

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

Health Professions Data Series Dentists 2010



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Massachusetts Health Professions Data Series: Dentists 2010

Overview

The Massachusetts Health Professions Data Series: Dentists 2010 report provides baseline data about the workforce demographics of dentists 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: Dentists 2010 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 the 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 2010 license renewal cycle 6,371 dentists were sent a renewal notice with an option of renewing their license online and completing 34 workforce survey questions. The survey included questions related to demographics, employment characteristics and future work plans. A total of 2,378 (35%) dentists completed the online survey, of which 1,875 (79%) reported practicing in Massachusetts. **The results should be quoted with caution as the representativeness of the dentist respondents for this report is unknown.**

The following data represents the responses of 2,378 Dentists who completed an online renewal between January 2010 and June 2010.

DEMOGRAPHICS²

n = 2,378 – All licensed in Massachusetts

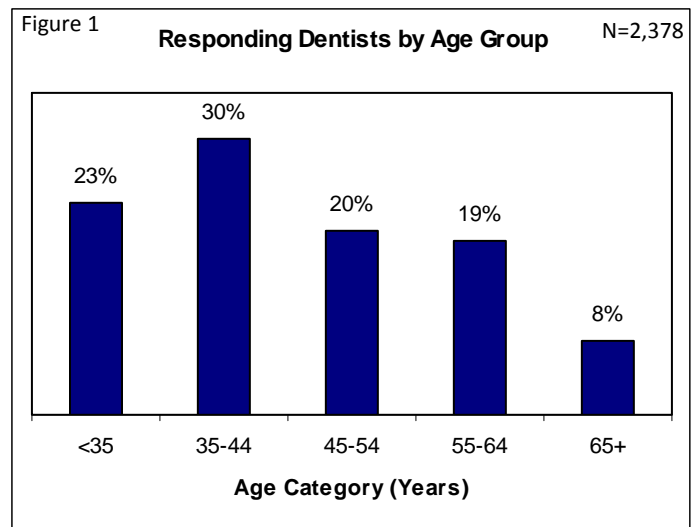
Gender: Males: 64% Females: 36%

Average Age: 46 yrs

Age Range: 26-88 yrs

Race:

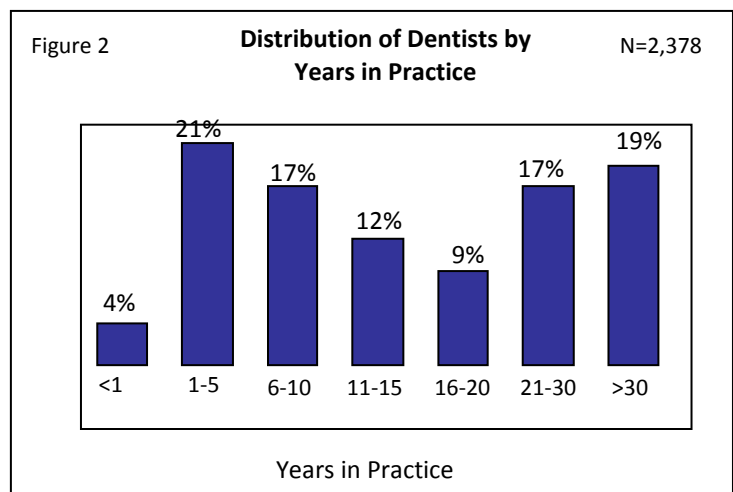
White, Non-Hispanic (NH):	61%
Black, NH:	2%
Asian, NH:	23%
American Indian/Alaska Native, NH:	<1%
Native Hawaiian/Pacific Islander, NH:	<1%
Decline to Answer:	13%



Languages other than English most frequently spoken with sufficient fluency to provide adequate care:

Spanish: 9% French: 6% Hindi: 6% Chinese: 5% Arabic: 4%

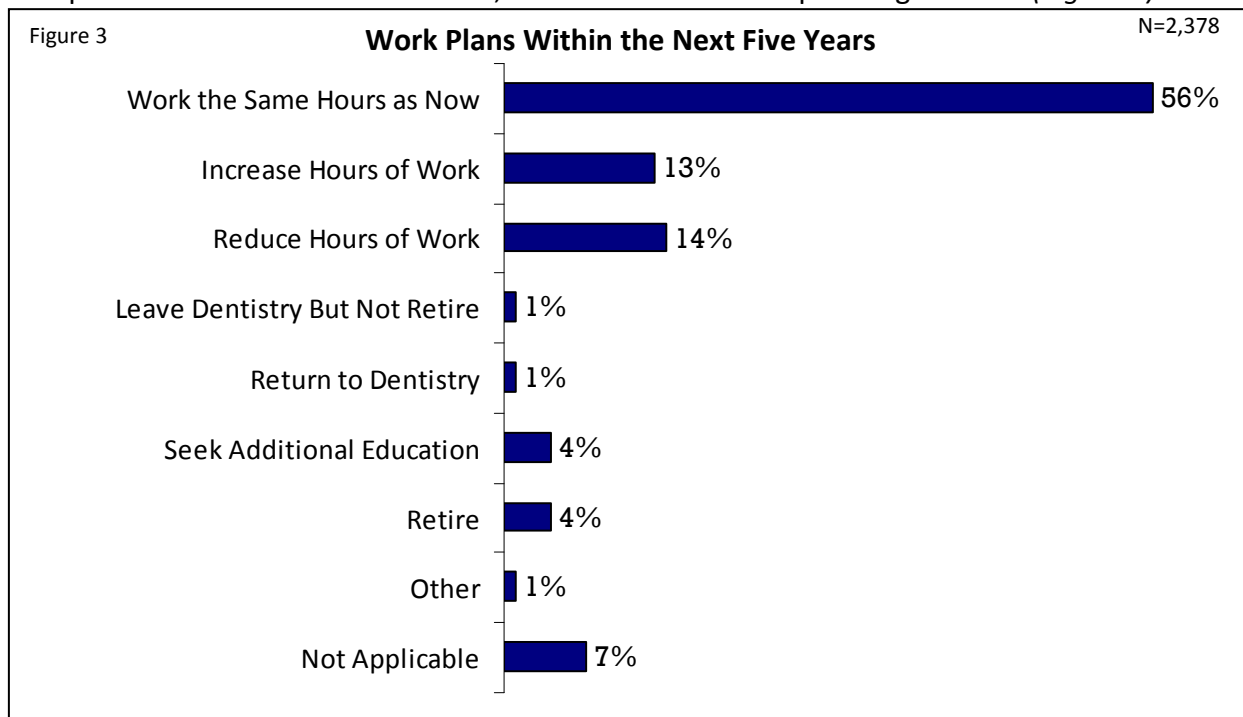
Years in Practice: Respondents appear to be mostly in the early or late stages of their career, with only 21% of dentists having worked between 11 and 20 years.



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

Future Plans

In the next five years, more than half (56%) of dentists intended to work the same as present. 13% planned to increase hours and 4% planned to seek additional education. Notably, 14% planned to reduce hours of work, with an additional 4% planning to retire (*Figure 3*).



All following data presented reflects Dentists who reported practicing in Massachusetts.

EMPLOYMENT CHARACTERISTICS

n = 1,875 – All licensed and working in Massachusetts³

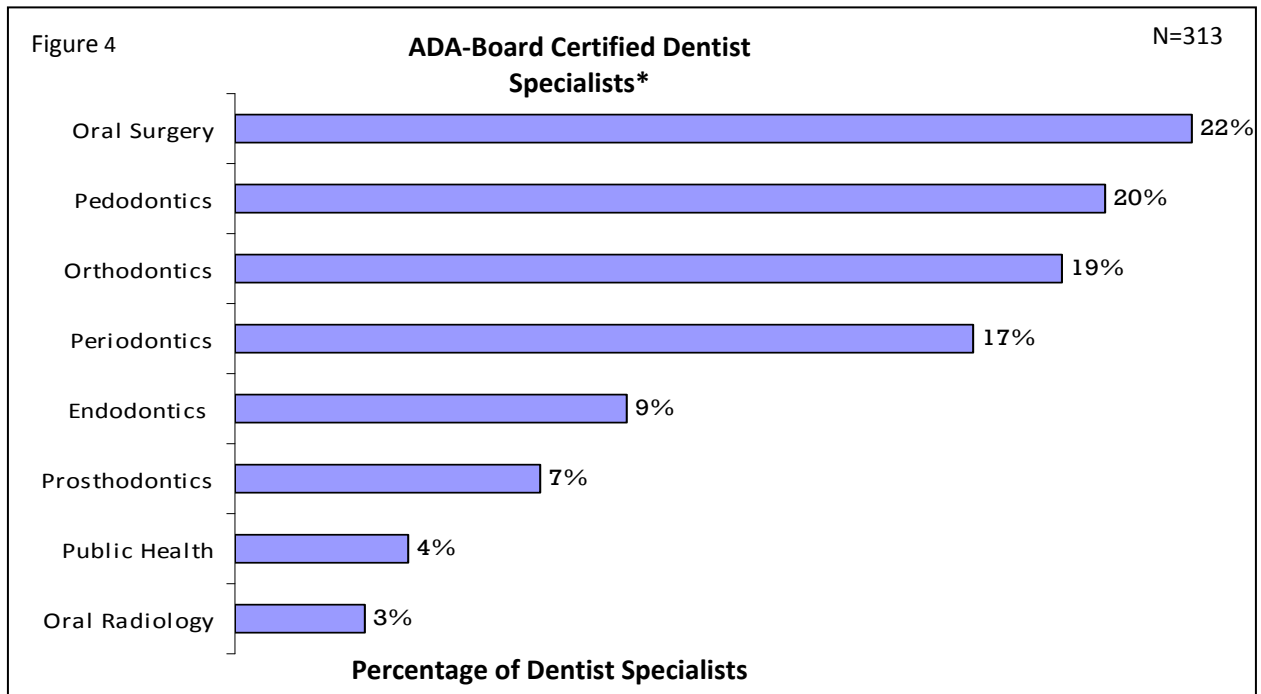
Employment Status: 81% were employed full-time in dentistry, 16% were employed part-time in dentistry, and 1% were retired from dentistry.

PRACTICE CHARACTERISTICS

n = 1,875 – All licensed and working in Massachusetts

- 93% were accepting new patients at their primary practice site.
- 69% spend most of their professional time practicing general dentistry. The remaining 31% practice primarily in the scope of specialties; orthodontics and pediatric dentistry are the two most common.
- 64% reported providing patient care in one practice setting, while 34% reported working in two or more practice settings.
- 50% of dentists reported a group practice as their primary practice setting and 36% practiced primarily in a solo practice setting. 5% reported working at a dental school, 3% at a community health center, 2% in a hospital-based setting, and less than 1% in a military and/or veterans affairs setting.
- 33% practiced an average of 1-10 hours of volunteer dentistry per month in 2009.

³ Dentists who reported working full time, part time, or on a voluntary basis in Massachusetts



*Missing from the ADA specialties data is information regarding Oral Pathology and its practitioners.

Student Loan Repayment

n = 1,875 – All licensed and working in Massachusetts

- 73% would have agreed to participating in a loan repayment program had they known one existed when graduating from dental school.
- 19% of MA dentists confirmed their past participation in some form of loan repayment program.

MassHealth

n = 1,875 – All licensed and working in Massachusetts

- 45% of dentists were a MassHealth (Medicaid) provider.
- 40% reported no interest in becoming a MassHealth (Medicaid) provider.

Other Public Health Implications

n = 1,875 – All licensed and working in Massachusetts

- 10% of dentists offered a sliding fee scale option for payment.
- 29% of dentists routinely saw children age 36 months or older; 22% routinely saw children age between 24 - 35 months; 17% routinely saw children age between 12 - 23 months; and 4% routinely saw children age 12 months or younger.
- 39% of dentists would consider entering into a collaborative agreement with a dental hygienist practicing as a public health dental hygienist.

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 Dentist Report please contact the
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