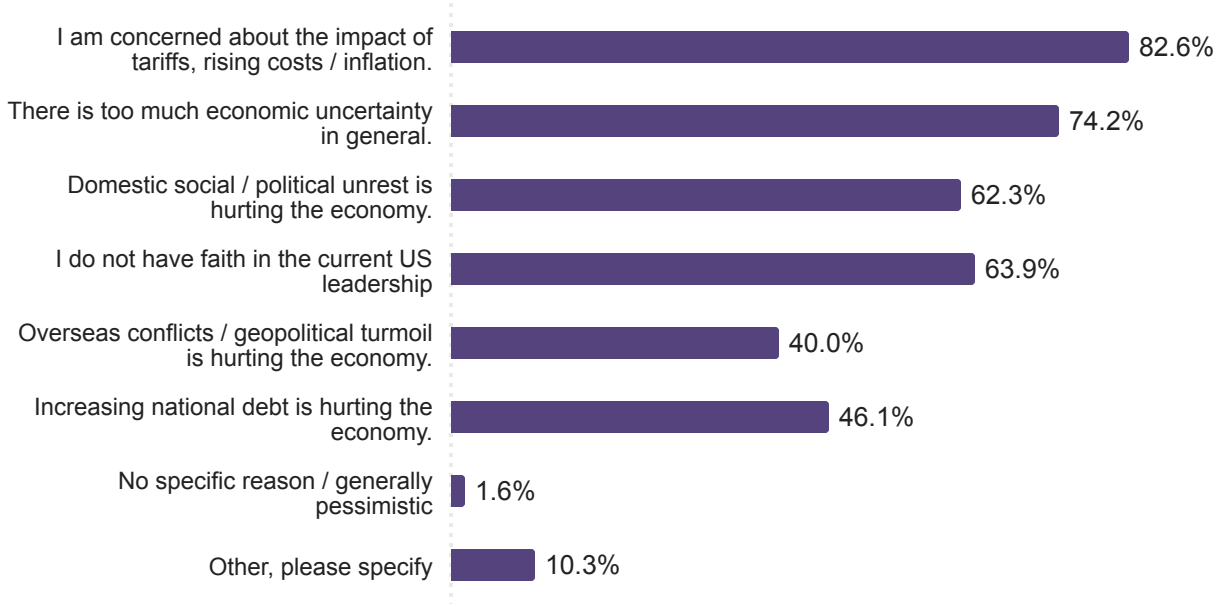
13 Responses



Please select the reason(s) for your skepticism in the overall U.S. economic conditions.
(Select all that apply.)

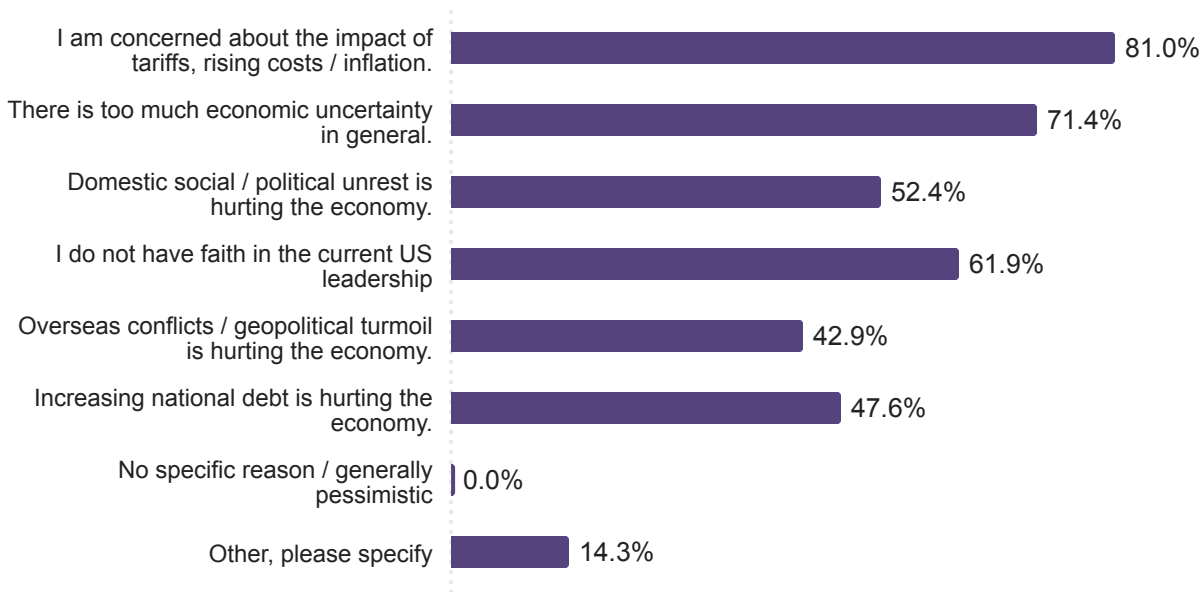
General Practice

310 Responses



Pediatric Dentistry

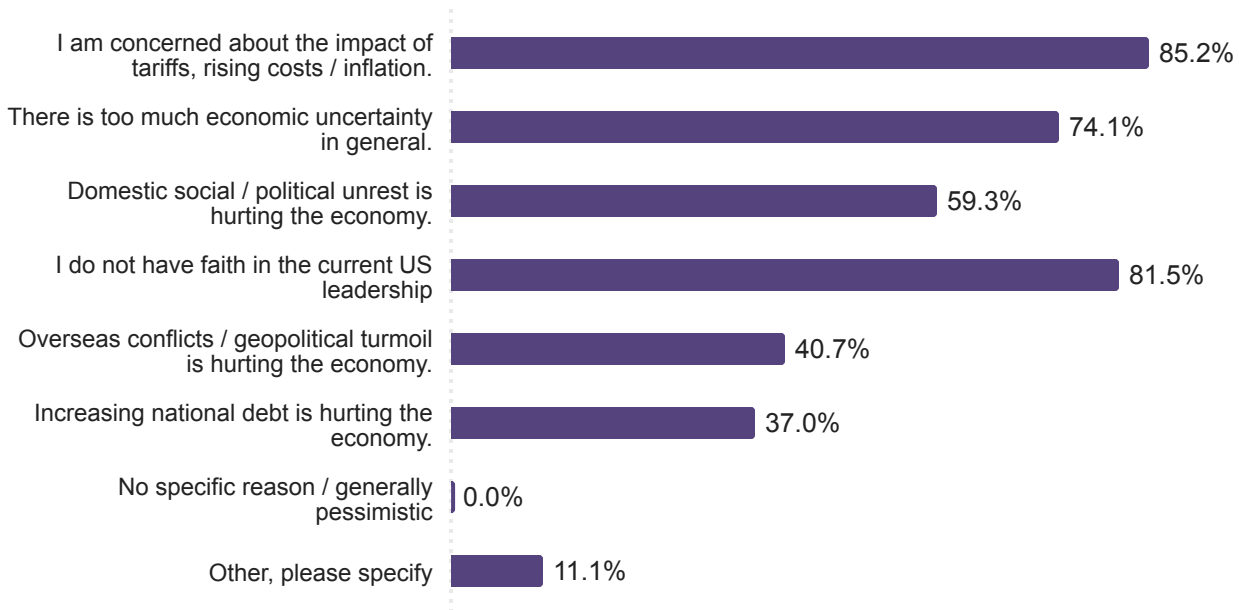
21 Responses



Please select the reason(s) for your skepticism in the overall U.S. economic conditions.
(Select all that apply.) (continued)

Dentists in Public Health Settings

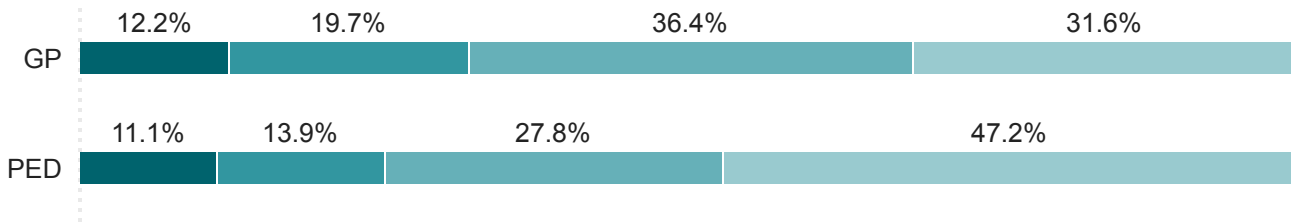
27 Responses



Busyness

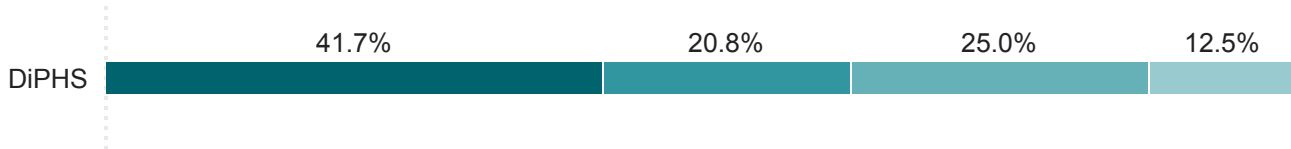
Which of the following best describes your general busyness level over the last 3 months?

Dentists in private practice



- Too busy to treat all people requesting appointments
- Provided care to all who requested appointments but was overworked
- Provided care to all who requested appointments but was not overworked
- Not busy enough, could have treated more patients

Dentists in Public Health Settings



New Patient Wait Times

[Owners only] Is your practice currently accepting new patients?

(Percent answering "yes")

Dentists in private practice



Dentists in Public Health Settings

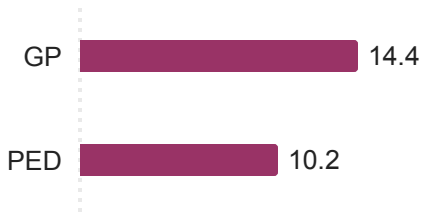
48 Responses



[If accepting new patients] 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



Dentists in Public Health Settings

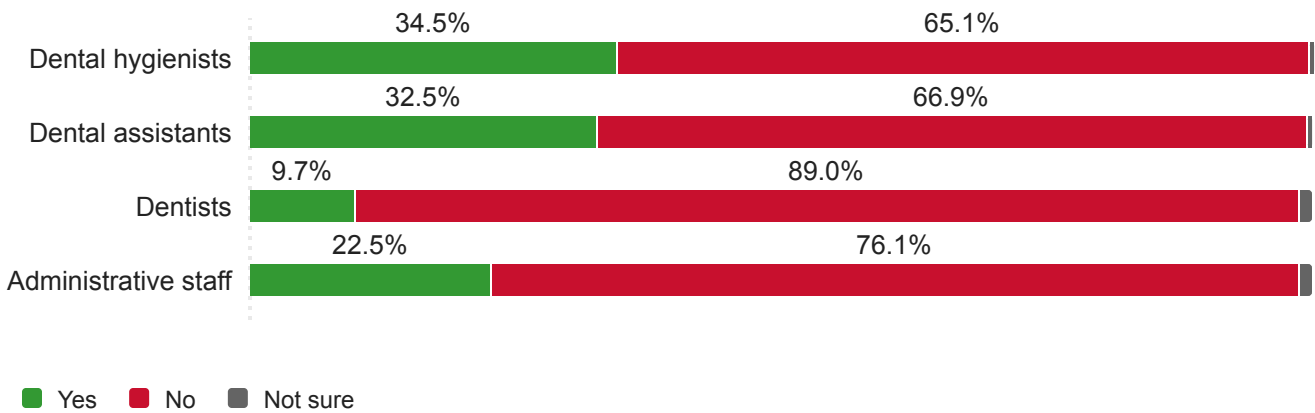


Staff Recruitment

General Practice

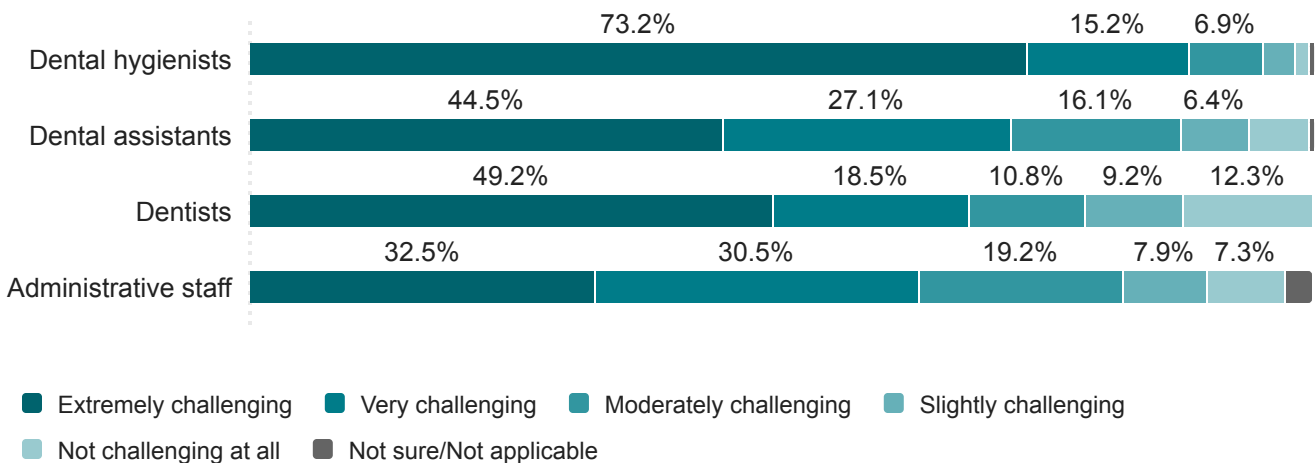
Currently, or at any time during the last 3 months, have you recruited for any of the following positions?

670 Responses



How challenging has it been to recruit the position(s) below over the last 3 months?

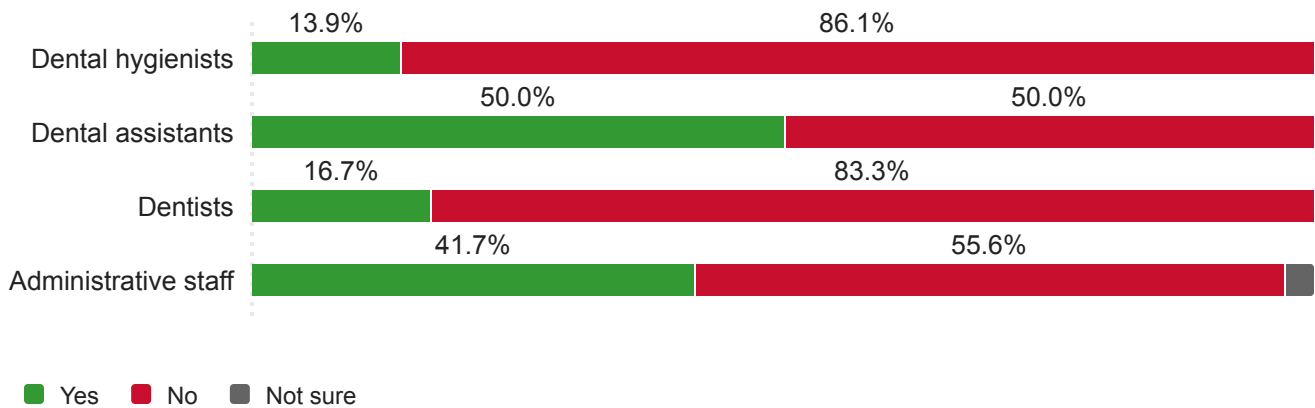
383 Responses



Pediatric Dentistry

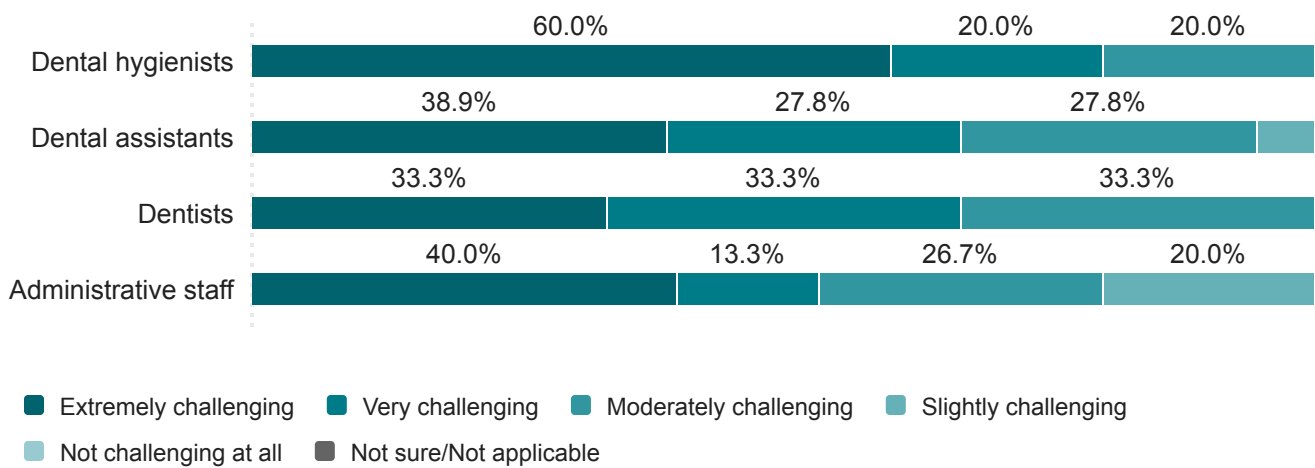
Currently, or at any time during the last 3 months, have you recruited for any of the following positions?

36 Responses



How challenging has it been to recruit the position(s) below over the last 3 months?

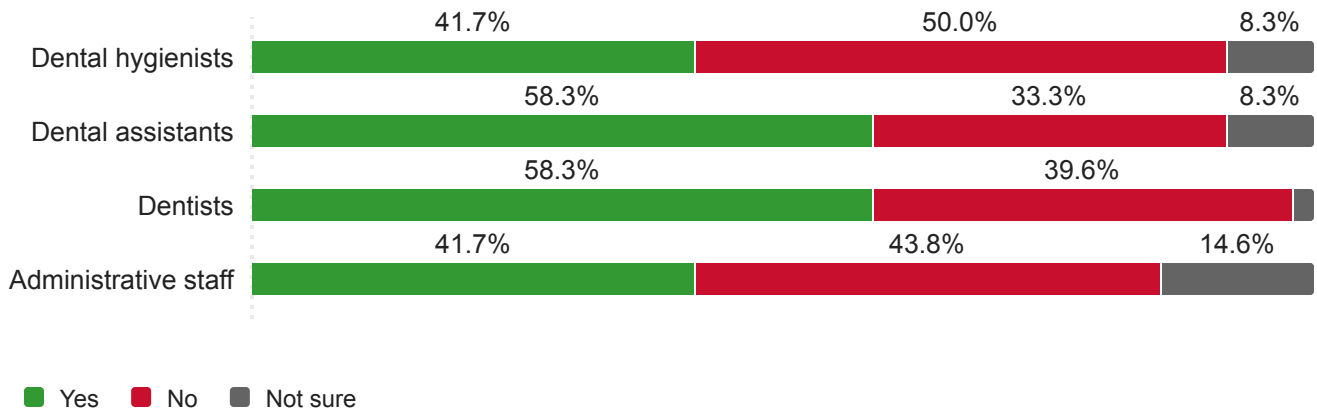
25 Responses



Dentists in Public Health Settings

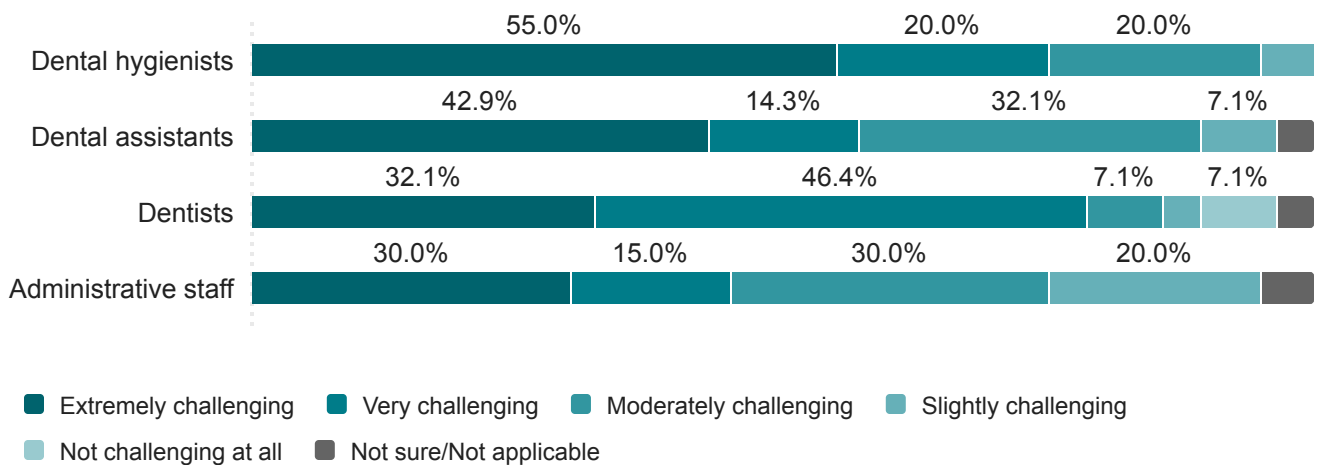
Currently, or at any time during the last 3 months, have you recruited for any of the following positions?

48 Responses



How challenging has it been to recruit the position(s) below over the last 3 months?

39 Responses

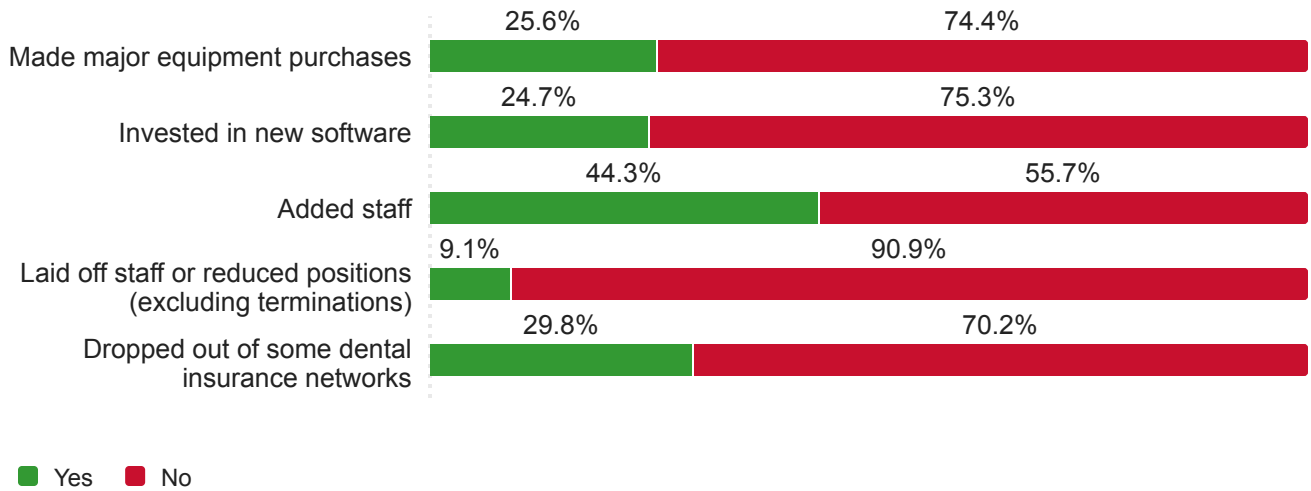


Recent Practice Decisions

[Owner dentists] Since the beginning of 2025, have you done any of the following in your practice?

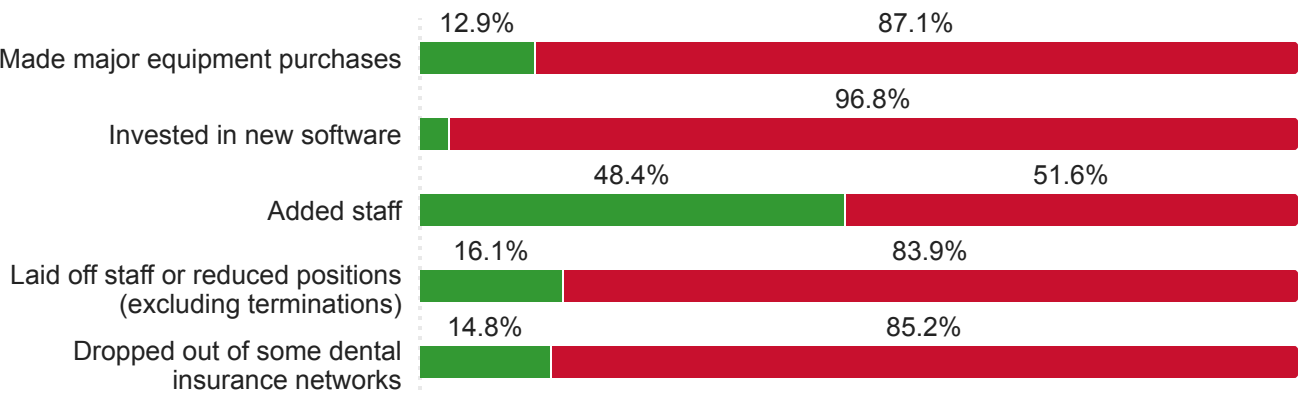
General Practice

601 Responses

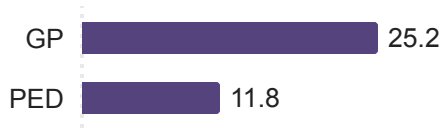


Pediatric Dentistry

31 Responses



[If *Dropped out of some dental insurance networks* selected] Approximately what percentage of the patient base were in the insurance networks that your practice dropped out of since the beginning of 2025?



■ Mean % of patient base

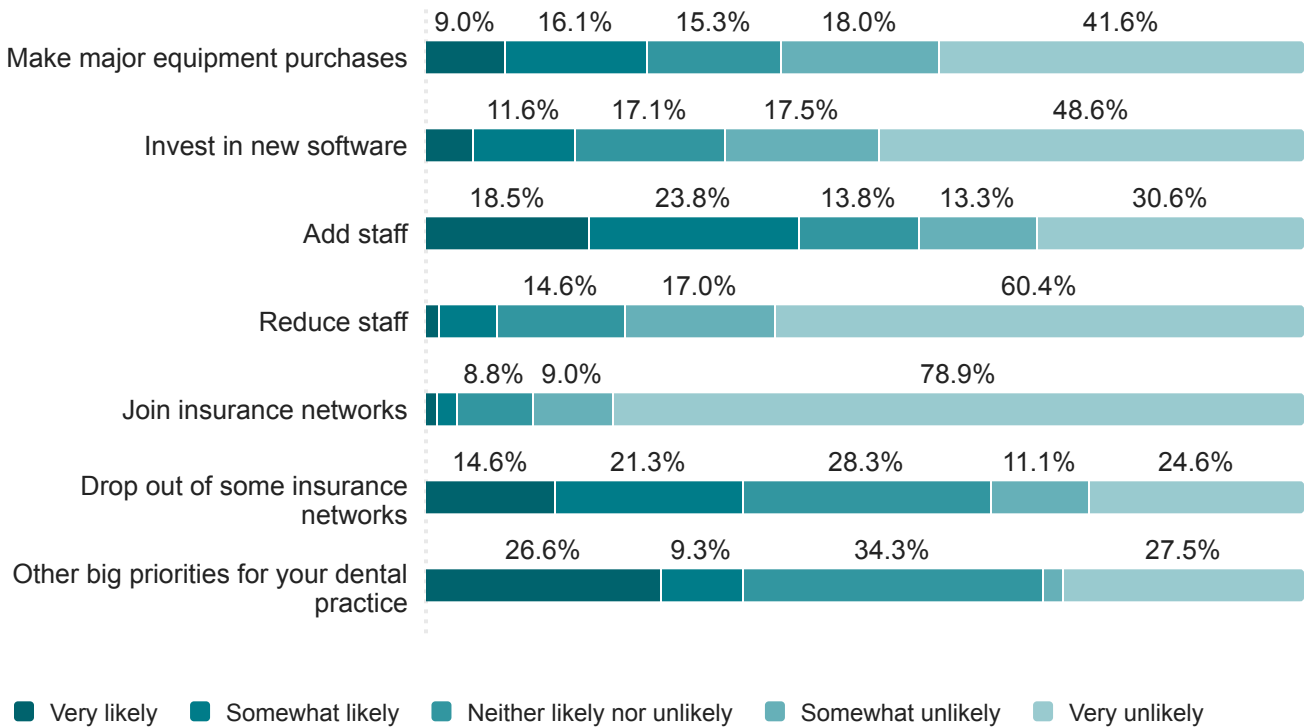
Future Practice Decisions

Looking forward to 2026...

[Owner dentists] How likely are you to do each of the following for your practice?

General Practice

601 Responses

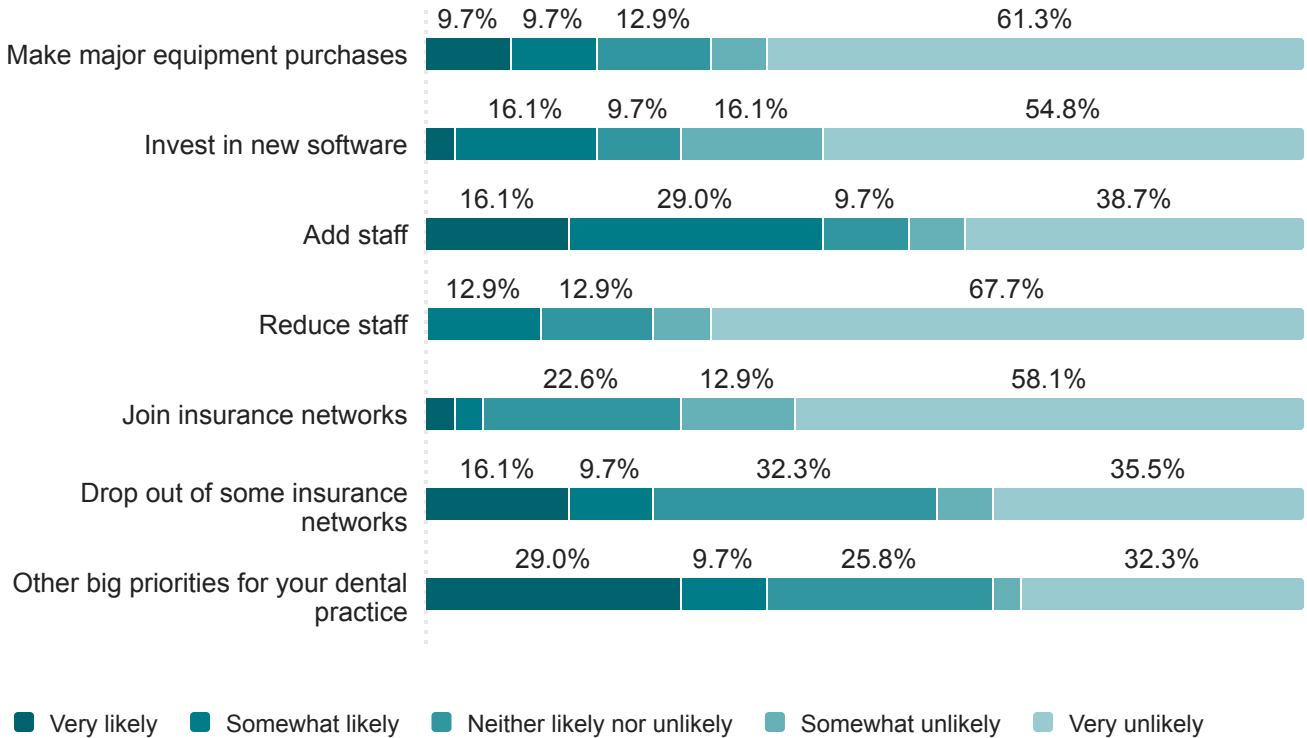


Looking forward to 2026...

**[Owner dentists] How likely are you to do each of the following for your practice?
(continued)**

Pediatric Dentistry

31 Responses



Dentists in private practice

Specialty	Choice Count
General practice (GP)	674
Oral and maxillofacial surgery (OMS)	18
Endodontics (ENDO)	13
Orthodontics (ORTHO)	22
Pediatric dentistry (PED)	36
Periodontics (PERIO)	17
Prosthodontics (PROS)	8
Dental public health (DPH)	2
Dental anesthesiology (DENTANES)	1

Practice Setting	Choice Count
Dentist in private practice	791
Dentist in public health setting	48