

A National Analysis of Factors Associated with the Prevalence and Practice of EFDAs

DANB

Why do some states have a robust expanded functions dental assistant (EFDA) workforce, while other states don't? Research published in the *Journal of the American Dental Association* explored several factors.

KEY FINDINGS:



Dentists' support of EFDAs was nearly universal.

92% expressed support for their assistants to become EFDAs

Top ways of providing support:

- On-the-job training
- Offering a pay raise

Regulation did not hinder the EFDA workforce.

EFDA requirements (often education, an exam, or both) did not appear related to EFDA workforce participation rates.



Restorative functions are not widely delegated.

1 out of 3 delegated direct restorations

Saving time was a key motivator



Growing the workforce takes time and resources.

More established EFDA levels, particularly ones that had widespread training and funding available at the time, were associated with higher EFDA rates.



Many states had low EFDA workforce rates.

In states with registered EFDAs, nearly half had low EFDA rates (less than 10%).



1 in 4 dentists reported being unsure of state EFDA requirements.



SOLUTION:

Standardizing EFDA requirements and scope of practice could support EFDA acceptance and utilization by dentists and mitigate confusion.