



# WEST VIRGINIA'S DENTAL HYGIENE WORKFORCE

## ASSESSING THE PRESENT & FUTURE NEED FOR HYGIENISTS IN WV

### METHODS

In 2020, the West Virginia (WV) Department of Health & Human Resources, Oral Health Program, in cooperation with the WV Board of Dentistry, sent an optional workforce survey to the 1,410 WV hygienists seeking a 2021 license renewal. A total of 419 hygienists returned the survey for a 30% response rate.

### SURVEY RESPONDENTS



- 82% obtained their dental hygiene education in West Virginia
- 57% have an associate degree
- 48% graduated before 2000
- 59% work in a solo practice
- 85% work for general dentists

### WORKFORCE DIVERSITY



- The respondents ranged in age from 22-75 years with a mean of 45 years
- Most dental hygienists in West Virginia (98%) are female
- Most dental hygienists in West Virginia (99%) are White

### CURRENT EMPLOYMENT



- 86% of respondents are currently practicing dental hygiene, 7% are retired and 8% are looking for employment
  - Of the hygienists looking for employment, 46% are looking for part-time positions (< 20 hours per week)
- Most practicing hygienists (53%), work 30+ hours per week
- 39% of hygienists report providing care to 100 or more patients per month
- West Virginia's hygiene workforce is stable, 44% of hygienists have worked in their current practice for 10+ years

### DIFFICULTIES FINDING EMPLOYMENT



- 32% of respondents reported they had difficulty finding employment, difficulties include
  - Inadequate benefits and/or salary
  - Cannot find full-time employment
  - Travel distance too great
  - Unsatisfactory work environment
  - Cannot find part-time employment

### RETIREMENT



- 32% of respondents plan to leave dental hygiene in the next 10 years
  - 22% because of retirement
  - 5% because of family commitments
  - 5% because of a career change



# WEST VIRGINIA'S DENTAL WORKFORCE

## ASSESSING THE PRESENT & FUTURE NEED FOR DENTISTS IN WV

### METHODS

In 2020, the West Virginia (WV) Department of Health & Human Resources, Oral Health Program, in cooperation with the WV Board of Dentistry, sent an optional workforce survey to the 1,220 WV dentists seeking a 2021 license renewal. A total of 513 dentists returned the survey for a 42% response rate.

### SURVEY RESPONDENTS



- 69% are practice owners
- 49% work in a solo practice
- 76% are general dentists
- 44% have been in their current practice for 20 or more years
- 79% are WVU School of Dentistry graduates

### WORKFORCE DIVERSITY



- More women are entering West Virginia's dental workforce
  - 29% of the 2020 respondents were female, compared to 22% in 2012
- Most dentists in West Virginia are non-Hispanic White
  - 93% of the 2020 respondents were White, the same as in 2012

### EMPLOYMENT



- Most dentists in West Virginia are fully employed, less than 3% report they are seeking additional employment
  - Of those seeking employment, 62% are looking for part-time positions
- Most practicing dentists (67%), work 30+ hours per week
- 7% of respondents report that they are trying to hire a dentist without success

### PATIENT LOAD



- 60% of dentists report providing care to 100 or more patients per month
- 88% of dentists are accepting new patients

### RETIREMENT



- West Virginia's dental workforce is aging
  - 50% of respondents are 55 years or older while 27% are 65+ years
- 36% of West Virginia's dentists plan to retire within the next 10 years

### GOVERNMENT PROGRAMS



- Many dentists in West Virginia participate in government funded programs
  - 56% provide care to Medicaid/CHIP children
  - 37% provide care to Medicaid adults
  - 28% participate in the pre-employment project (TANF)
- 48% of dentists report that they are accepting new Medicaid patients
  - The primary reasons for not accepting new Medicaid patients are low compensation, broken appointments, paperwork & billing requirements