

DENTAL HYGIENIST REPORT

2023 Dental Salary Survey



2023 Salary Survey | RDH Report

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RDH Report Summary & Highlights

Between July to September 2022, DentalPost conducted the largest and most comprehensive dental professional salary survey of its kind, generating participation from nearly 15,000 dental professionals nationwide, including 6,933 dental hygienists. From compensation to work environments to the job turnover rate, this report captures some of the latest trends and takeaways from responding dental hygienists.

Please note: all percentages have been rounded to the nearest 0.25%. All income dollar amounts have been rounded to the nearest \$5. Hourly rates have been rounded to the nearest \$0.05.

Key Highlights & Takeaways

- **Income satisfaction grew by nearly 18%**, with a whopping 61.5% of respondents saying they felt “satisfied” or “very satisfied” with their total income.
- In the last year, the average income of dental hygienists **increased by 4.5% in private practices** and by **7.5% in corporate practices**. This year’s national average pay increases for dental hygienists were below the current national rate of inflation of 8.2% for the 12 months ending September 2022.
- Despite rising incomes, **more than 31% of dental hygienists are considering a job change**. This includes 13% who are actively looking for a new job, and another 18.5% considering applying for a new job this year.
- 59% of full-time RDHs earned salaries over \$70,000+, and **33% reported salaries exceeding \$80,000**. The median income of respondents dissatisfied with their pay was \$68,000, indicating it is **not just the lowest paid dental hygienists who are unhappy** with their income.
- 1 in 3 of those who changed jobs reported the **desire for higher income** drove their decision, and 1 in 4 reported the **desire for a more positive work environment** drove their decision.
- The **percentage of RDHs receiving “major benefits” increased** between 10-20%. Major benefits (medical insurance, dental benefits, retirement, paid vacation, and paid sick leave) are the new normal for over 50% of RDHs with one exception. Only 35.5% of RDHs in private practices are provided medical insurance by employers, compared with 76.75% of RDHs in corporate practices (DSOs).
- Retirement rates are outpacing dental hygiene school output, compounding the ongoing dental labor shortage. **In the next six years, nearly 30% of the combined full- and part-time RDH workforce plans to retire.**

Income

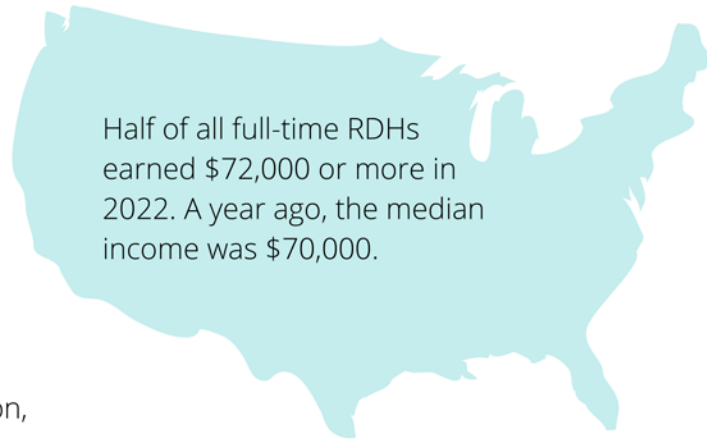
Average & Median Income: Annual Pay for Full-Time RDHs

The following averages and medians reported below are based on the total primary incomes reported by over 4,000 RDHs working full-time (32+ hours per week).

NATIONAL

Average Income = \$73,745

Median Income = \$72,000



REGIONAL

Average and median income by region, from highest to lowest.

Pacific (AK, CA, HI, OR, WA)

Average: \$83,278

Median: \$81,530

South Atlantic (DE, DC, FL, GA, MD, NC, SC, VA, WV)

Average: \$77,680

Median: \$77,330

New England (CT, MA, ME, NH, RI, VT)

Average: \$73,945

Median: \$73,830

Mountain (AZ, CO, ID, MT, NV, NM, UT, WY)

Average: \$73,157

Median: \$71,750

Middle Atlantic (NJ, NY, PA)

Average: \$72,971

Median: \$71,300

West South Central (AR, LA, OK, TX)

Average: \$71,199

Median: \$70,750

West North Central (IA, KS, MN, MO, NE, ND, SD)

Average: \$70,388

Median: \$68,700

East North Central (IL, IN, MI, OH, WI)

Average: \$68,631

Median: \$68,200

East South Central (AL, KY, MS, TN)

Average: \$57,465

Median: \$57,000

INCOME IN STATES WITH DATA SET OF 100+ RESPONDENTS

Average Income

AL	\$46,122
CA	\$91,015
FL	\$70,824
GA	\$71,609
IL	\$74,975
MI	\$63,264
NJ	\$81,030
NY	\$73,530
OH	\$66,671
PA	\$64,352
TN	\$64,050
TX	\$75,131
VA	\$77,725
WA	\$69,557

Median Income

AL	\$54,000
CA	\$89,000
FL	\$70,000
GA	\$71,000
IL	\$75,000
MI	\$62,000
NJ	\$78,000
NY	\$72,000
OH	\$65,000
PA	\$64,000
TN	\$64,000
TX	\$73,000
VA	\$75,000
WA	\$90,000

Income

Average & Median Income: Hourly Rates for Full- and Part-Time RDHs

National average hourly rate: \$42

Based on the hourly rates reported by both full-time and part-time RDHs, the national average hourly rate in 2022 is \$42, an increase from the \$38 national hourly rate one year ago.

While the national hourly rate for full-time and part-time hygienists increased by 10%, the average total income for full-time hygienists has only risen 5% (see "Changes in RDH Income: Year-Over-Year Comparison" on the following page).

National average temp rate: \$47.50

The temp rate increased by 18% over the last two years, when the average hourly rate for full-time temps was \$40.25.

AVERAGE HOURLY RATE IN STATES WITH DATA SET OF 100+ RESPONDENTS

AL	\$27
CA	\$49
FL	\$39
GA	\$41
IL	\$42
MI	\$36
NJ	\$47
NY	\$43
OH	\$37
PA	\$37
TN	\$37
TX	\$43
VA	\$46
WA	\$39

Income

Changes in RDH Income: Year-Over-Year Comparison

To measure the increase in RDH income in the previous 12 months, the national average income reported in last year's survey was compared to the national average income reported in this year's survey. In all measured clinical environments the average national income increased in 2022.

- RDHs working in private general practices reportedly earned a 4.5% higher average income year-over-year
- RDHs in corporate practices (DSOs) reportedly earned a 7.25% higher average income year-over-year
- RDHs who work in specialist practices reportedly earned a 7.25% higher average income year-over-year
- RDHs who work in other types of clinical situations (i.e., public health, mobile clinics, prisons, school-based programs, Native American Indian reservations, universities, and hospital clinics) reportedly earned 3% more year-over-year

Full-Time Average Total Income			
	2022	2021	
Private General Practices	\$72,150	\$68,939	4.5% increase
Specialist Practices	\$72,800	\$67,868	7.25% increase
DSOs	\$79,410	\$73,758	7.5% increase
Public Health & Community	\$72,080	\$70,067	3% increase

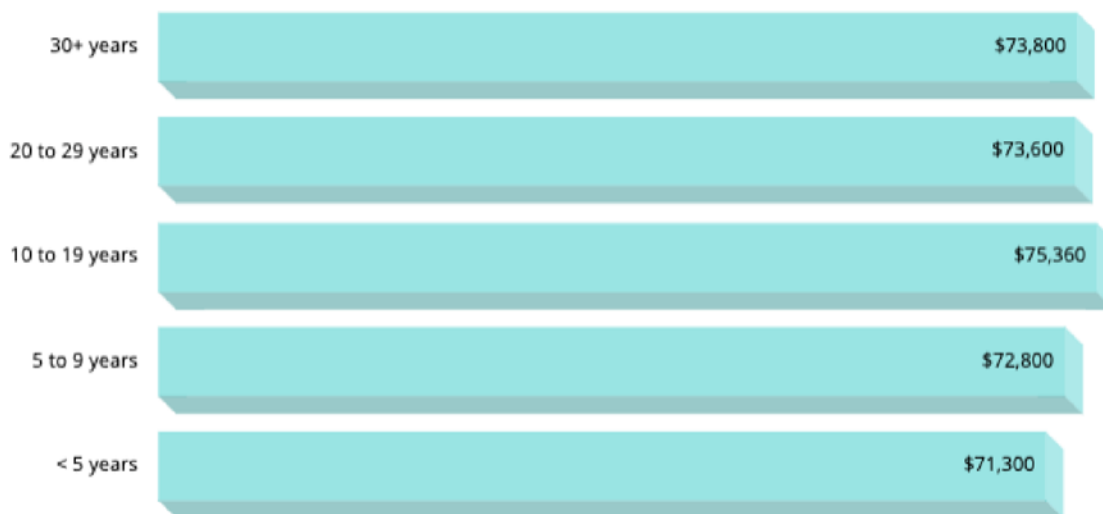
Income

Based on Experience & Location

Average income based on experience

Respondents with 10 to 19 years of experience are the top earners.

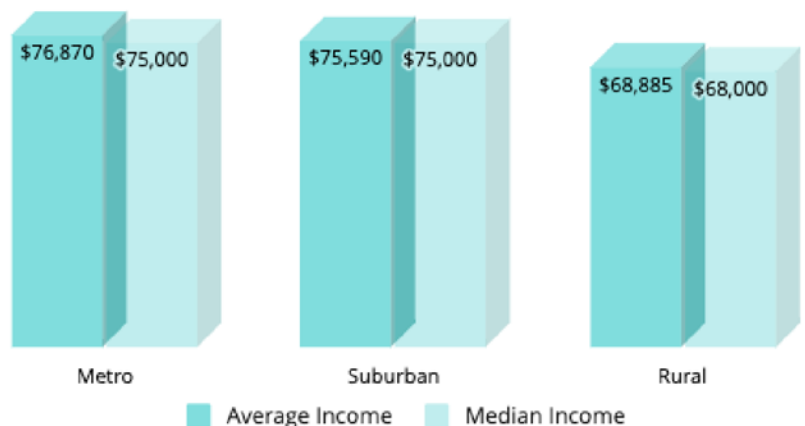
The higher average in this experience bracket is not correlated with working more hours. In fact, 53% of RDHs working more than 35 hours per week have 20 or more years of experience. Only 23% of RDHs working more than 35 hours per week have 10 to 19 years of experience.



Average income based on location

The average income rose in metropolitan, suburban, and rural communities

- The average income in small towns and rural areas increased by \$3,095 YOY
- The average income in metropolitan communities increased by \$3,730 YOY
- The average income in suburban communities increased by \$4,720 YOY



Income

Based on Employment Type

Average income based on employment type

The following reported averages and medians are based on the total income of responding dental hygienists who work 32 or more hours a week.

	Average Income	Median Income
General Private Practice	\$71,980	\$70,000
Corporate Practice	\$79,630	\$76,800
Specialist Private Practice	\$72,800	\$72,999
Public Health & Community Clinics	\$76,080	\$75,000
Other*	\$77,185	\$75,000

**Other types of employment include public schools, military, hospital, university, prison, mobile, and Native American Reservation clinics.*

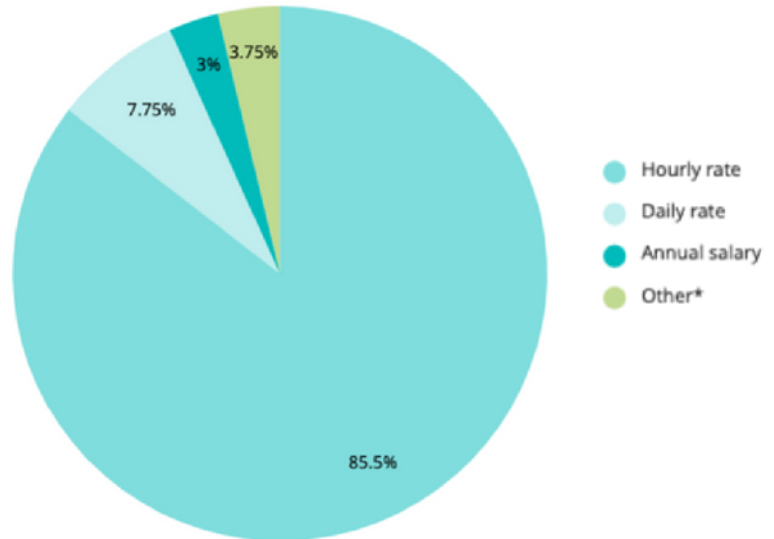
Income

How RDHs are Paid

Income basis

The vast majority of respondents (85.5%) said their principal dental income is based on an hourly wage.

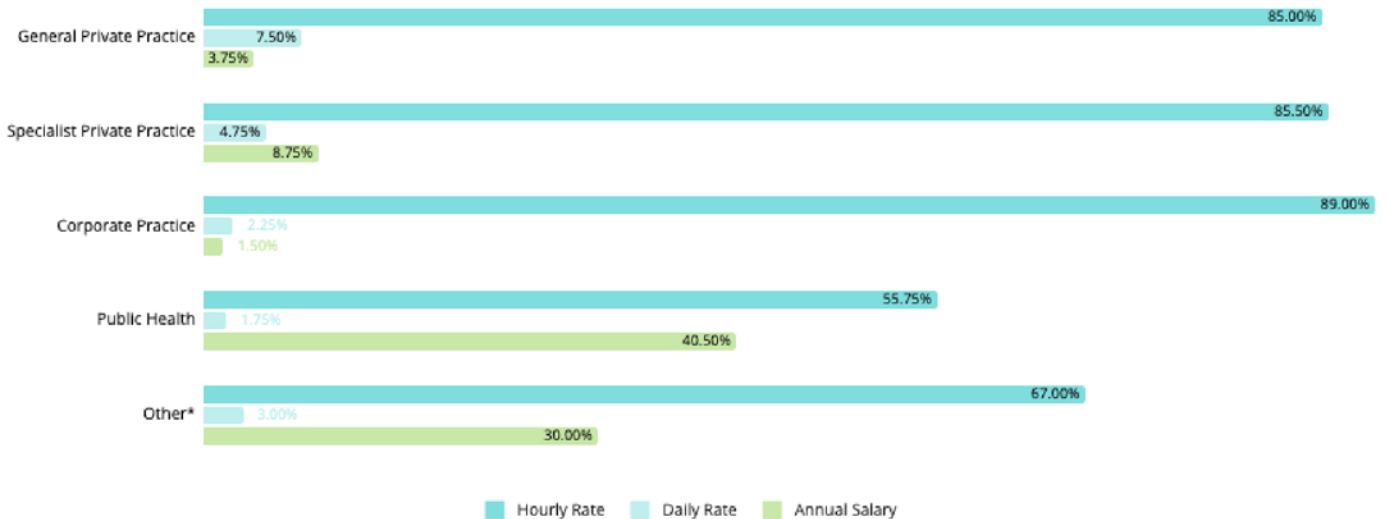
**Other includes percent of production, percent of collections, and commission.*



Income basis by practice type

Over 80% of dental hygienists working in private and corporate practices earn an hourly wage.

In public health and other types of employment, 55 to 67% of responding hygienists earn an hourly wage, and 30 to 40% earn an annual salary.



**Other types of employment include public schools and community, military, hospital, university, prison, mobile, and Native American Reservation clinics.*

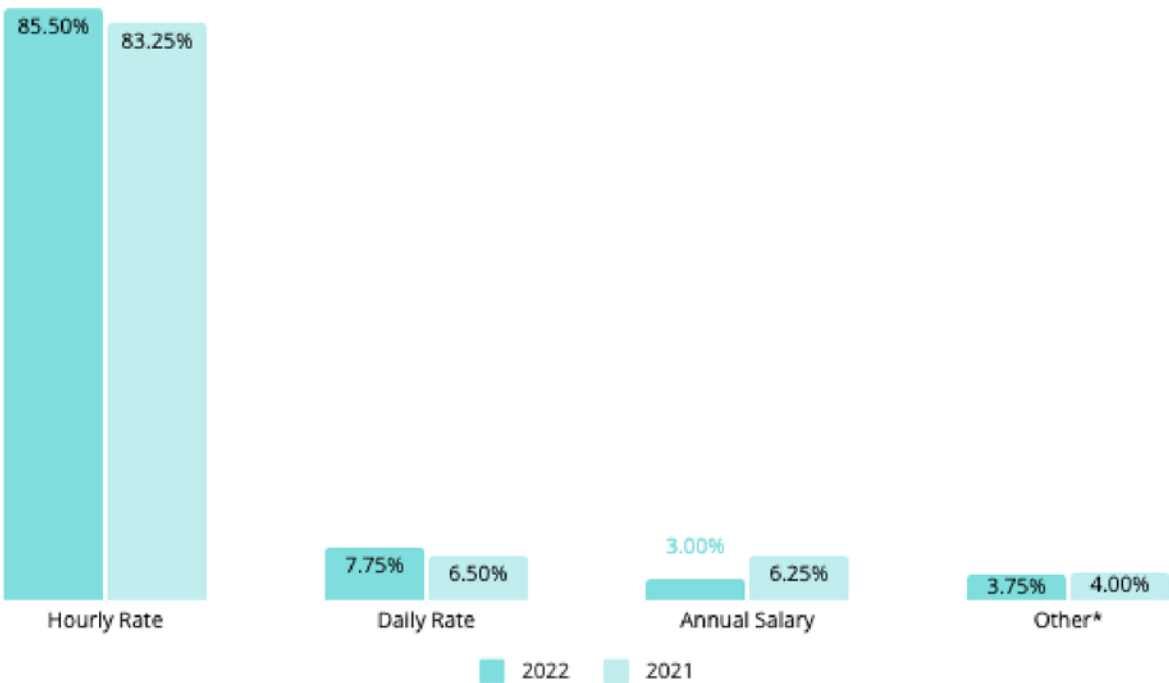
Hourly pay for no-shows and open appointments

93% of RDHs are reportedly paid their normal full hourly rate for no-shows and open appointments in the middle of the day

Income

Year-Over-Year Comparison

Income basis has remained consistent YOY, with 2.25% more receiving income based on an hourly rate



Income

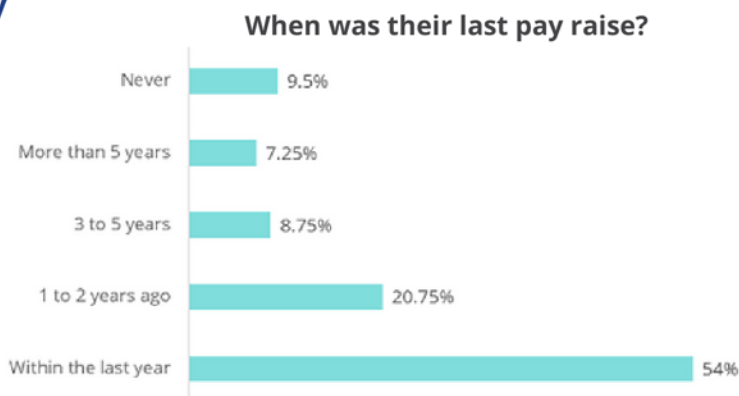
Pay Increases

3 out of 4 responding hygienists reported receiving a pay raise in the last 2 years

- The average total incomes for RDHs YOY shows an increase of 7.5% in corporate practices, 4.5% in private general practices, 7.25% in specialist practices, and 3% in public health and community clinics.
- 59% of RDHs earning \$70,000+ annually and 33% of RDHs earning \$80,000+ annually. That's an increase of 16% more RDHs earning \$70,000+ and 12% more RDH earning \$80,000+ annually.
- 17% more dental hygienists YOY reported feeling "satisfied" or "very satisfied" with their total income.
- 40% asked for a raise in the last year. Of these respondents who asked for a raise, 24% were satisfied with the outcome vs. 16% who asked for a raise and were not happy with the outcome.

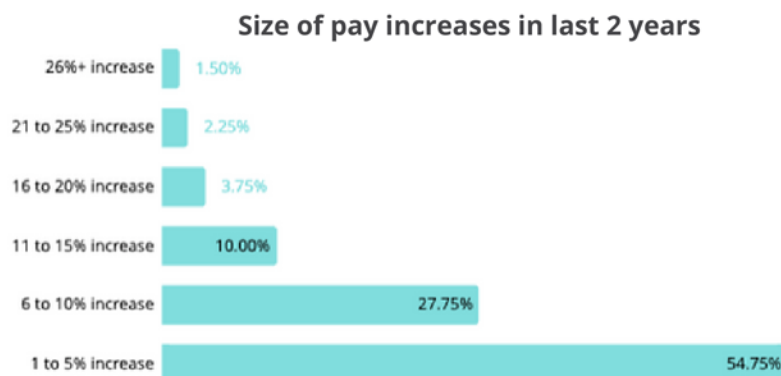
54% of RDHs received their last pay increase in the last 12 months

- Of the 9.5% who reported never receiving a pay raise, 69% have been with their current employer two or less years. This short longevity in their current employment may have factored into their response.



How big were dental hygienists' pay increases in the last two years?

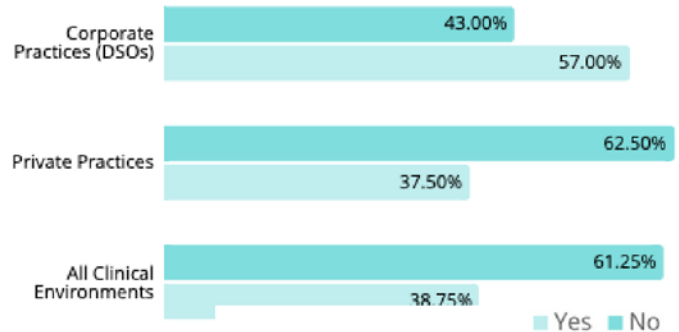
- Nearly 55% reported pay increases in the range of 1 to 5% in the last two years
- Almost 28% reported pay increases in the range of 6 to 10% in the last two years



Bonuses

Comparing practice types: who receives a bonus?

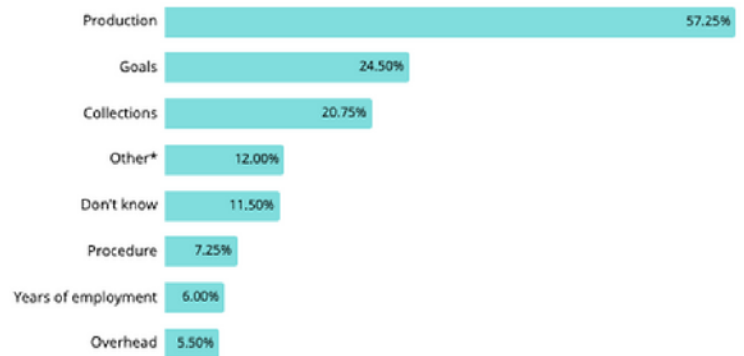
- Almost 30% of responding RDHs receive one or more non-commission-based bonuses in addition to their primary income
- 57% of RDHs working in corporate practices receive bonuses
- 37.5% of RDHs working in private practices receive bonuses



Basis of bonuses

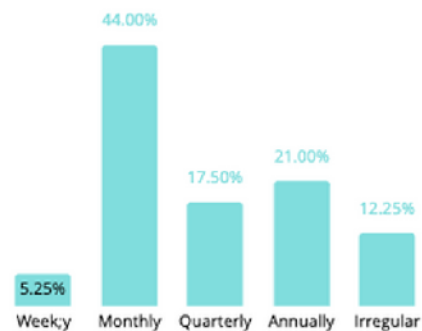
- Over half of bonuses are based on production. Some respondents indicated more than one basis because they receive more than one type of bonus.

**Other reported bases include end-of-year profit sharing or holiday gifts, Saturday hours, new patient referrals, product sales, patient retention, and patient appreciation.*



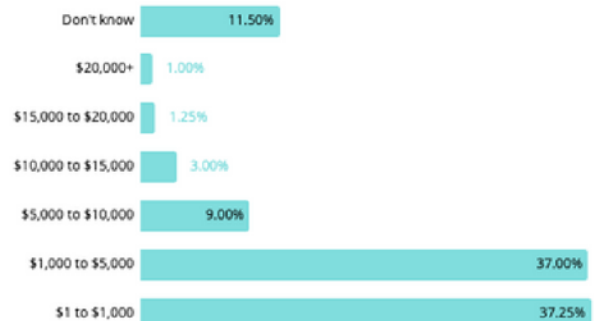
Frequency of bonus payouts

- Most dental hygienists who receive bonuses reported they receive them monthly or annually



Expected bonuses in 2022

- 37% of dental hygienists anticipated their bonuses to total less than \$1,000 in 2022
- 37.25% of dental hygienists receiving bonuses anticipated their bonuses to total \$1,000 to \$5,000 in 2022

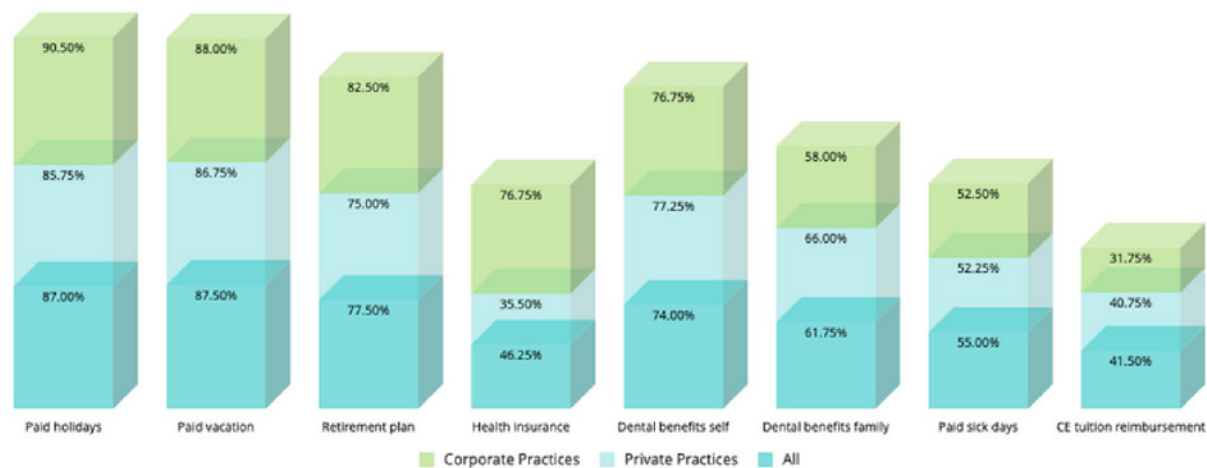


Benefits

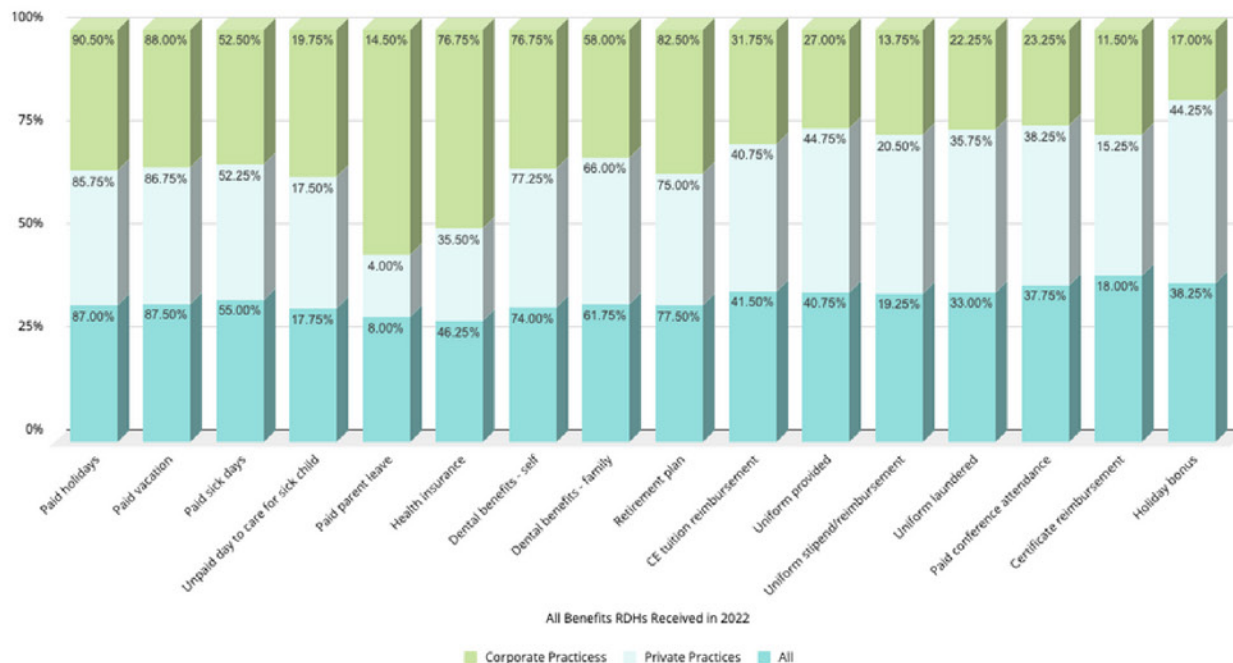
Importance of benefits to RDHs

Nearly 68% of dental hygienists receiving benefits reported that benefits are “very important” or “extremely important” to them, and only 11.25% reported benefits are “not so important” or “not important” to them.

Top 8 benefits RDHs receive



16 top benefits RDHs receive: comparing private practices, corporate practices, and all employment environments



Benefits

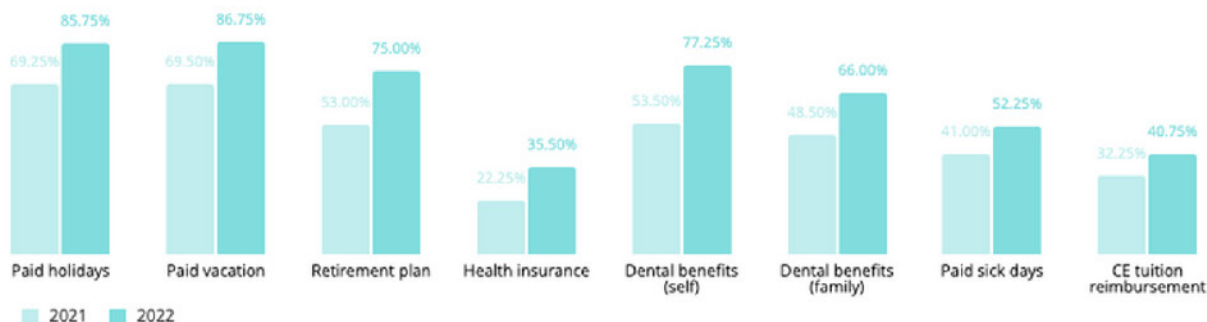
Year-over-year comparison of top 8 benefits

Today, more dental hygienists are receiving the top 8 benefits

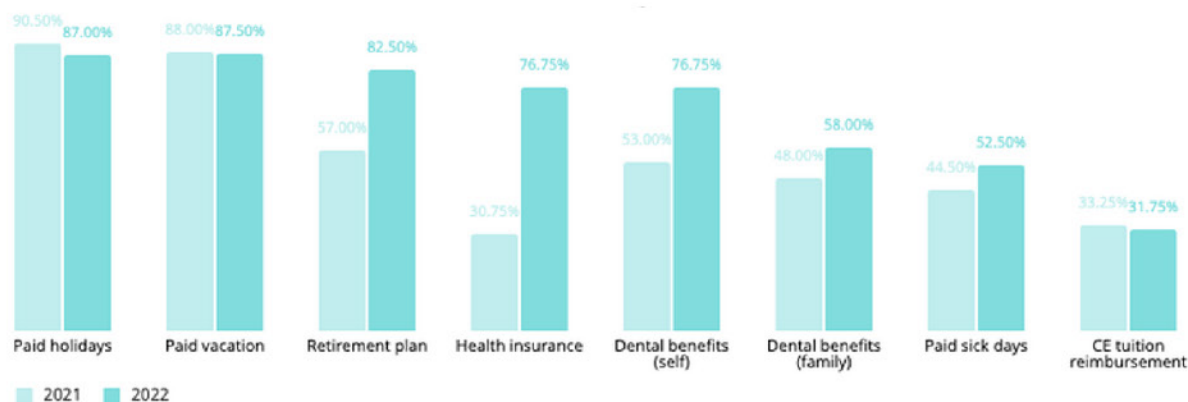
- Health benefits have increased by 25.5%
- Retirement benefits have increased by 20.5%



Private Practice: year-over-year comparison of top 8 benefits



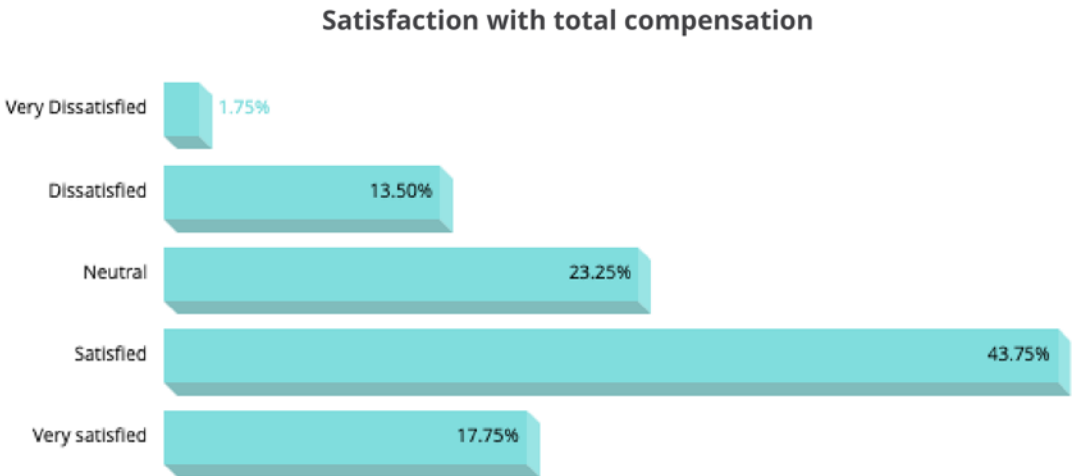
Corporate Practice: year-over-year comparison of top 8 benefits



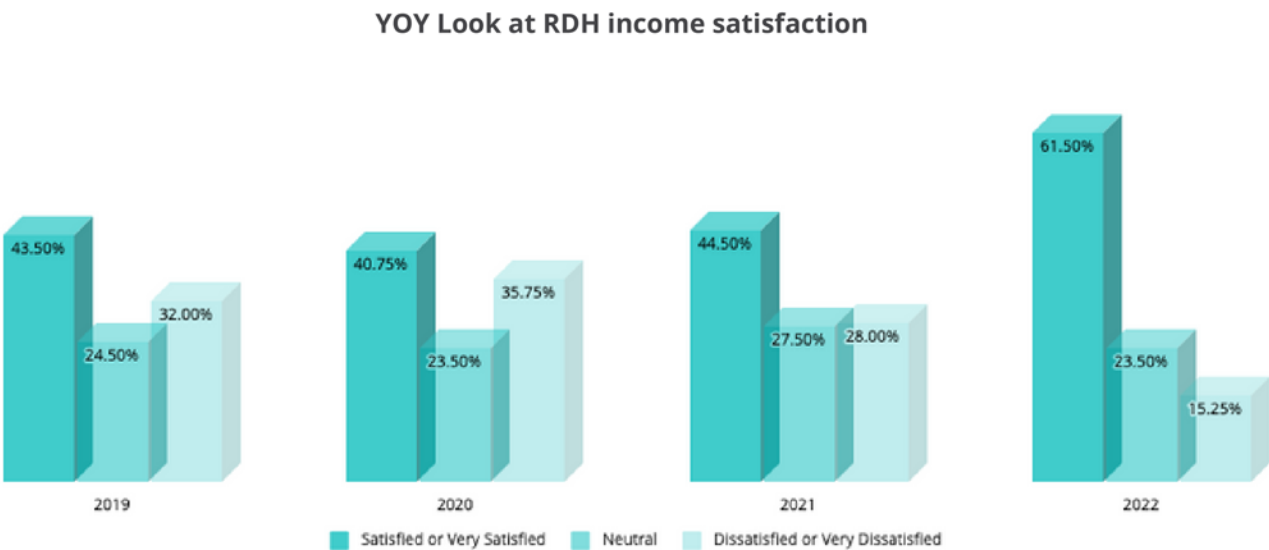
Satisfaction with Total Compensation

How satisfied are dental hygienists with their income?

Between 61% and 62% of respondents are “satisfied” to “very satisfied” with their total compensation, including primary income, bonuses, and benefits.



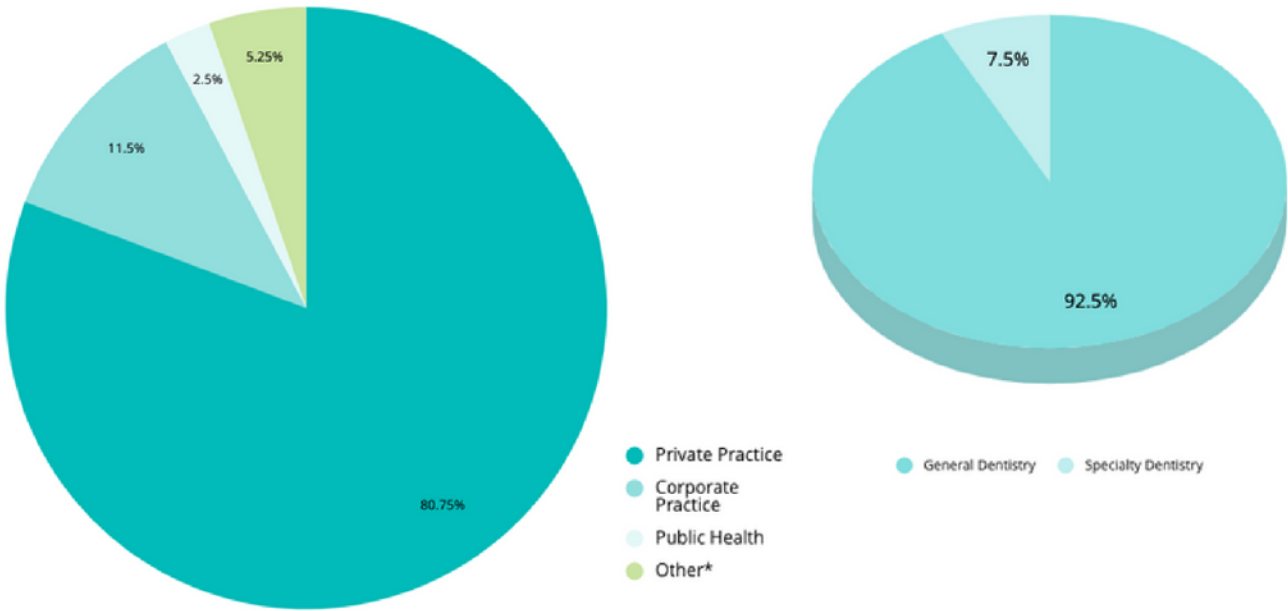
Over the last three years (2020, 2021, and 2022), compensation satisfaction has increased by 20.5%, from 40.75% to 61.5% reporting they are “satisfied” or “very satisfied.” Over the last three years, dissatisfaction decreased by 20.5%, from 35.75% to 15.25% reporting they are “dissatisfied” or “very dissatisfied.”



Practice Type & Location

Types of dental practices RDHs work in

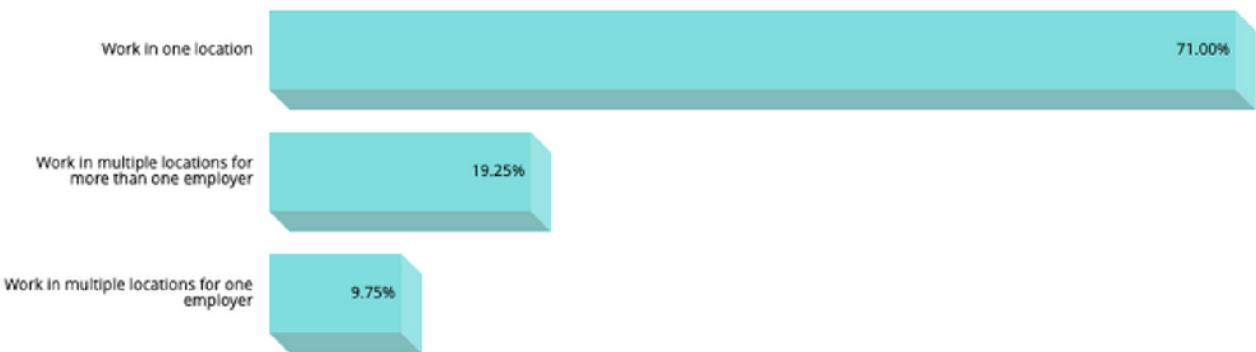
- Nearly 81% of responding dental hygienists work in private practices, and 11.5% work in corporate practices (DSOs)
- Nearly 93% of the private practices are general dentistry practices, and just over 7% are specialty practices



**Other types of employment include public schools and community, military, hospital, university, prison, mobile, and Native American Reservation clinics.*

How many RDHs work in more than one practice location?

71% work in a single location compared with 89.5% of respondents last year. This indicates an increase in hygienists who are now working across multiple dental offices.

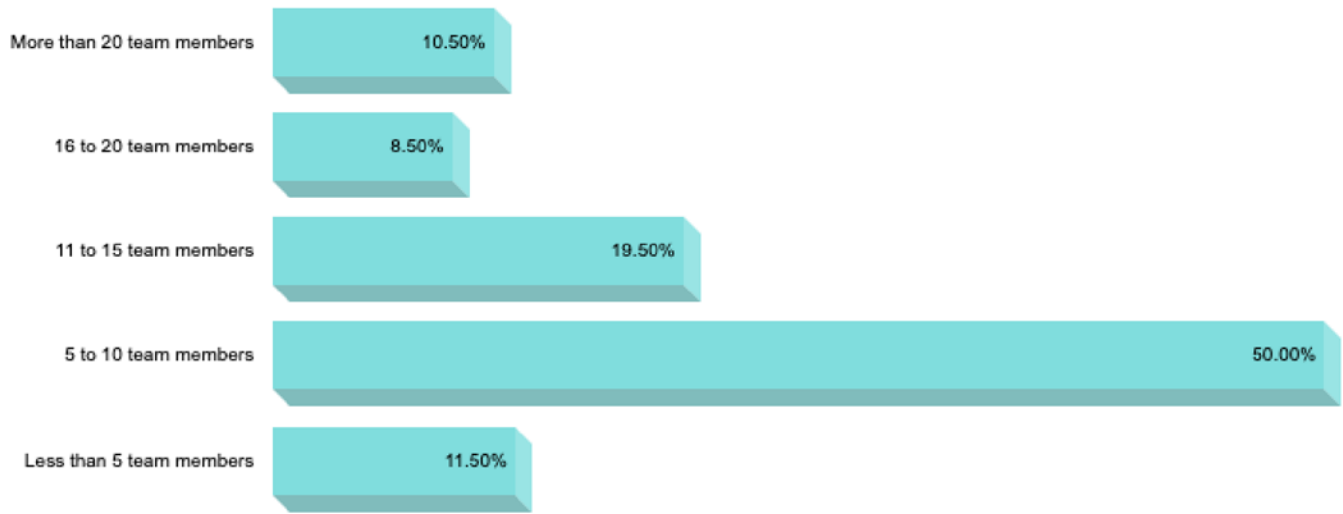


Practice Size & Workload

Team Size & Patient Scheduling

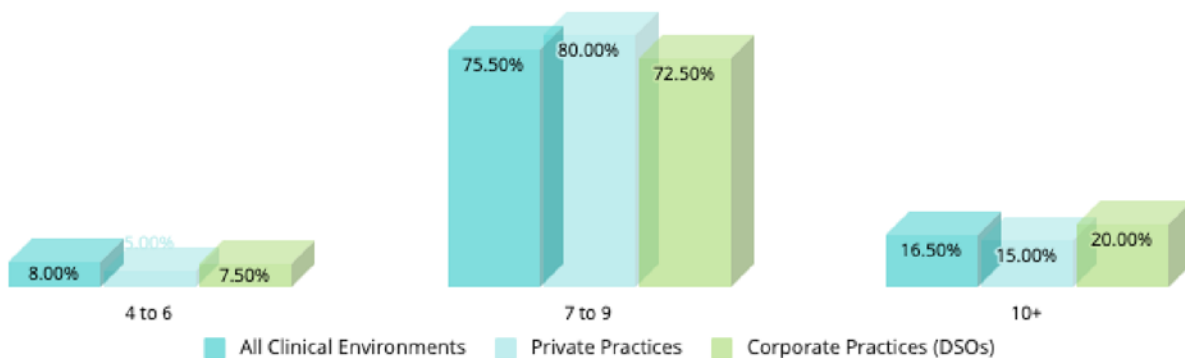
Size of dental teams

50% of responding dental hygienists work in clinics with 5 to 10 team members



How many patients do dental hygienists see in a day?

20% of RDHs in corporate practices responded that they see 10+ patients a day compared with 15% of those who work in private practices

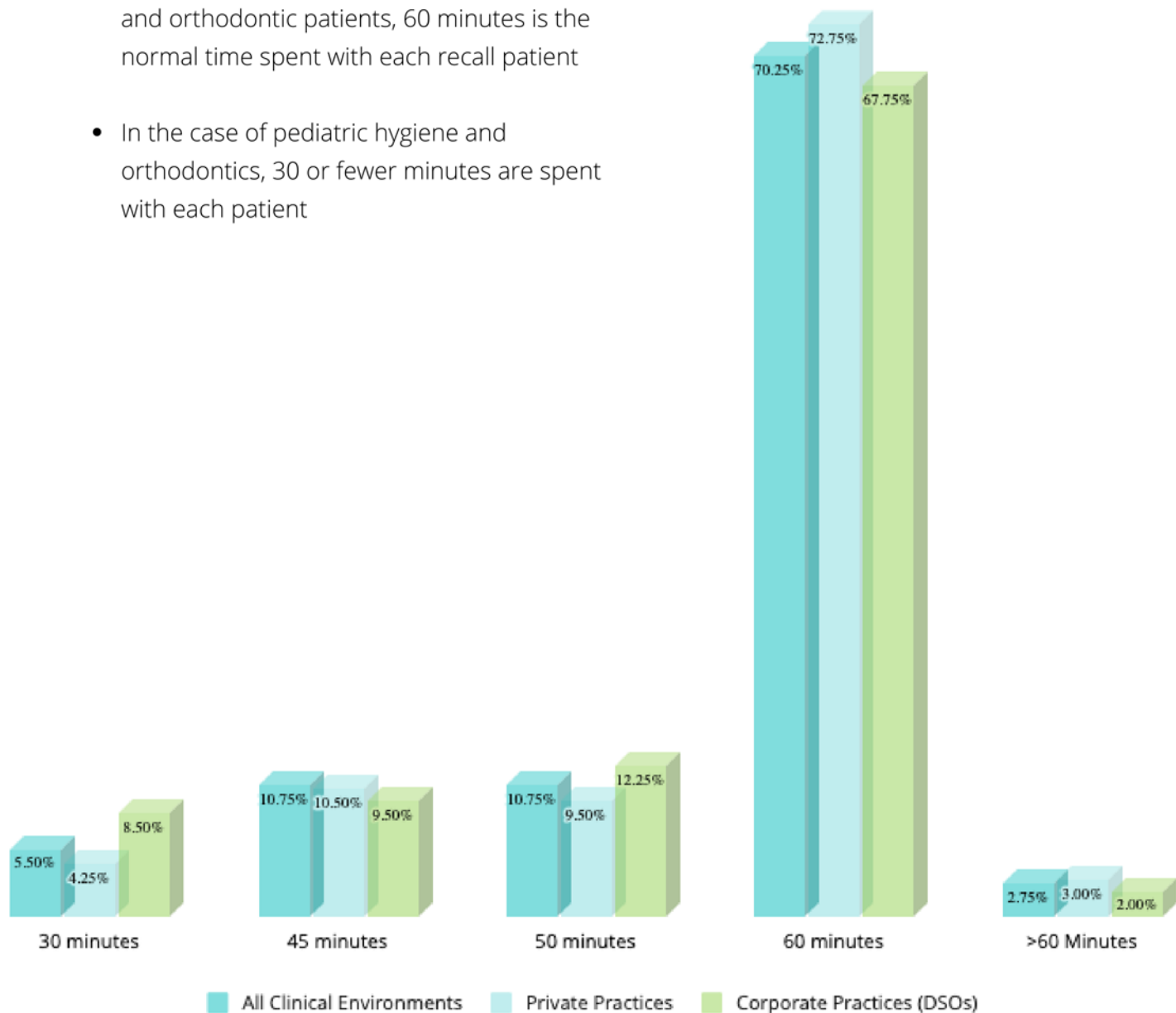


Practice Size & Workload

Team Size & Patient Scheduling

How much time do dental hygienists spend with each patient?

- Except for dental hygienists serving pediatric and orthodontic patients, 60 minutes is the normal time spent with each recall patient
- In the case of pediatric hygiene and orthodontics, 30 or fewer minutes are spent with each patient

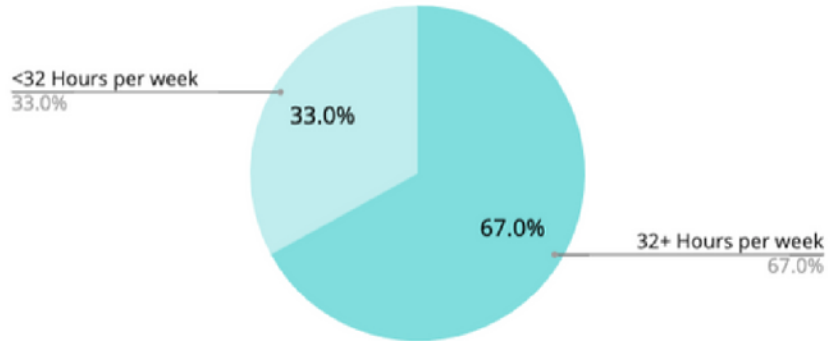


Practice Hours

Average Hours Per Week

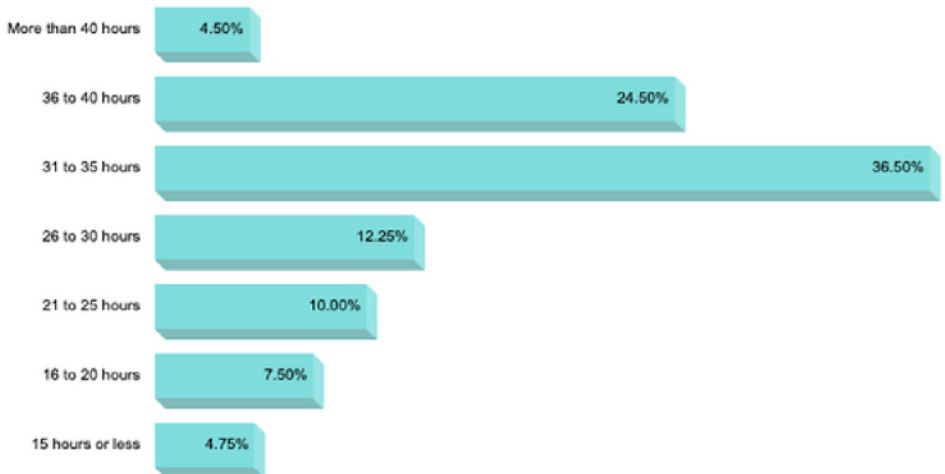
67% work full time

- Full-time hygienists, working 32 or more hours a week, outnumber part-time hygienists 2 to 1



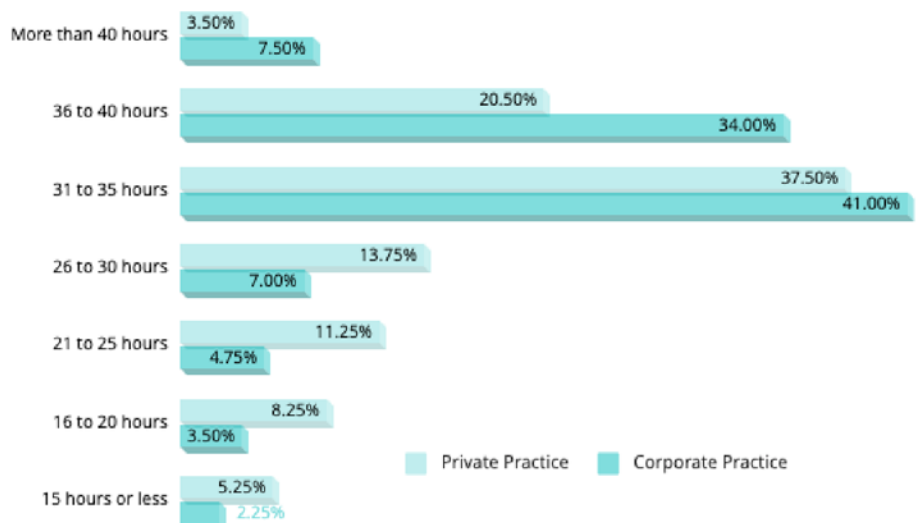
Average work week hours

- The majority (36.5%) of responding hygienists average between 31 to 35 hours a week



Private vs. corporate practice hours

- 41.5% of respondents working in corporate practices work 36 or more hours a week, compared to 24% of respondents working in private practices



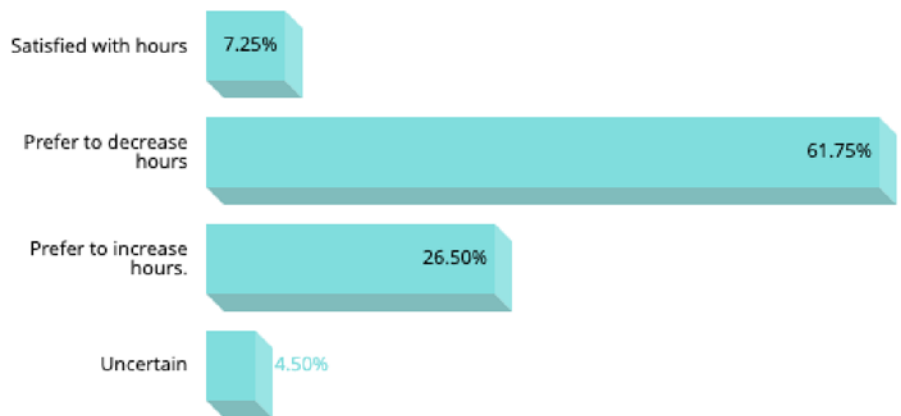
Practice Hours

RDH Satisfaction with Hours

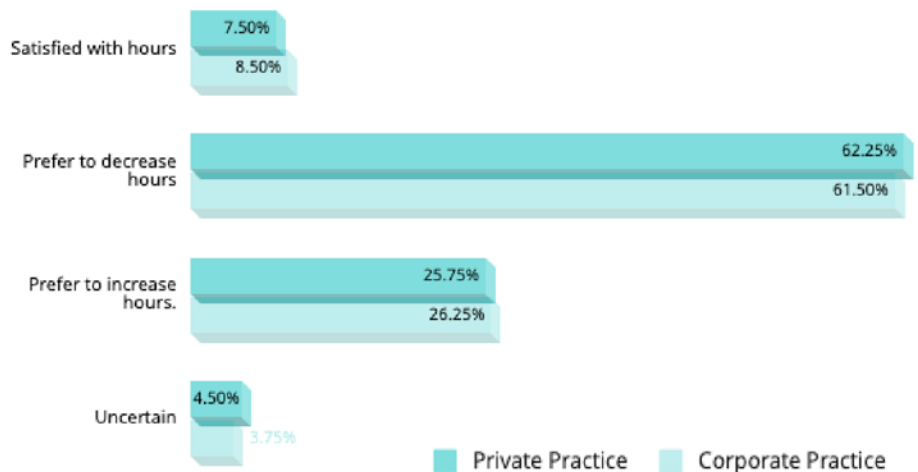
RDH's satisfaction with their hours remained consistent - within 0.25% of last year's satisfaction data

- 61 to 62% are satisfied with their hours
- 26.5% of RDHs would like to work fewer hours
- 4.5% of RDHs would like to work more hours
- 7 to 8% are uncertain if they would like to change their hours
- Satisfaction is similar between private and corporate practices

Satisfaction with hours: all practice and employment types



Satisfaction with hours: comparing private vs. corporate practice



Supplemental Jobs

RDHs Working Additional Jobs

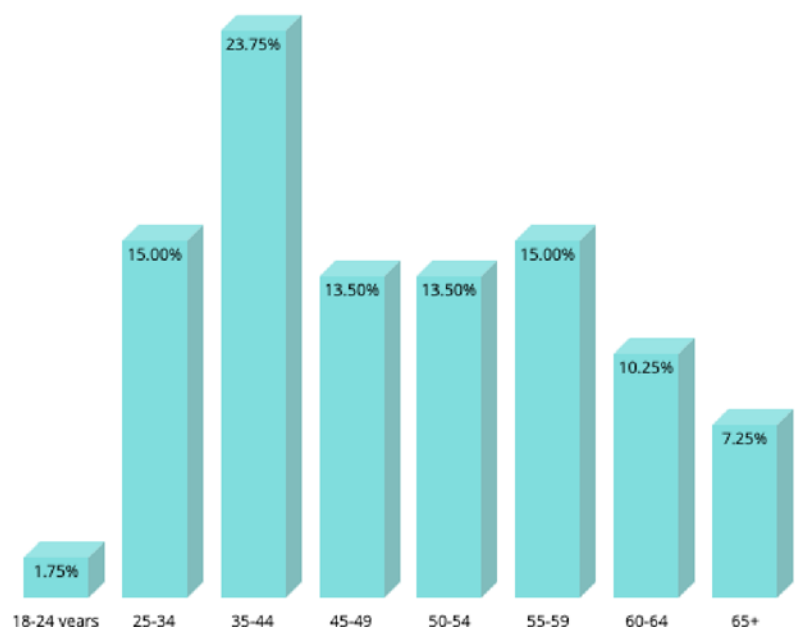
Consistent with last year's findings, 20% of responding dental hygienists have "side gigs" in addition to their primary clinical employment

- 11.75% earn income from non-dental side gigs
- 7.25% earn income from dental side gigs
- 1% earn income from dental and non-dental side gigs
- Note that 32.75% of those who have dental-related side jobs reported they do part-time temping in addition to their primary income. For this group of respondents, temping is likely their side job.



Age breakdown of "gig workers"

The majority (32.5%) of RDHs taking on "side work" are 55 or older, indicating most of the gig workers are Boomers, followed by Gen X and Gen Y (23.75%) in the 34 to 45 age range

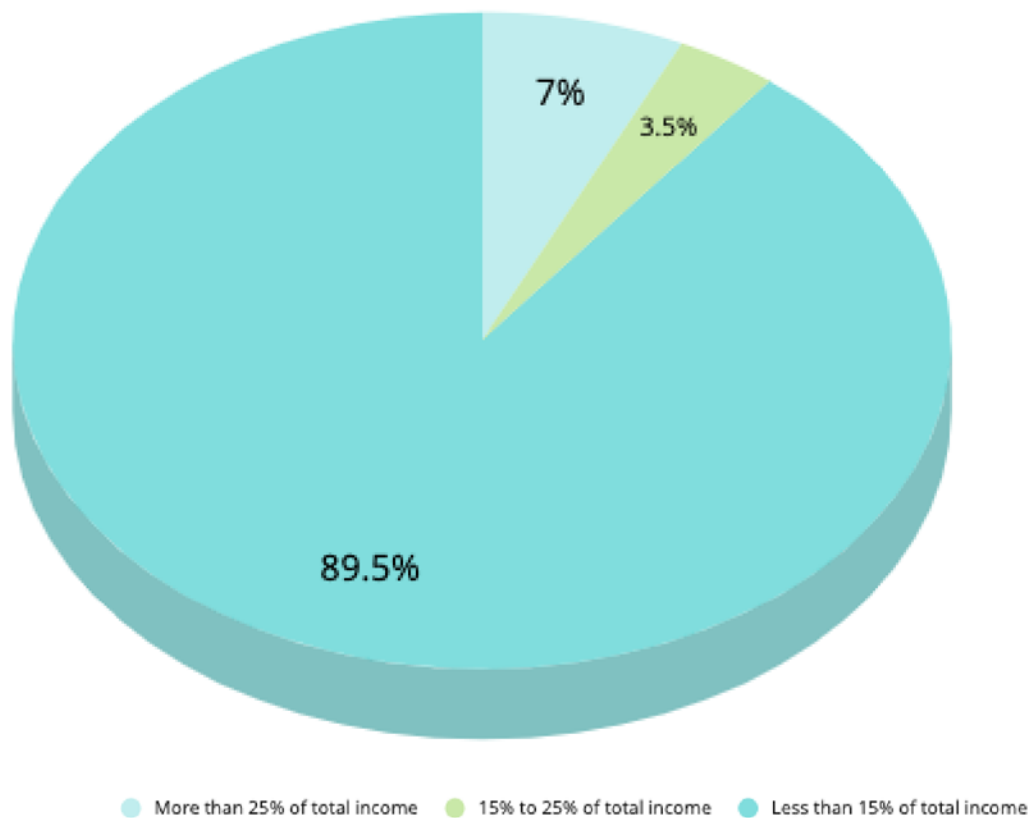


Supplemental Jobs

RDHs Working Additional Jobs

How much of their total income is attributed to "side jobs"?

- 7% of respondents attribute more than 25% of their income to side jobs
- 3.5% of respondents attribute between 15 to 25% of their income to side jobs

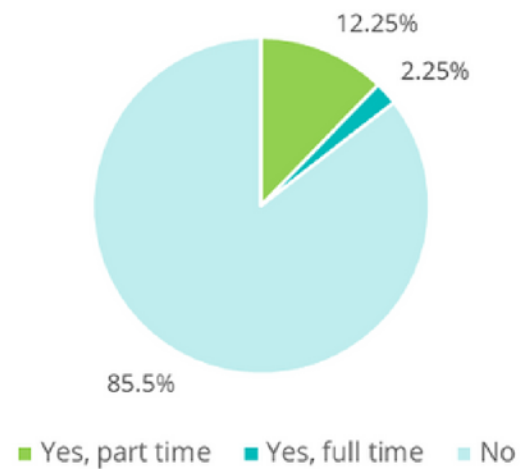


Temp Employment

RDHs Working Temp Jobs

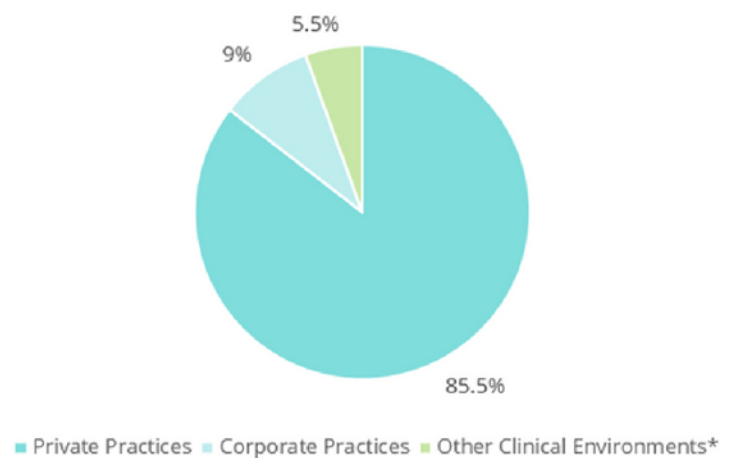
14.5% of respondents temp full- or part-time

- 12.25% of respondents are part-time temp workers, in addition to their primary clinical employment
- 2.25% of respondents are full-time temp workers
- 85.5% of respondents do not temp
- 1.25% fewer respondents temp part-time or full-time than two years ago



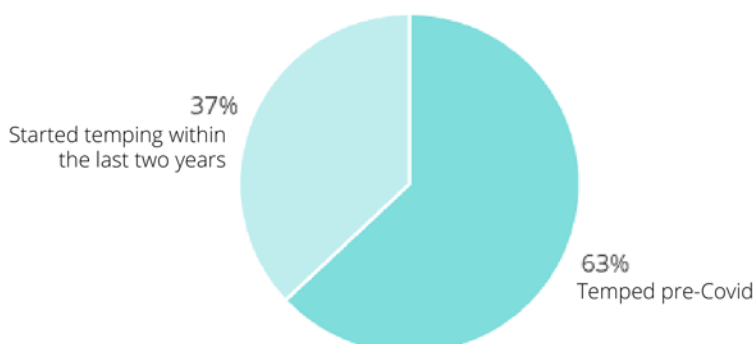
85.5% temp in private practices

**Other clinical environments include Hygiene schools, public schools, and public health, community, military, hospital, university, prison, mobile, and Native American Reservation clinics.*



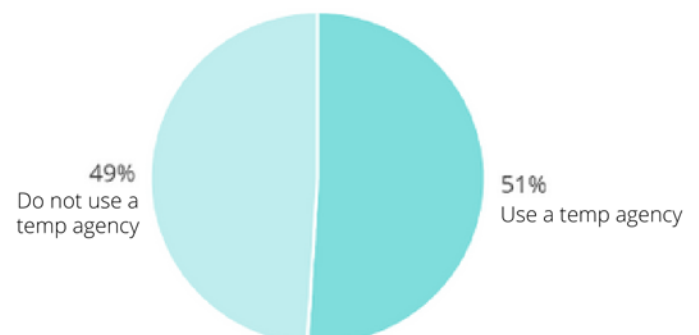
63% temped before Covid

The majority of respondents who temp today were temping pre-pandemic



51% use a temp agency

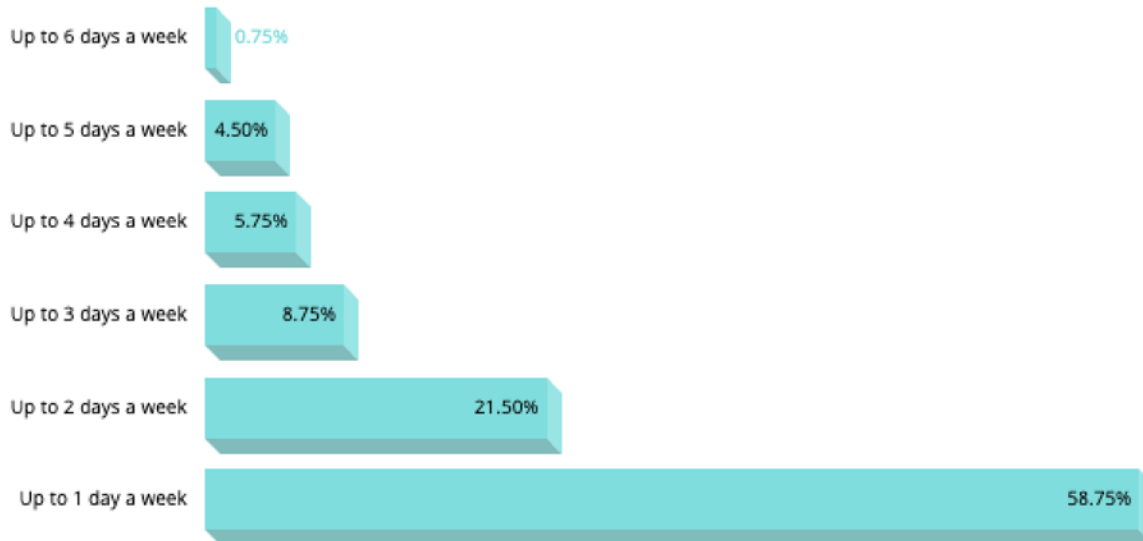
A slight majority use temp agencies to book temp jobs



Temp Employment

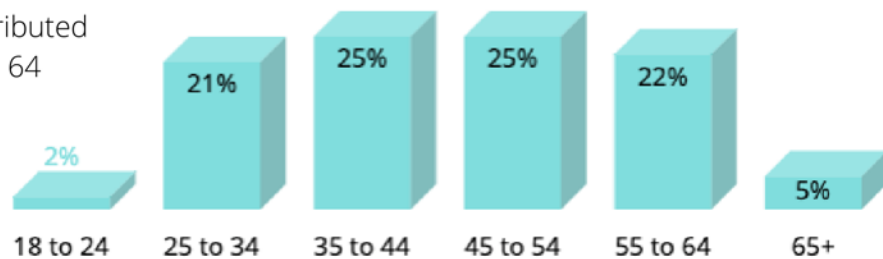
RDHs Working Temp Jobs

Temping frequency: 58.75% temp 1 day a week



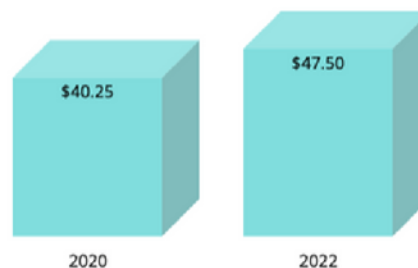
Age distribution of RDHs who are temping

Temping is fairly evenly distributed between the ages of 25 and 64



Hourly wages

The average hourly rate reported by full-time temps has increased by 18%, from \$40.25 in 2020 to \$47.50 in 2022



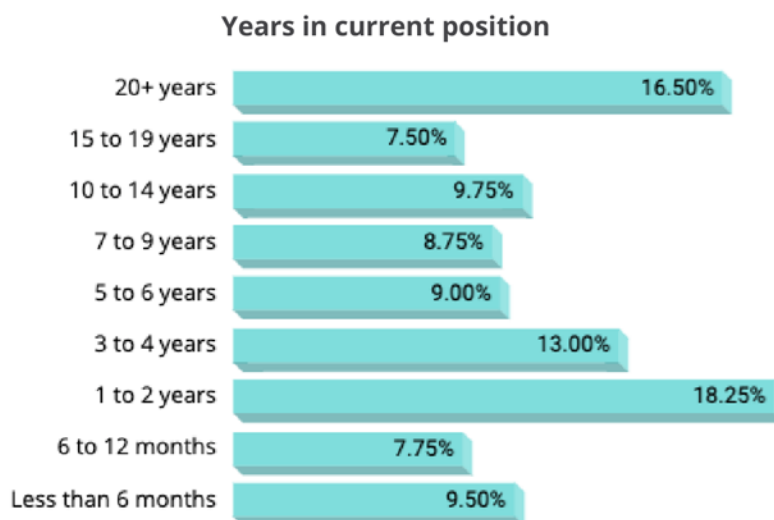
Job Turnover

Recent Job Search Activity and Future Plans

To gain insights into job turnover, we asked questions related to the number of years RDHs have been in their current position, job changes in the past year, job applications in the past year, and plans to apply for jobs in the next year.

Longevity in current position

- 9.5% of respondents have been with their current employer for less than 6 months
- 35.5% have been with their current employer for less than 3 years
- 16.5% have been with their current employer for more than 20 years



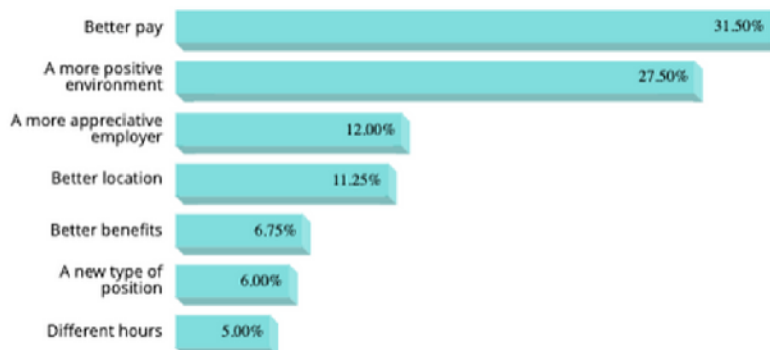
Changes in employment

- 17% of the responding dental hygienists made an employment change in the previous 12 months
- Of these, 90.5% said they achieved their goal by making the change

Top motivations for changing jobs

Among dental hygienists changing positions within the last 12 months:

- 31.5% wanted better pay
- 27.5% sought a more positive work environment
- The next highest motivations were a more appreciative employer and better location



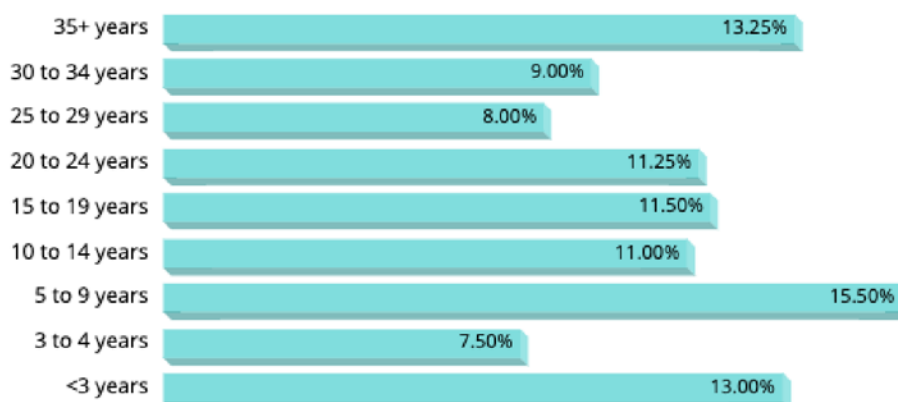
Job Turnover

Turnover Based on Experience & Practice Type

Years of experience among RDHs who changed jobs last year

41.5% of those who changed jobs last year had 20+ years of experience

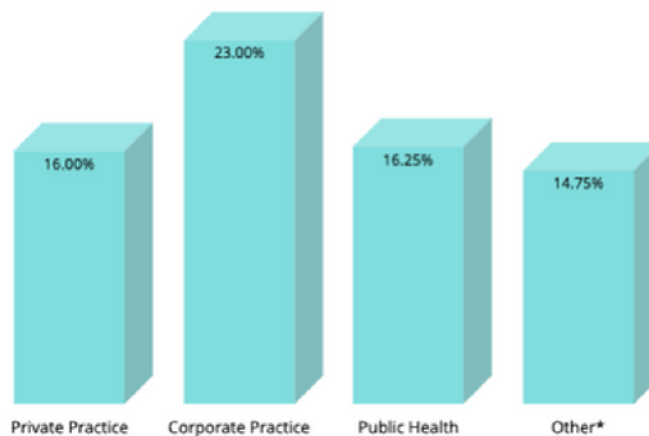
RDHs who changed jobs: years of experience



Turnover was highest among RDHs working in corporate practices (DSO)

23% of responding hygienists working in corporate practices (DSOs) changed employment in the previous 12 months, compared with 16.25% of RDHs in public health employment and 16% of RDHs in private practices

RDHs who changed jobs: employment type



**Other includes hygiene schools, community and public school clinics, military and prison clinics, mobile clinics, and Native American Reservation clinics.*

Job Turnover

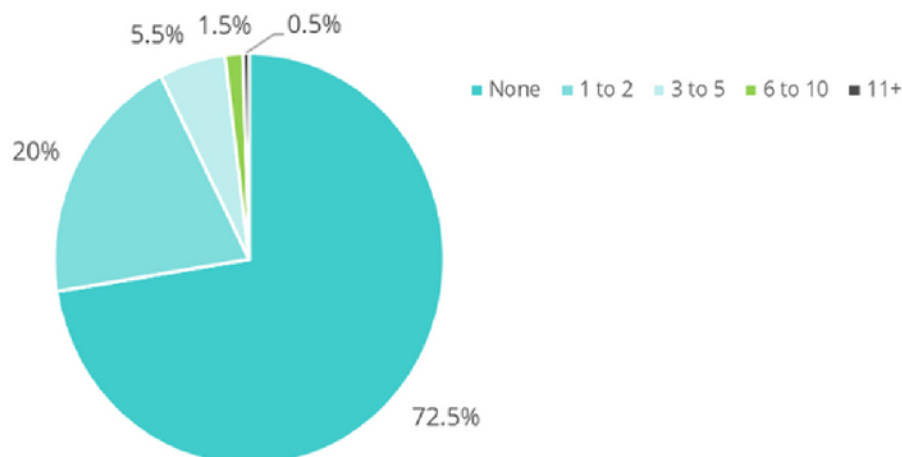
Job Search Activity & Forecast

Recent job search activity

27.5% of responding hygienists reported they had applied for one or more jobs, a decrease from the 29% in the previous year's report

- 7.5% of respondents applied for 2+ jobs in the previous 12 months, and 20% of respondents applied for 1-2 jobs
- 58.5% of this year's RDH job applicants (17% of all respondents) accepted offers from new employers

Number of job applications sent in last 12 months



More than 31% of RDHs considering a job change

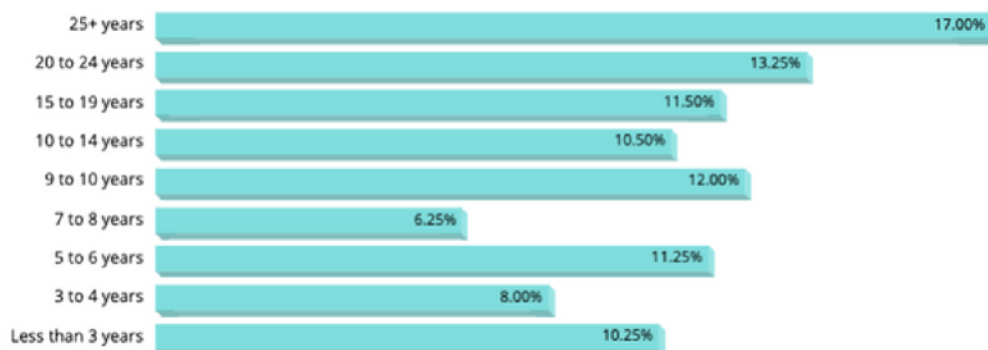
- 13% plan to apply for new jobs in the next year
- 18.5% are considering applying for new jobs this year
- In last year's report, 14% of respondents said they planned to apply for new jobs, and the actual number of job applicants rose to 27.5%. In line with this trend, the number of job applicants in 2023 is anticipated to be higher than the 13% who are applying for jobs or planning to apply for jobs.

Retirement Forecast

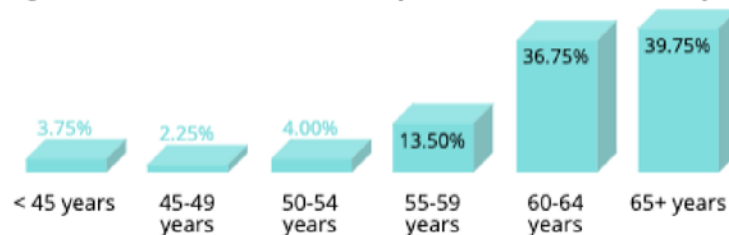
Nearly 30% of RDHs plan to retire within 6 years

- 6% of full-time responding RDHs plan to retire within three years. 87.25% of them are 55+ years of age
- Between 19 to 20% of part-time RDHs plan to retire within three years. 92.5% of them are 55+ years of age

Planned years to retirement: combined full- and part-time RDH respondents

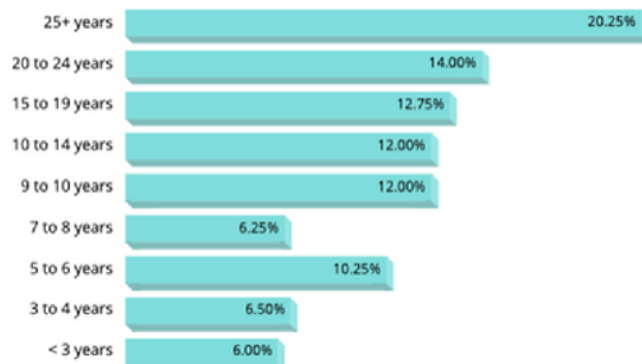


Age breakdown of RDHs who plan to retire within 3 years

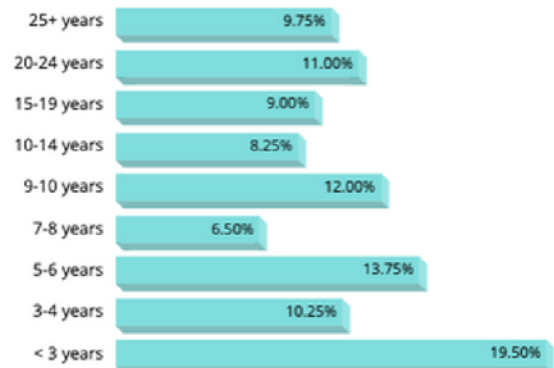


Planned years to retirement: full-time vs. part-time RDHs

Full-time RDHs: planned years to retirement



Part-time RDHs: planned years to retirement



Survey Audience Demographics

Who Responded to DentalPost's Annual Salary Survey?

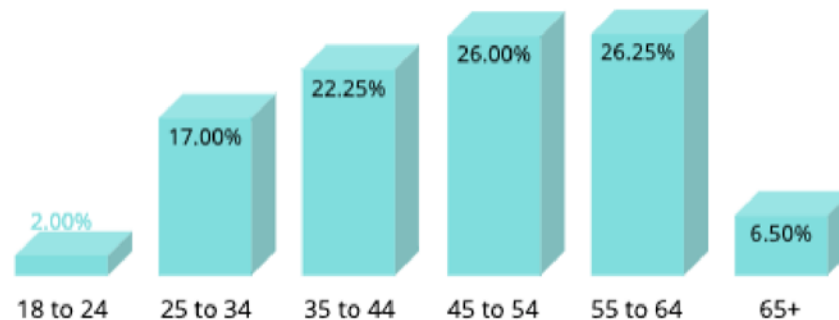
Every state and the District of Columbia were represented by the 6,933 dental hygienists who responded to DentalPost's annual Salary Survey.

There was a 14.5% increase in RDH participation over last year's survey. Despite the significant increase in respondents, demographic information follows and remains consistent with the previous year's survey report.

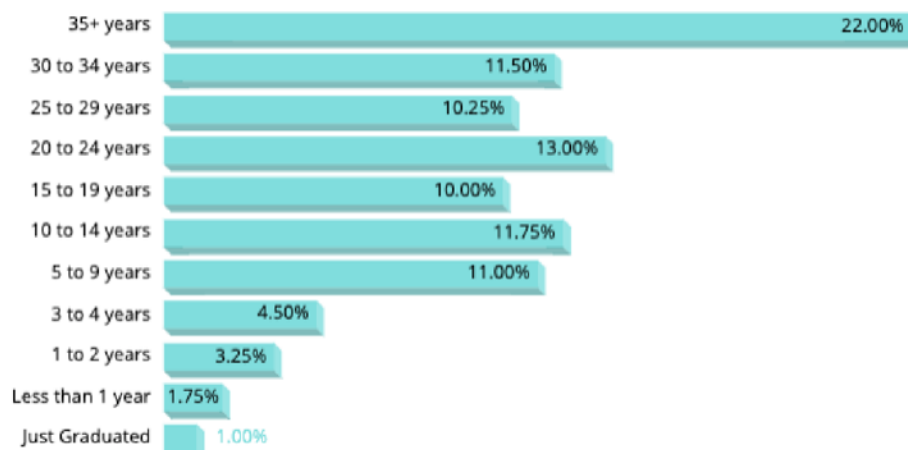
Age & Experience

By age and experience, responding hygienists fell into the following groups:

Age of responding dental hygienists

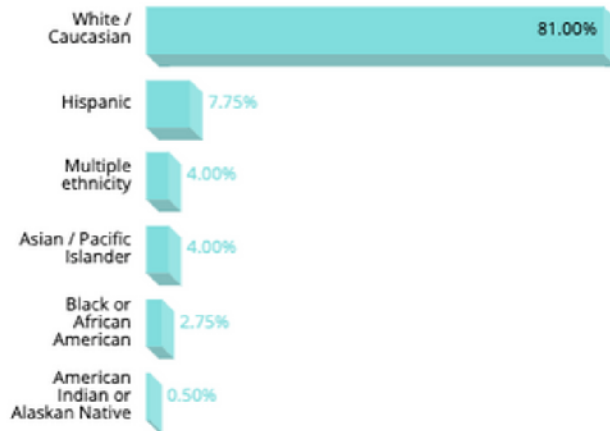


Years of experience



Survey Audience Demographics

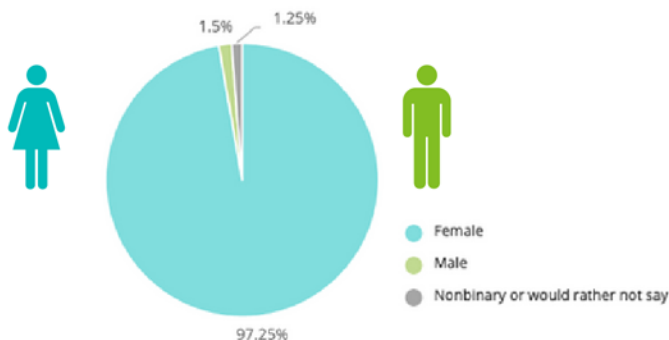
Race / Ethnicity



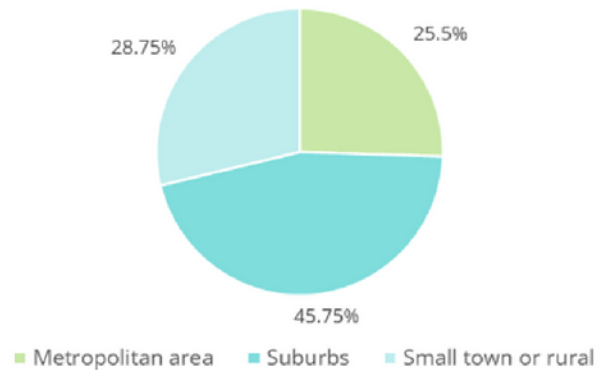
For comparison, here are the latest Race/Ethnicity percentages in the U.S. population, according to the U.S. Census Bureau's 2021 report:

- 59.3% White alone, not Hispanic
- 18.9% Latino/Hispanic alone
- 12.6% Black or African American alone
- 5.9% Asian alone
- 2.3% Two or more races (multi-racial non-Hispanic)
- 0.7% American Indian/Alaskan Native
- 0.2% Hawaiian/Pacific Island

Gender

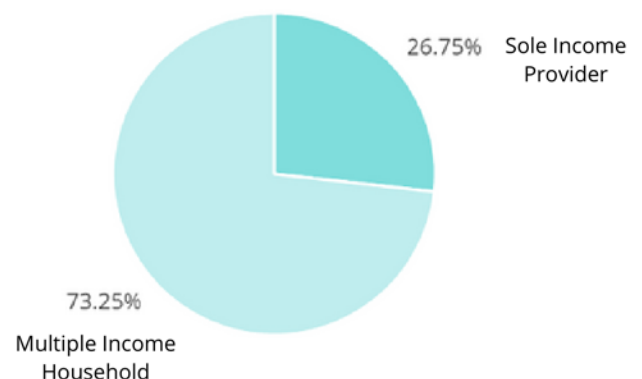


Size of community responding RDHs live in:



Sole income provider

26.75% of responding RDHs are the sole income earner in their household, compared with 73.25% in joint income households.





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