



National and State-Level Projections of Dentists and Dental Hygienists in the U.S., 2012-2025

Summary

- This brief presents national and state-level estimates of supply and demand for dentists and dental hygienists at baseline in 2012 and for 2025 using the Health Resources and Services Administration's (HRSA) Health Workforce Simulation Model (HWSM).
 - Assuming current national patterns of labor supply and service demand remain unchanged, the supply side projections account for new entrants to the workforce as well as changing workforce decisions (e.g. retirement and hours worked patterns) arising from the changing characteristics of the workforce.
 - The demand projections account only for the changing population size and composition and assume that the number of visits covered by each provider remains constant over time.
 - Both supply and demand projections are reported as full time equivalents (FTE).

1) Dentists

- a) Nationally, increases in supply will not meet the increases in demand for dentists, which will exacerbate the existing shortage.
 - i) The supply of dentists is expected to grow by 11,800 full-time equivalents (FTEs) – from 190,800 in 2012 to 202,600 in 2025 – a 6 percent increase nationally.
 - ii) The national demand for dentists is projected to grow by 20,400 FTEs – from 197,800 in 2012 to 218,200 in 2025 - a 10 percent increase.
- b) All 50 states and the District of Columbia are projected to experience a shortage of dentists.
 - i) Projected changes in supply and demand for dentists between 2012 and 2025 differ by state, resulting in a variation in the extent of shortage across states in 2025.
 - ii) States projected to experience the greatest shortfalls in the number of dentists in 2025 are California (with 1,234 fewer FTE dentists than needed), Florida (with 1,152 fewer FTE dentists than needed), and New York (with 1,024 fewer FTE dentists than needed).
 - iii) The excess growth in demand compared to dentist supply, combined with the existing shortages in DHPSAs, results in a projected national shortage of approximately 15,600 FTE dentists in 2025.

- 2) The average student debt for dental graduates in 2011 was \$245,497. The high level of debt has been identified as a barrier to practicing in rural and low-income communities where earning potential is lower.

State	2012			2025 Projected		
	Supply	Shortage as captured by HPSA	Demand (2012 Supply + shortage as captured by HPSAs)	Supply	Demand	Difference [Supply-(Demand +DHPSA)]
Kansas	1515	(85)	1600	1384	1489	(190)
New Mexico	941	(139)	1080	1090	1149	(198)
Ohio	6260	(235)	6495	5887	6279	(627)
Vermont	359	(1)	360	328	353	(26)
Washington	5188	(174)	5362	5778	5933	(329)

3) Dental Hygienists

- a) At the national level, supply will outpace the demand for dental hygienists.
 - i) The supply of dental hygienists is expected to grow by 43,600 FTEs – from 153,600 FTEs in 2012 to 197,200 FTEs in 2025 – a 28 percent increase nationally.
 - ii) The national demand for dental hygienists is projected to grow by 15,500 FTEs – from 153,600 FTEs in 2012 to 169,100 FTEs in 2025 – a 10 percent increase nationally.
 - iii) Despite projections of an excess supply of hygienists at the national level, by 2025 five states are expected to see growth in demand for dental hygienists outpace supply, resulting in shortages
 - (1) States projected to have the greatest surplus in dental hygienist are California (with 5,154 additional FTEs than needed), Texas (with 3,324 additional FTEs than needed) and Florida (with 2,768 additional FTEs than needed).
 - (2) Five states are projected to experience a smaller growth in dental hygienist supply relative to demand, resulting in shortages by 2025. Shortages of dental hygienists in Mississippi, Montana, North Dakota, South Dakota, and West Virginia are expected to range from 21-93 FTE.

4) Evolving Role of the Dental Hygienist

- a) Changes in oral health delivery and in health systems may somewhat ameliorate dentist shortages by maximizing the productivity of the existing dental health workforce.
 - i) The roles of dental hygienists are expanding in some states.
- b) Increased use of dental hygienists could reduce the projected dentist shortage if they are effectively integrated into the delivery system.
 - i) Research to model the implications of these recent trends in care delivery is ongoing and will inform future workforce projection models.

State	2012	2025 Projected		
	Supply & Demand	Supply	Demand	Difference [Supply-Demand]
Kansas	1656	1656	1634	22
New Mexico	715	1156	865	291
Ohio	5563	6391	5570	821
Vermont	619	682	616	66
Washington	4334	6012	4930	1082

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