

**Executive Office of Health and Human Services
Massachusetts Department of Public Health**

**Health Professions Data Series
Dental Hygienists 2011**



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Massachusetts Health Professions Data Series: Dental Hygienist 2011

Overview

The Massachusetts Health Professions Data Series: Dental Hygienists 2011 report provides baseline data about the workforce demographics of dental hygienists licensed to practice in Massachusetts. It is part of the Department of Public Health's Health Professions Data Series currently reporting on seven licensed health professions: dentists, dental hygienists, pharmacists, physicians, physician assistants, registered nurses, and licensed practical nurses.

This series responds to the need for quality and timely data on workforce demographics and characteristics of employment among these components of the Commonwealth's healthcare workforce, and is intended to provide useful information and tools to assist in workforce development initiatives and health care workforce policy development and planning in both the public and private sectors.

The Massachusetts Health Professions Data Series: Dental Hygienists 2011 report is a collaborative effort coordinated by the Health Care Workforce Center of the MDPH Bureau of Community Health and Prevention, the Division of Health Professions Licensure and the Massachusetts Board of Registration in Dentistry in the MDPH Bureau of Health Care Safety and Quality, and partners from the UMass Area Health Education Center (AHEC) Network.

Chapter 305 of the Acts of 2008: An Act to Promote Cost Containment, Transparency, and Efficiency in the Delivery of Quality Health Care¹

The publication of this data series is a major step toward fulfilling the mandates of Chapter 305 of the Acts of 2008 which established the MDPH Health Care Workforce Center (the Center). It complements and contributes to other state and federal efforts such as the National Center for Health Workforce Analysis Assessment, as well as other ongoing health care access and payment reform initiatives in the Commonwealth.

The need for timely, high quality data about the healthcare professions in the Commonwealth is constant. This initiative is ground-breaking because it utilizes the capacity of the MDPH Division of Health Professions Licensure to provide online license renewal which offers an efficient and sustainable system for collecting and analyzing workforce data submitted directly by licensed health care professionals upon renewal of their licenses.

This data series is intended to characterize the workforce from a supply perspective, and will enhance the Commonwealth's ability to identify trends and patterns in the workforce that may impact access to health care professionals and the services they provide. The resulting Health Professions Data Series promises to be a very robust, timely source of data that will be integral to future discussions and decisions about healthcare workforce development, education, training, recruitment, and retention.

Quality data collection, analysis, and reporting at the state level are integral to the development of effective health care planning and policy-making. The Massachusetts Health Professions Data Series has fostered public-private collaborations that are key to the availability of a highly qualified, diverse, and culturally competent workforce to meet the current and future needs of all Massachusetts residents.

¹ Chapter 305 of the Acts of 2008 is codified at MGL c.111, § 25L through 25N
<http://www.malegislature.gov/Laws/GeneralLaws/PartI/TitleXVI/Chapter111/Section25L>

BACKGROUND

During the 2011 license renewal cycle, 6,735 dental hygienists were sent a renewal notice with an option of renewing their license online and completing 33 workforce survey questions. The survey included questions related to demographics, employment characteristics and future work plans. A total of 2,403 (36%) dental hygienists completed the online survey, of which 1,889 (79%) reported practicing in Massachusetts. **The results should be quoted with caution as the representativeness of the dental hygienist respondents for this report is unknown.**

The following data represents the responses of all Dental Hygienists who completed an online renewal between January 2011 and June 2011.

DEMOGRAPHICS²

n = 2,403 – All licensed in Massachusetts

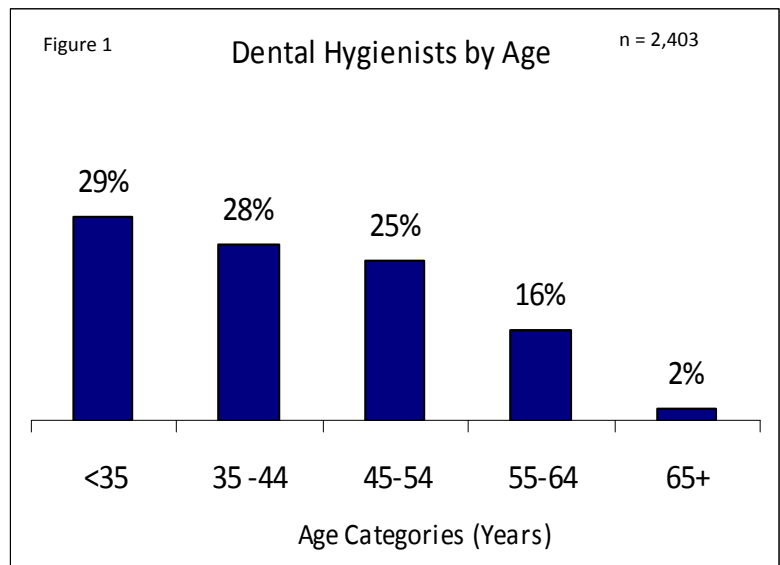
Gender: Males: 2% Females: 98%

Average Age: 42 years

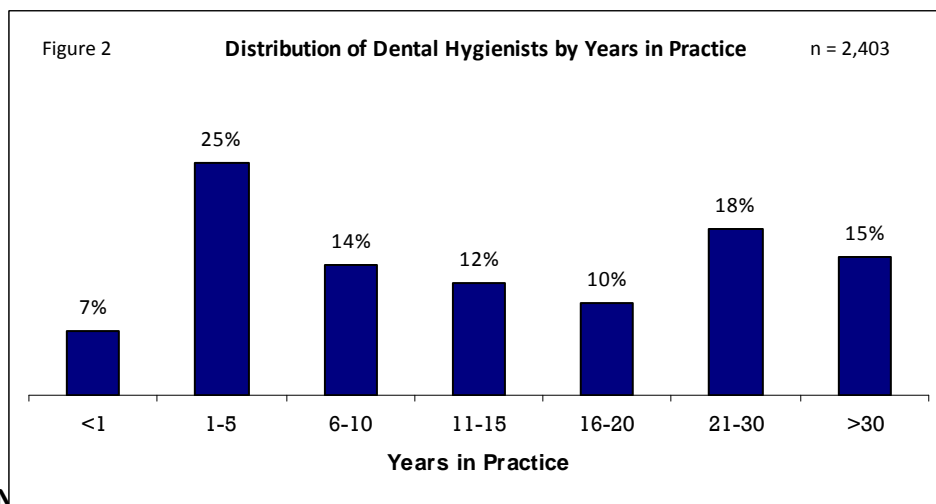
Age Range: 21-78 years

Race:

White, Non-Hispanic (NH):	86%
Black, NH:	2%
Asian, NH	4%
Native Hawaiian/Pacific Islander, NH:	<1%
Hispanic:	3%
Decline to Answer:	4%



Languages other than English most frequently spoken with sufficient fluency to provide adequate care: Spanish: 5% Portuguese: 3% French: 2% Russian: 2%



EDUCATION

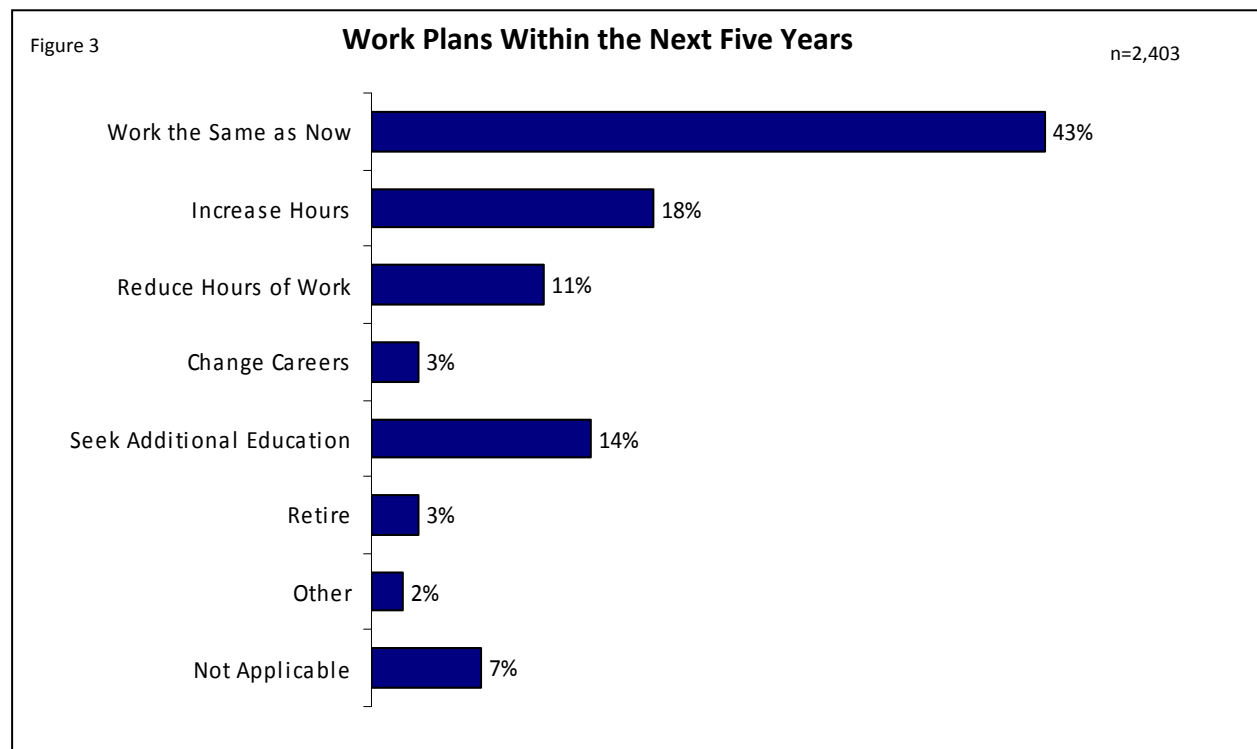
² Percentages may not add to 100% due to rounding or the respondent's ability to select more than one answer.

Highest level of education obtained by age group:

Age Group:	<u>< 35 yrs</u>	<u>35-44 yrs</u>	<u>45-54 yrs</u>	<u>55+ yrs</u>
Associate Degree	62%	71%	72%	67%
Baccalaureate Degree	36%	26%	21%	19%
Master's Degree	2%	3%	7%	12%
Doctorate	1%	0%	<1%	<1%

Future Plans:

- 64% intend to work the same number or increase their hours of work.
- 6% plan to change their career or retire.
- 34% of respondents indicated an intention to practice for another 11 to 20 years.



All following data presented reflects dental hygienists who reported practicing in Massachusetts.³

EMPLOYMENT CHARACTERISTICS

n = 1,889– All licensed and working in Massachusetts

Employment Status:

- 49% of dental hygienists were employed full-time.
- 44% of dental hygienists were employed part-time.

PRACTICE CHARACTERISTICS

n = 1,889 – All licensed and working in Massachusetts

- 49% worked primarily in a solo practice setting while 32% worked primarily in a group practice setting.
- 2% worked in a specialty practice, 2% reported working at a community health center, and 1% worked in academia/research.
- 64% provided patient care in one practice setting.
- 33% worked in two or more practice settings.
- 89% of dental hygienists worked as clinicians; only 4% worked as educators.
- 35% of respondents felt that there were too many dental hygienists in their community, while only 5% felt that there weren't enough.

Public Health Dental Hygiene Practice:

- 34% were likely to pursue training to practice as a public health dental hygienist in the next five years. 30% were likely to practice as a public health dental hygienist in the next five years.

MassHealth:

- 27% worked in a practice that accepted MassHealth (Medicaid).

Loan Repayment:

- 65% would have agreed to participate in a loan repayment program had they known one existed when graduating from dental hygiene school.

³ Number represents all dental hygienists who reported working either full-time, part-time or on a voluntary basis in Massachusetts.

This report was developed by the

Massachusetts Department of Public Health

Bureau of Community Health and Prevention
Health Care Workforce Center

Bureau of Health Care Safety and Quality
Division of Health Professions Licensure
Board of Registration in Dentistry

in collaboration with

UMASS Area Health Education Center Network



For additional information about the *Health Professions Data Series*
or this Dental Hygienist Report please contact the
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