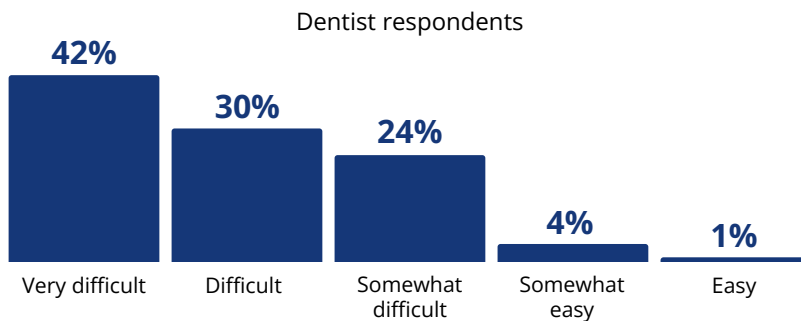


Perspectives on Dental Assisting Professional Requirements

In October and November 2023, DANB commissioned two surveys to learn more about the dental community and the public's perspectives on dental assisting professional requirements. These survey results will inform the work of the Dental Assisting Professional Model Workgroup and its efforts to develop a proposed national model framework.

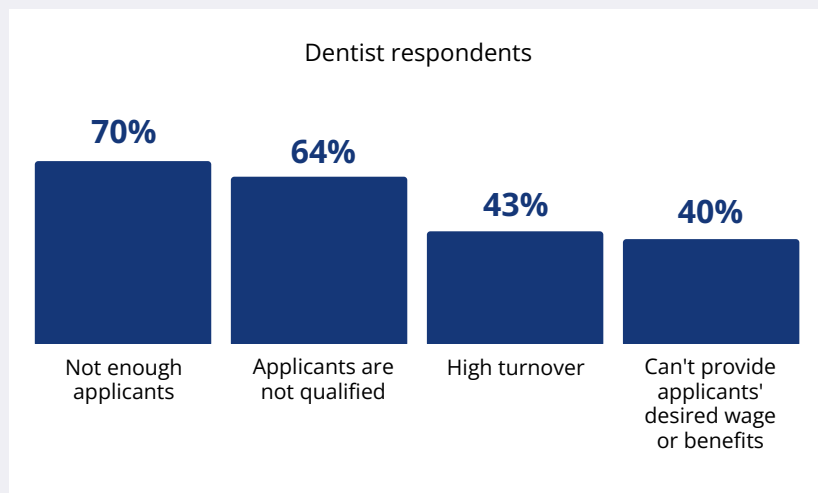
Dental Survey Findings

How easy is it right now to hire qualified dental assistants?



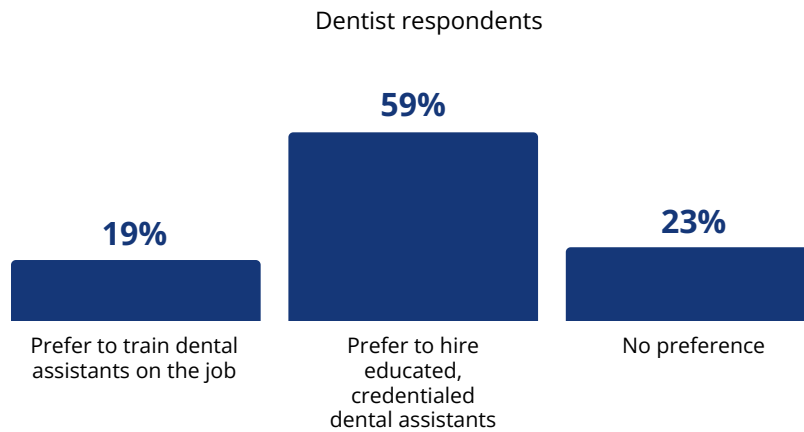
72%
of dentists reported difficulty hiring dental assistants

What are the current challenges related to hiring and retaining qualified dental assistants? (Check all that apply)



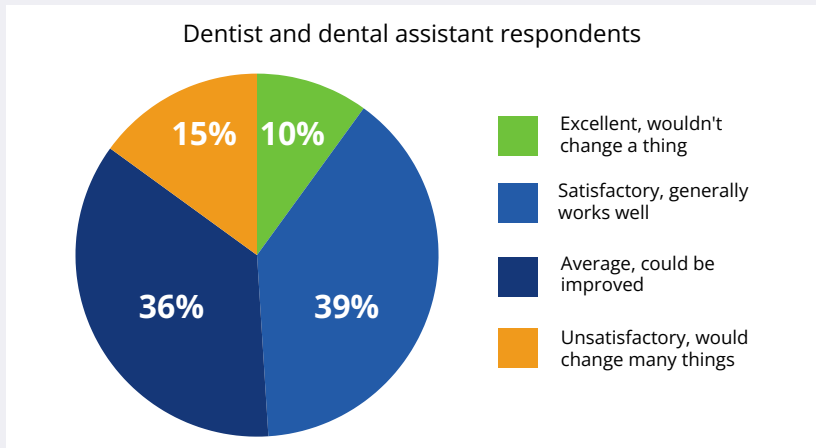
According to dentists, the biggest challenges with hiring dental assistants are not enough applicants and unqualified applicants.

What is your hiring preference for dental assistants?



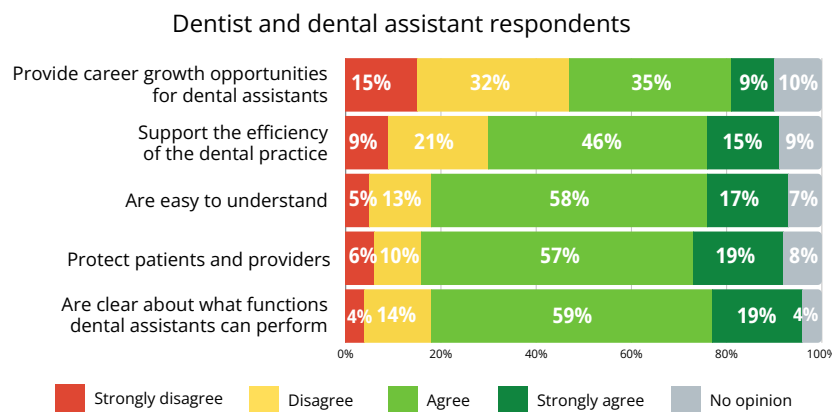
Most dentists preferred hiring educated, credentialed dental assistants, but acknowledged they often had to be willing to train on the job due to lack of candidates.

How do you feel about your state's laws and regulations governing dental assistant practice?



Current laws and regulations could be improved, with only about 10% of dentists and dental assistants saying their state's requirements are excellent.

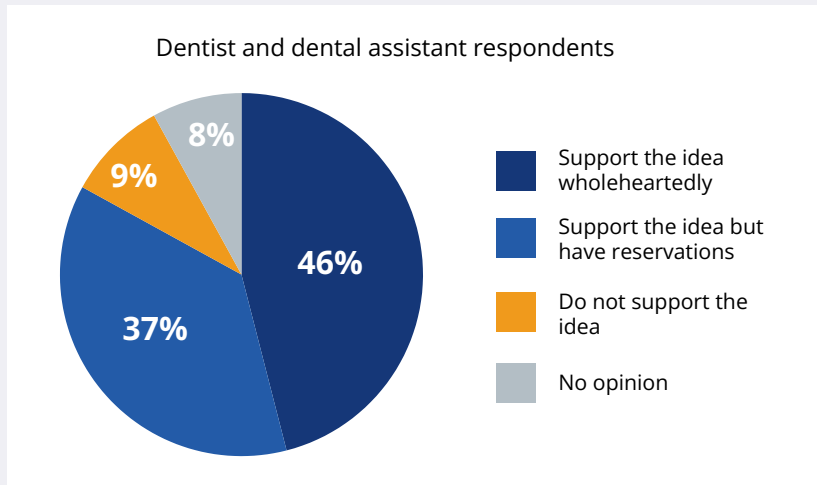
My state's existing laws and regulations for dental assistants:



DENTAL ASSISTANT CAREER GROWTH IS A TOP ISSUE.

Both dentists and dental assistants recognized that their state's current laws and regulations do not provide career growth for dental assistants, with about half of both groups citing this as an issue.

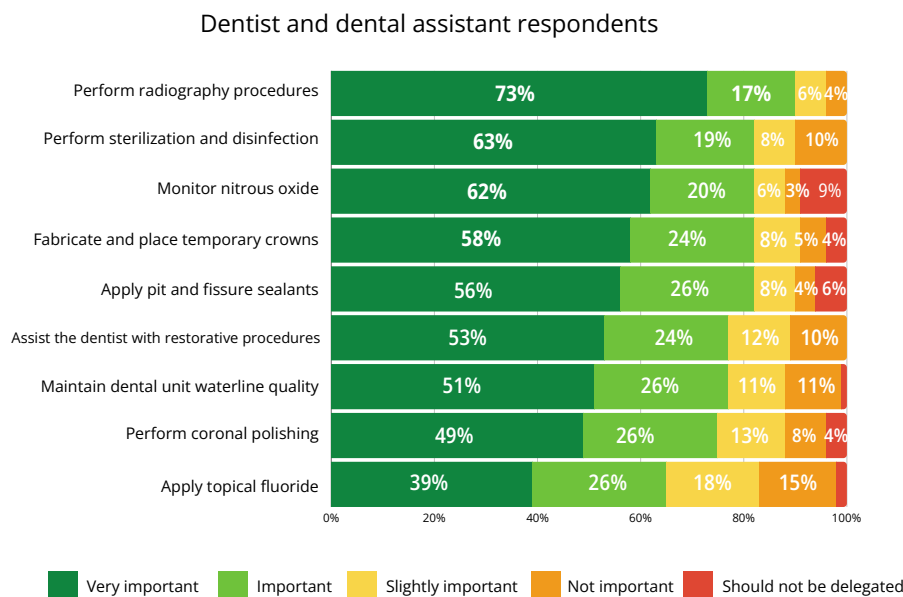
How do you feel about states adopting similar regulations for dental assistants so there would be more uniformity in the requirements across the country?



83%

of dentists and dental assistants support a move toward uniformity in dental assistant requirements

How important is it for a dental assistant to complete education or pass an exam before performing each of the following?



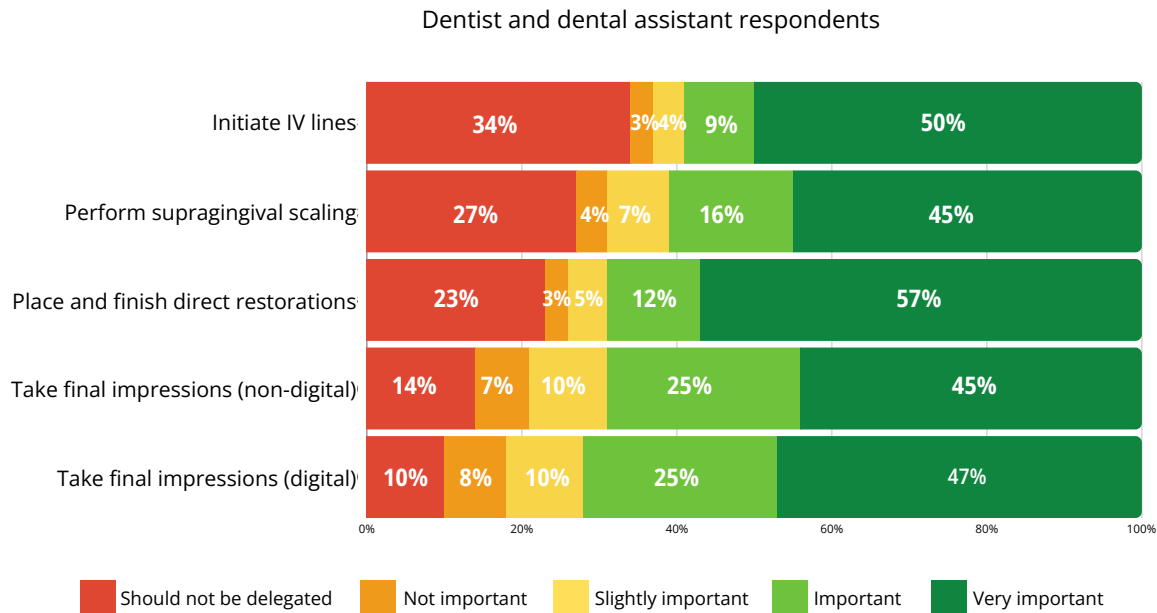
90%

of dentists and dental assistants reported it was important for assistants to pass an exam or complete education before performing radiography procedures.

The survey asked about 14 specific functions. These functions do not represent all the functions dental assistants perform, nor are dental assistants allowed to perform these functions in all states.

How important is it for a dental assistant to complete education or pass an exam before performing each of the following? (cont.)

There were some functions that dentists and dental assistants more often felt should not be delegated to dental assistants.



The survey asked about 14 specific functions. These functions do not represent all the functions dental assistants perform, nor are dental assistants allowed to perform these functions in all states.

ABOUT THE SURVEY

In October 2023, DANB distributed the survey to the dentists, dental assistants, and other dental professionals. The survey received 500+ responses from dentists and 600+ responses from dental assistants, which met the minimum sample sizes for these populations. Responses were received from all 50 states and Washington, D.C. The results were analyzed and reported to DANB by a third-party firm. These survey results will inform the work of the Dental Assisting Professional Model Workgroup and its efforts to develop a proposed framework for the dental assisting profession.

Public Survey Findings

More than 1,000 consumers were asked for their perspectives on dental assisting education and training requirements. Prior to answering any questions, the respondents were presented with a brief description of the role of a dental assistant, specifying what a dental assistant does and does not do.

3 OUT OF 4 CONSUMERS EXPECT THEIR DENTAL ASSISTANTS TO BE EDUCATED AND CREDENTIALLED.

Consumers value educated dental assistants.

73% of consumers responded it was very important for dental assistants to have formal education in dental assisting

64% expected dental assistants to have a certificate or associate degree in dental assisting as the minimum level of education

Consumers see the importance of dental assisting exams.

73% reported it was very important to them that their dental assistant passed some type of exam to demonstrate their knowledge

Consumers expect dental assistants to be credentialed.

70% expect their dental assistant to hold a state license or registration

44% expect their dental assistant to hold an industry certification

ABOUT THE SURVEY

The public audience survey was distributed by an independent research company in November 2023 to more than 1,000 consumers to gauge public sentiment on dental assistant education and training. Respondents were diverse across a number of aspects, including of age, race, ethnicity, education level, household income, geography, and marital/family status. More than 60% had visited the dentist within the last 12 months. The research company analyzed and reported the results to DANB. These survey results will inform the work of the Dental Assisting Professional Model Workgroup and its efforts to develop a proposed framework for the dental assisting profession.