

Dental Workforce Shortages: Data to Navigate Today's Labor Market

October 3, 2022

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Association

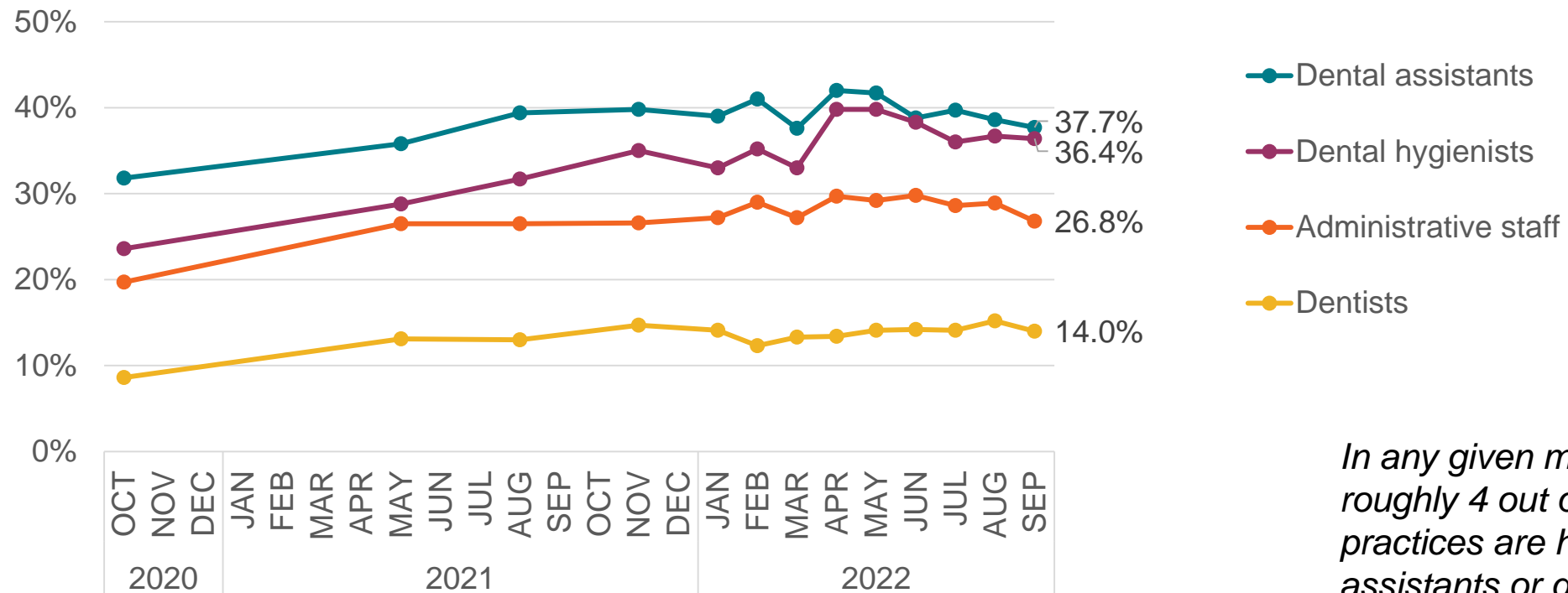
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Why This Matters

Have you recently or are you currently recruiting any of the following positions in your dental practice? (Percentages indicating “yes.”)



In any given month, roughly 4 out of 10 dental practices are hiring dental assistants or dental hygienists.

Report Now Available

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What keeps dental assistants and dental hygienists satisfied in their roles?

What workplace conditions are to blame for dental assistants and dental hygienists leaving their positions?

What levers are available to recruit and retain a high quality dental workforce?

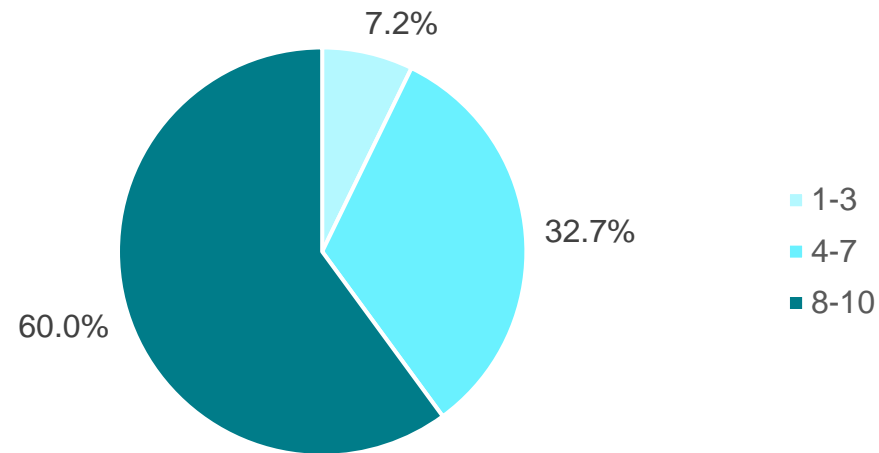
[ADA.org/HPI](https://www.ada.org/HPI)

What the New Report Tells Us

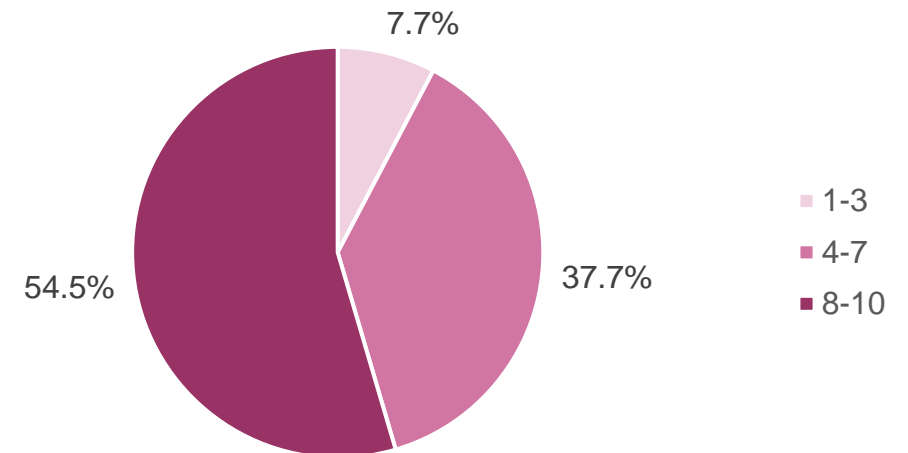
- Approximately one-third of the dental assistant (33.7%) and dental hygienist (31.4%) workforce indicate they expect to **retire in five years or less**.
- The majority of dental assistants and dental hygienists are **satisfied** in their current job.
- Roughly half of dental assistants and dental hygienists indicate they have **received a raise within the past year**. The majority of wage increases are in the **1-3%** range.
- The majority of dental assistants and dental hygienists indicated that they receive **dental benefits, paid holidays, paid vacation, and retirement savings** from their employers. **Health insurance, paid sick time, paid leave, and continuing education or professional development funds** are rare overall. These benefits matter for recruitment and retention.
- Factors associated with retention include **work-life balance, positive workplace culture, and ability to help patients**.
- Factors associated with attrition include **negative workplace culture, insufficient pay, lack of growth opportunity, inadequate benefits, and feeling overworked**.

Job Satisfaction

Dental Assistants: On a scale of 1 to 10, how satisfied are you in your current role? (1 = Not at all satisfied, 10 = Extremely satisfied)



Dental Hygienists: On a scale of 1 to 10, how satisfied are you in your current role? (1 = Not at all satisfied, 10 = Extremely satisfied)

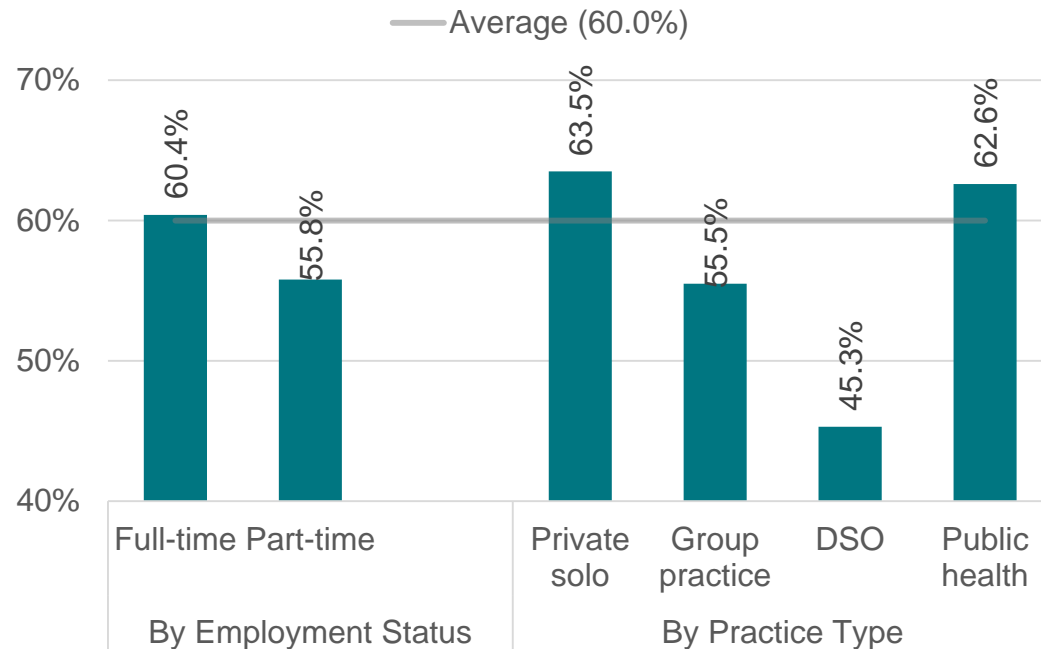


The majority of currently employed dental assistants and dental hygienists indicate they are satisfied in their role.

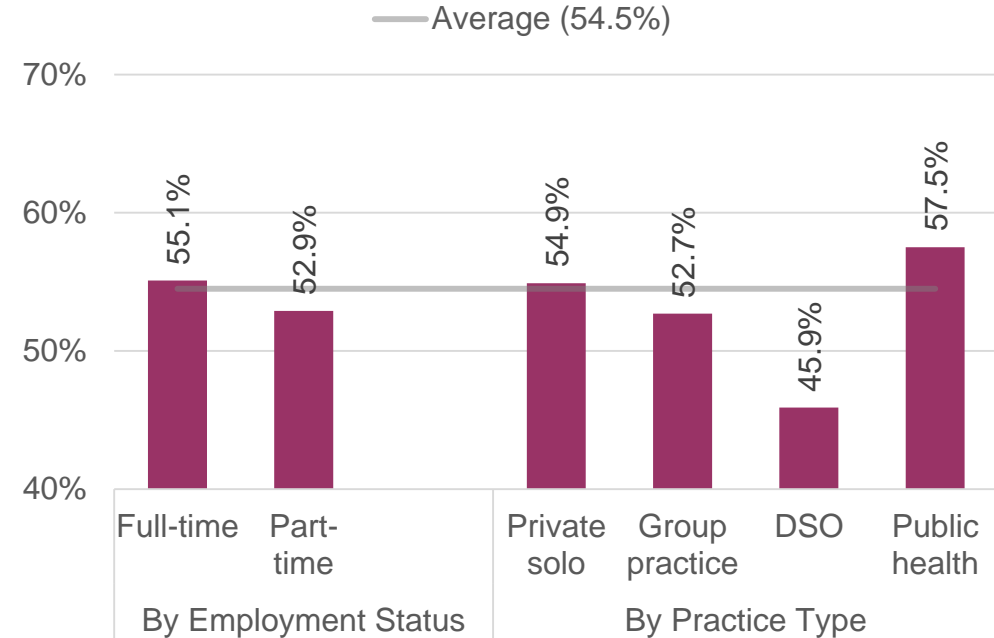
Fewer than 1 in 10 indicate a low level of satisfaction.

Job Satisfaction

Dental Assistant Job Satisfaction
(% indicating at least 8/10 job satisfaction)

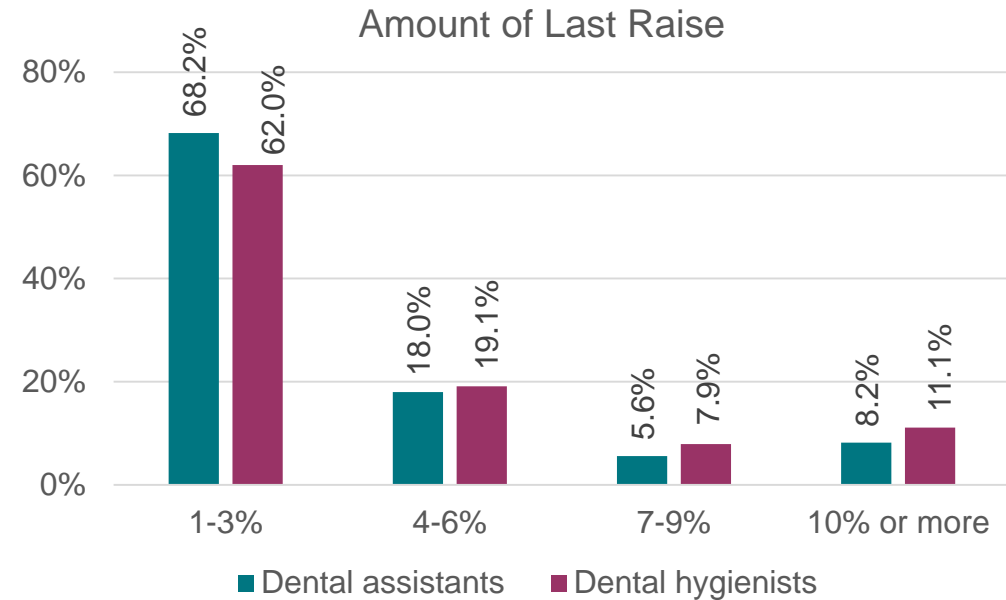
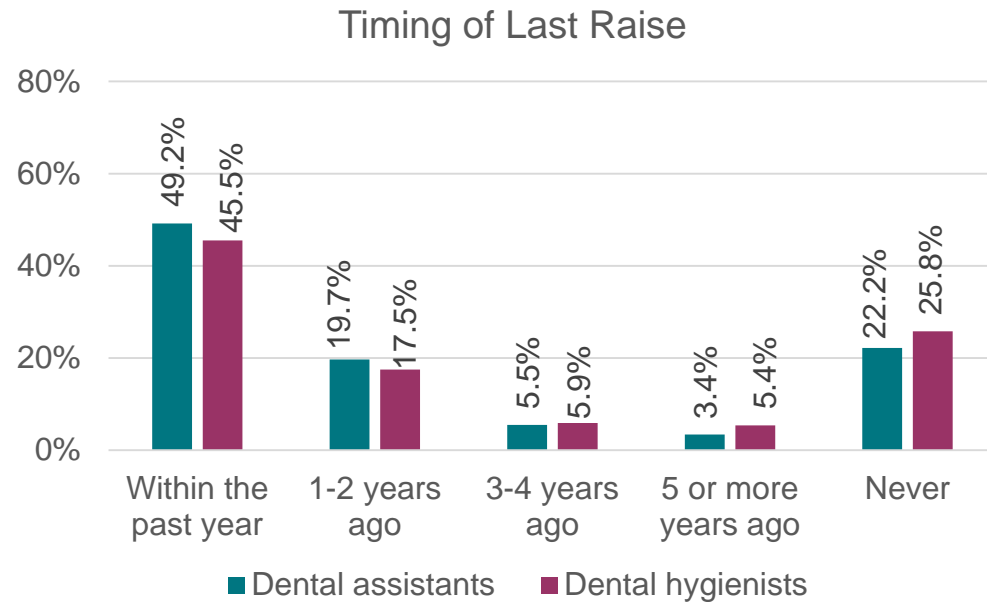


Dental Hygienist Job Satisfaction
(% indicating at least 8/10 job satisfaction)



A lesser share of dental service organization (DSO) employees and part-time employees indicate high job satisfaction.

Pay Raises

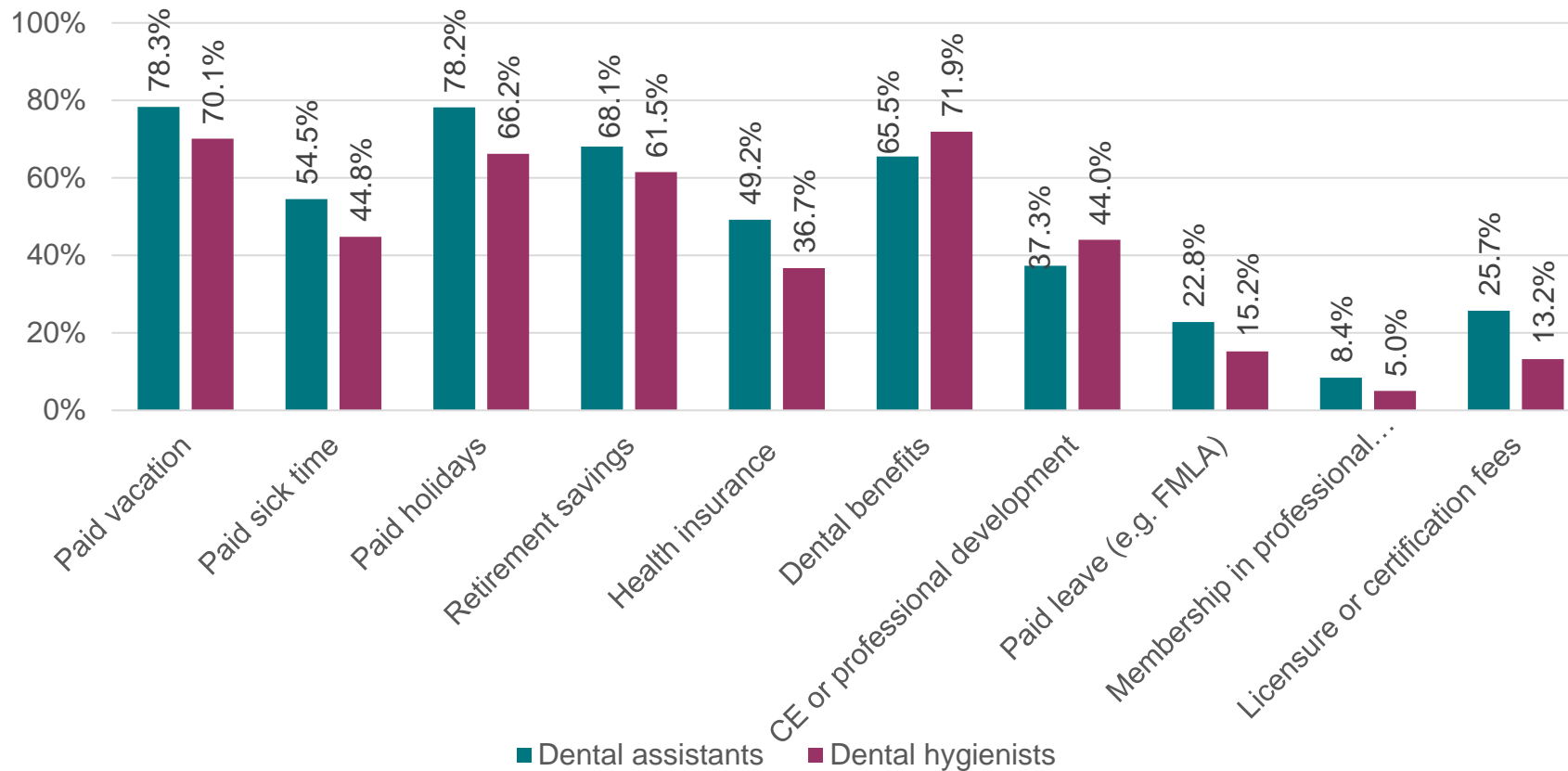


Most dental assistants and dental hygienists indicate that they received wage increases within the past year or 1-2 years ago.

Among those who indicated they have received a raise, it was most commonly an increase in the 1-3% range.

Benefits

Share of dental assistants and dental hygienists receiving select workplace benefits

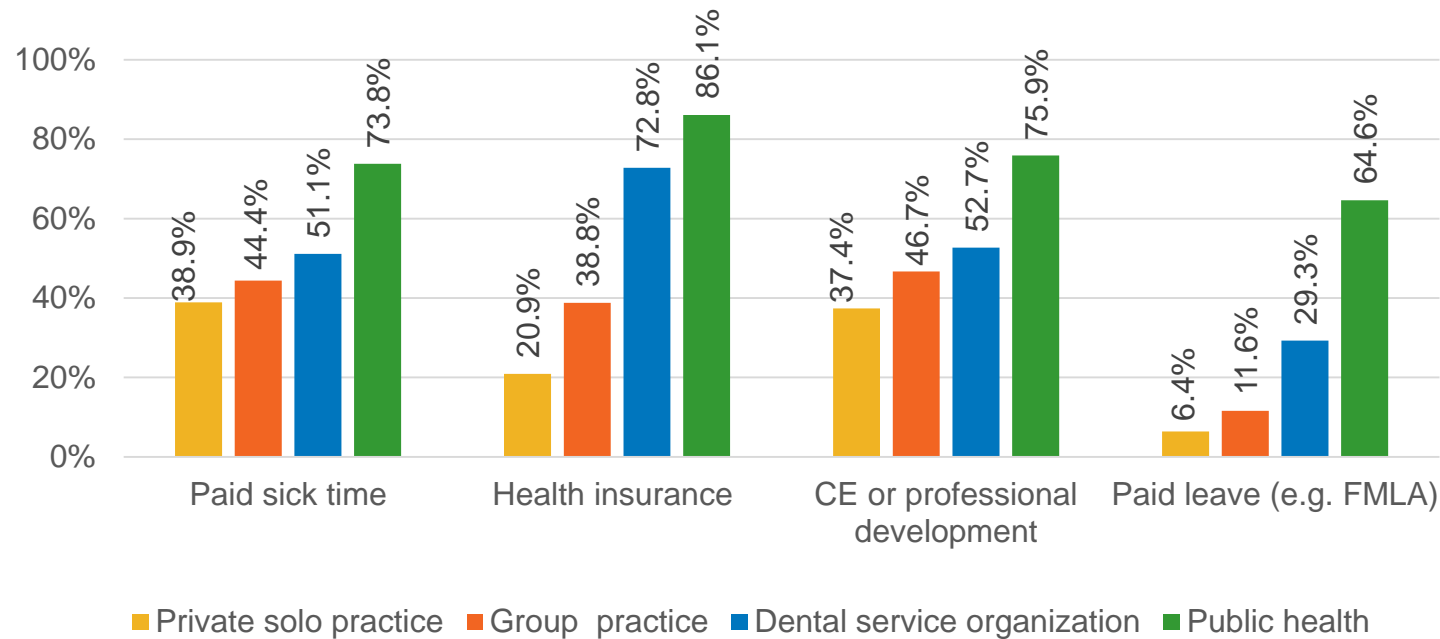


The majority of dental assistants and dental hygienists receive dental benefits, paid holidays, paid vacation, and retirement savings.

Health insurance, paid sick time, paid leave, and continuing education or professional development funds are much less common.

Group Settings Offer More Benefits

Share of dental hygienists receiving select workplace benefits by practice type

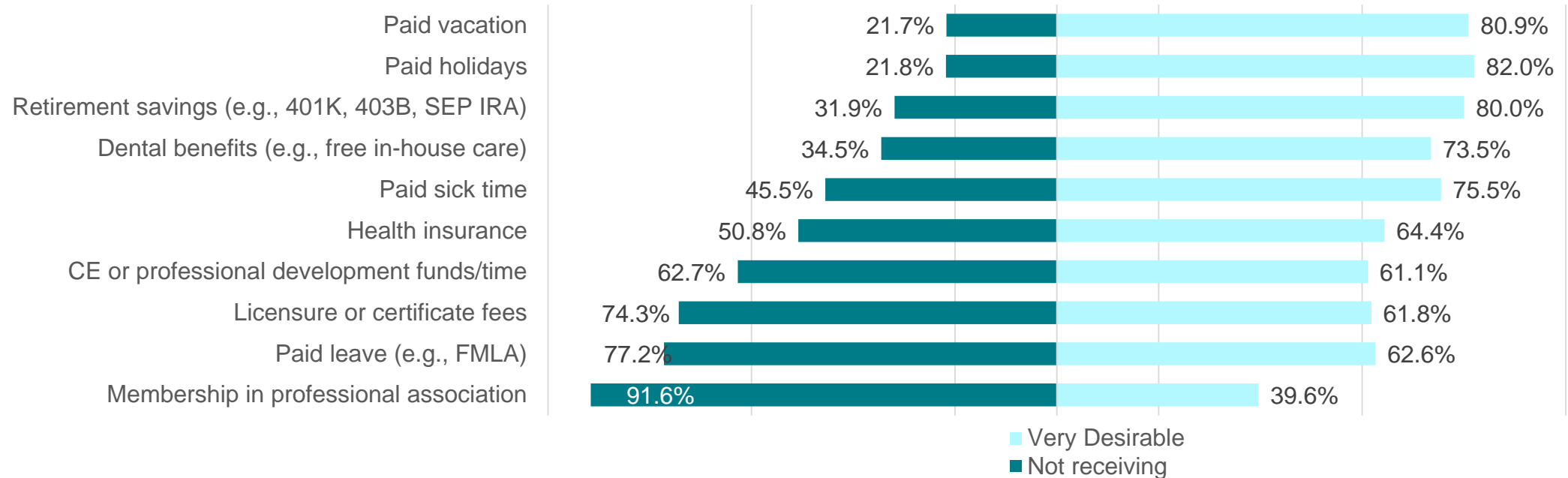


Health insurance, paid sick time, paid leave, and continuing education or professional development funds – while rare overall – are available to the majority of dental hygienists working in public health settings.

These benefits are also more common in DSOs and group practices than in private solo practices.

Missing Benefits are Highly Desirable

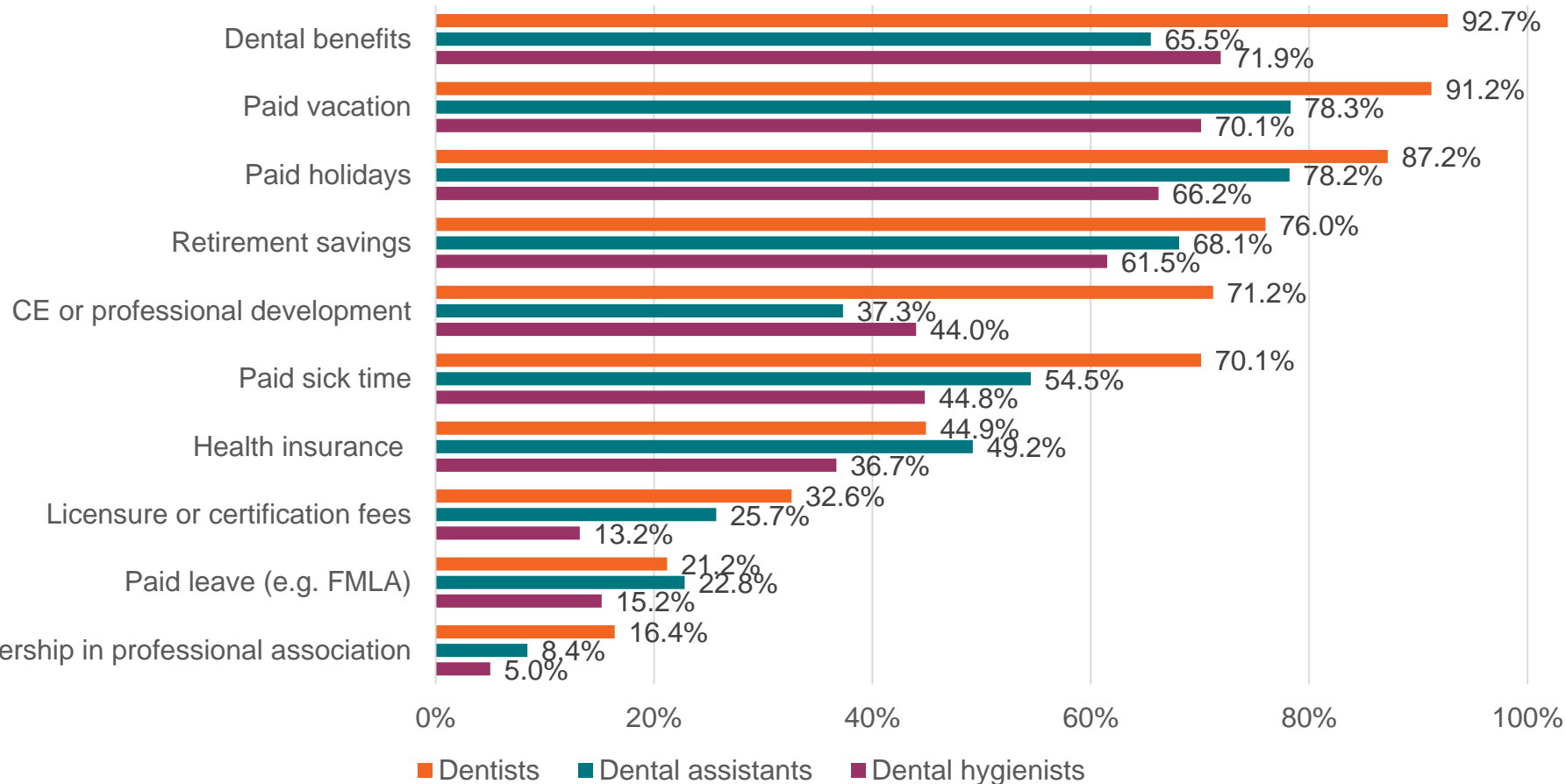
Share of dental assistants not receiving these workplace benefits, and the share not receiving who find the benefit "very desirable"



Among dental assistants and dental hygienists not receiving these workplace benefits, the majority indicate that almost all of these benefits are “very desirable.”

Perceptions on Benefits Generosity

Share of assistant and hygienist employees receiving select workplace benefits as reported by dentists, dental assistants, and hygienists

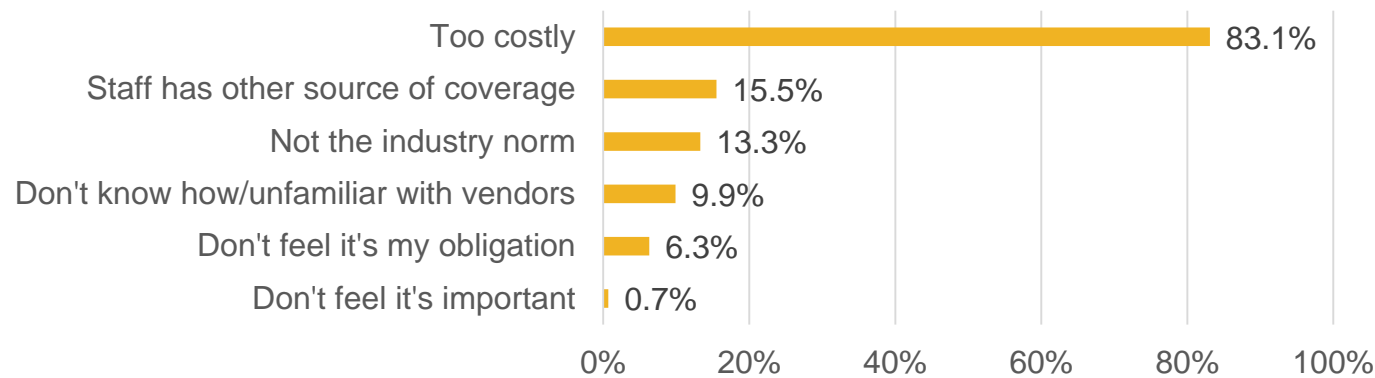


In general, dentist employers indicated greater generosity in terms of their benefits packages than reported by dental assistant and dental hygienist employees.

Better communication and more transparency surrounding workplace benefits might be helpful.

Why Health Insurance Isn't More Common

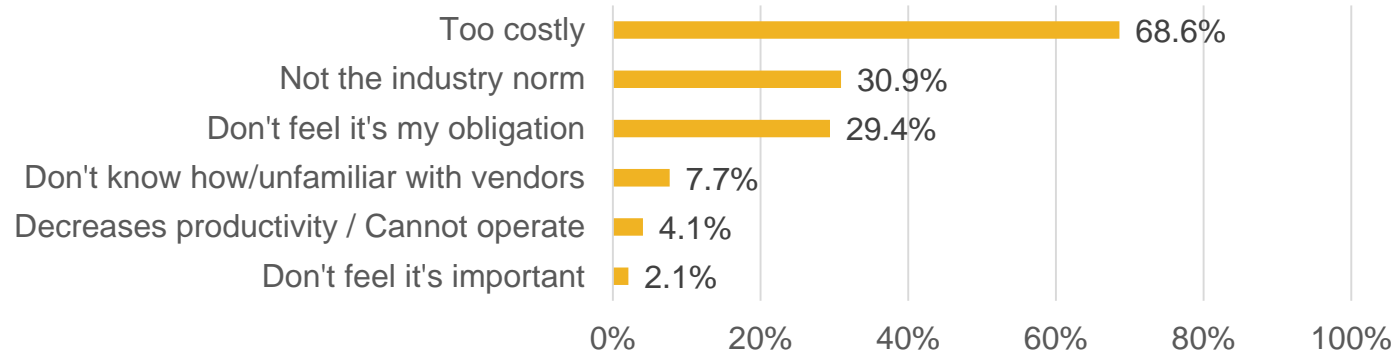
Dentists' reasons for not offering health insurance



Dentists who do not offer their employees health insurance were asked why, and the overwhelming majority indicated cost as a reason.

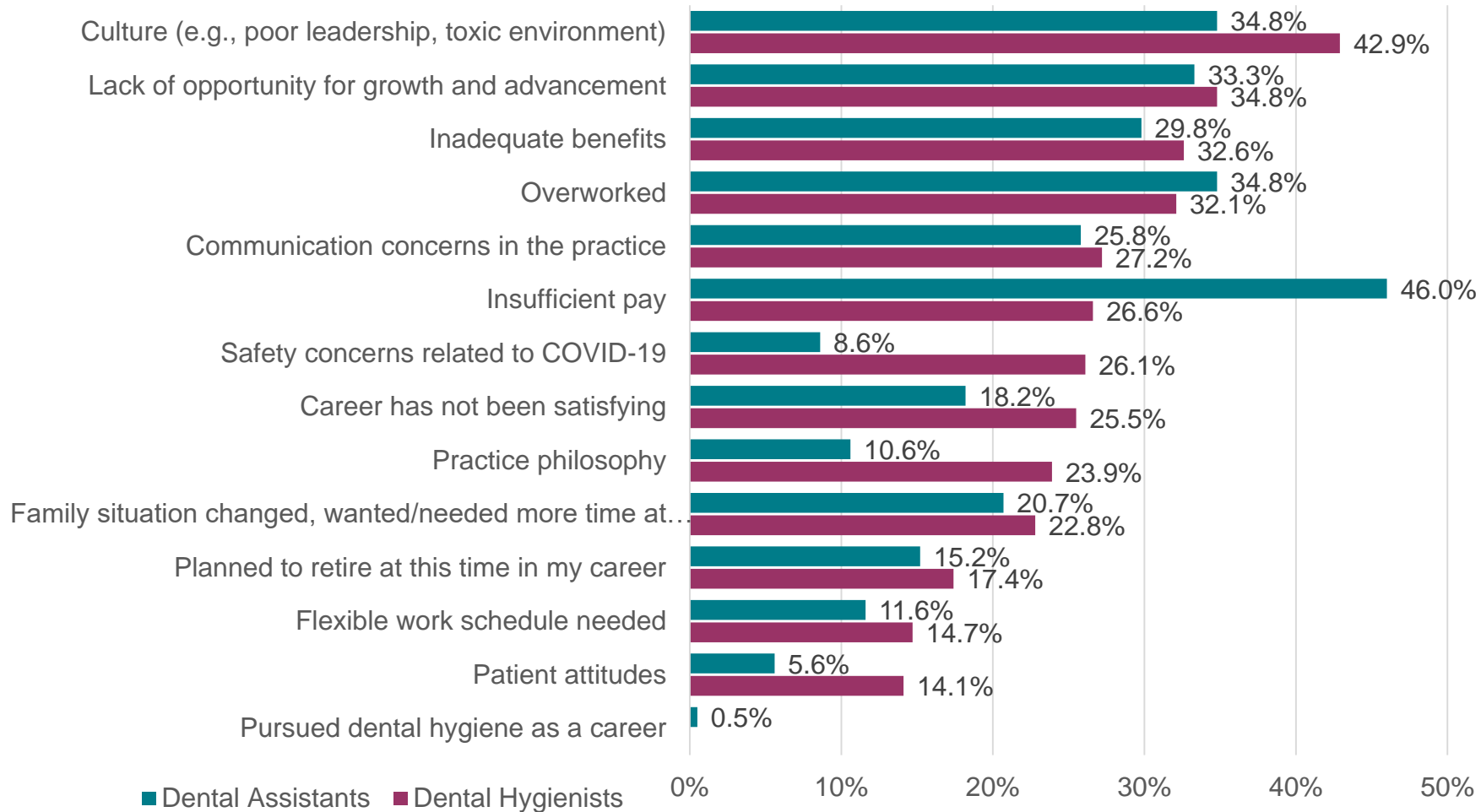
While cost was also the predominant reason among dentists not offering paid leave, nearly 1 in 3 also indicated that they do not offer the benefit because it is not the industry norm and/or not their obligation.

Dentists' reasons for not offering paid leave



Leaving the Field Voluntarily

Reasons for Voluntarily Leaving the Field



The most common reasons dental hygienists opt to leave the field include negative workplace culture, lack of growth opportunity, and inadequate benefits.

The most common reasons among dental assistants were insufficient pay, negative workplace culture, and feeling overworked.

Considerations for Dental Employers



Dental practices need to remain competitive as employers when it comes to employee benefits.



Responsive compensation is a must.



Workplace culture cannot be overlooked.



Consolidated dental practices have an edge when it comes to employee benefits.



Shoring up the workforce pipeline will require long-term changes.

Thank You!



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