



COMMUNITY
HEALTH CARE
ASSOCIATION
of New York State

The Future of the Dental Workforce: Building Partnerships and Pathways

Part 1: Optimizing the Dental Workforce through Academic Partnerships

Monday, May 5th, 2025

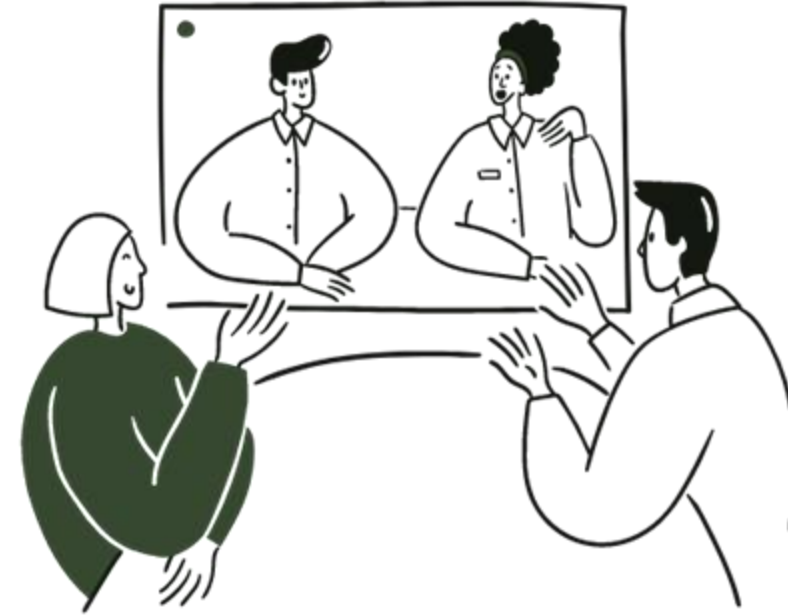
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Housekeeping

- Participants have been muted to prevent background noise.
- Use the chat box to type questions during the webinar.
- This webinar is being recorded and will soon be available to all participants along with a copy of the slides.
- A webinar evaluation will be shared with participants after the session.



About NNOHA

- Founded in 1991 by FQHC Dental Directors who identified a need for networking, collaboration, research, and support
- Membership now includes more than 5,500 dentists, dental hygienists, dental assistants, supporters, and partners



HRSA National Training and Technical Assistance Partner



Learning Collaboratives



NNOHA Listserv



Annual Conference



NNOHA Oral Health
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(NOHLI)



Webinars and on-demand
learning



Resources: publications,
dental forms library,
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Objectives

Review national and New York State data to understand the current landscape of the dental workforce.

Provide an overview of academic partnerships and service-learning experiences in health centers.

Describe strategies to develop and establish academic partnerships.

Learn benefits of academic partnerships to enhance the workforce in health centers.



Workforce Demand

- Health centers employ only 2.5% of the nation's dentists.
- Many dental professionals and students may not know that health centers are a viable career option or are unaware of loan repayment opportunities.



Dental Staffing in New York

- 2023 UDS
 - 1,214,538 clinical visits
 - 3,684 virtual visits
 - **1,218,222 total visits**
 - **496,957 dental patients**
- DA to DDS ratio = 1.79:1
 - National average and recommendation is 2:1
- RDH to DDS ratio = 0.37:1
 - National average and recommendation is 1:1



Dental Program Utilization (2023)

New York State

- 2,845.85 encounters per FTE dental provider
- 2.45 dental visits per patient

National

- 2,881 encounters per FTE dental provider
- 2.42 dental visits per patient



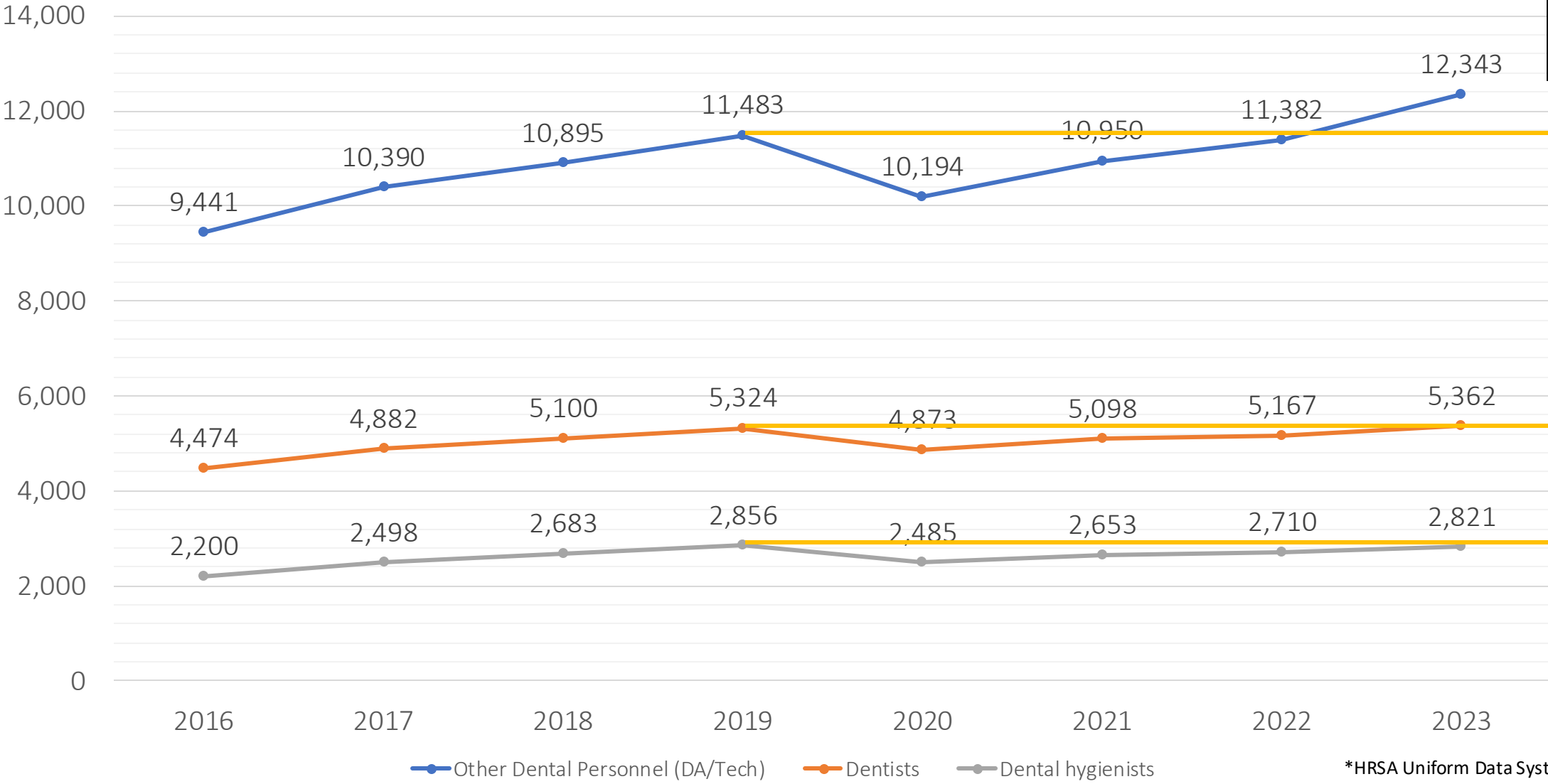
*HRSA Uniform Data System 2023:
Dental FTEs in Health Centers

Dental Health Professional Shortage Areas (HPSA)

- As of December 2024, there were 7,067 Dental Care HPSAs
 - Only 32.2% of dental needs met for areas
 - 10,153 dental practitioners are needed to fill the need
- New York
 - 161 dental care HPSA designations
 - 16.2% of dental needs met for areas
 - 588 dental practitioners are needed to fill the need



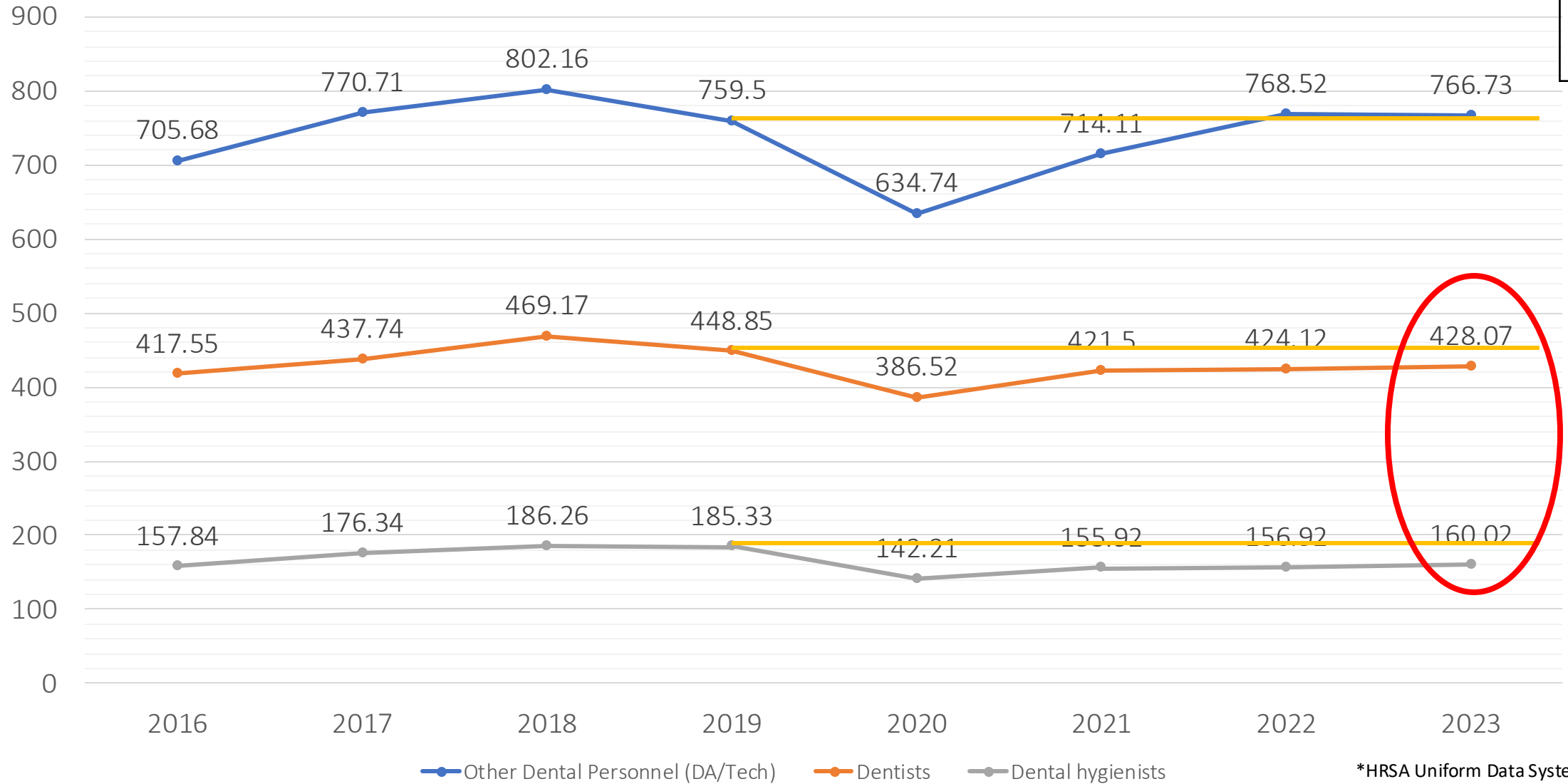
Dental FTEs in Health Centers



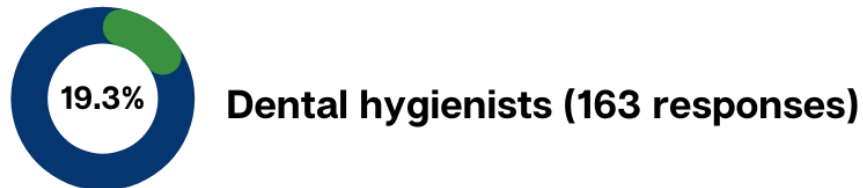
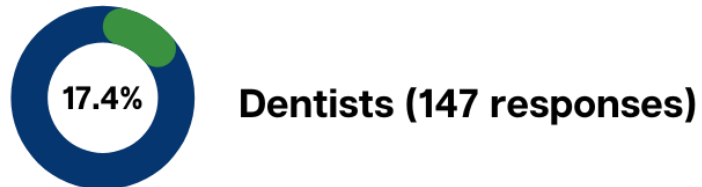
*HRSA Uniform Data System 2023:
Dental FTEs in Health Centers



Dental FTEs in New York State Health Centers



NNOHA Workforce Survey Methodology (National Level)



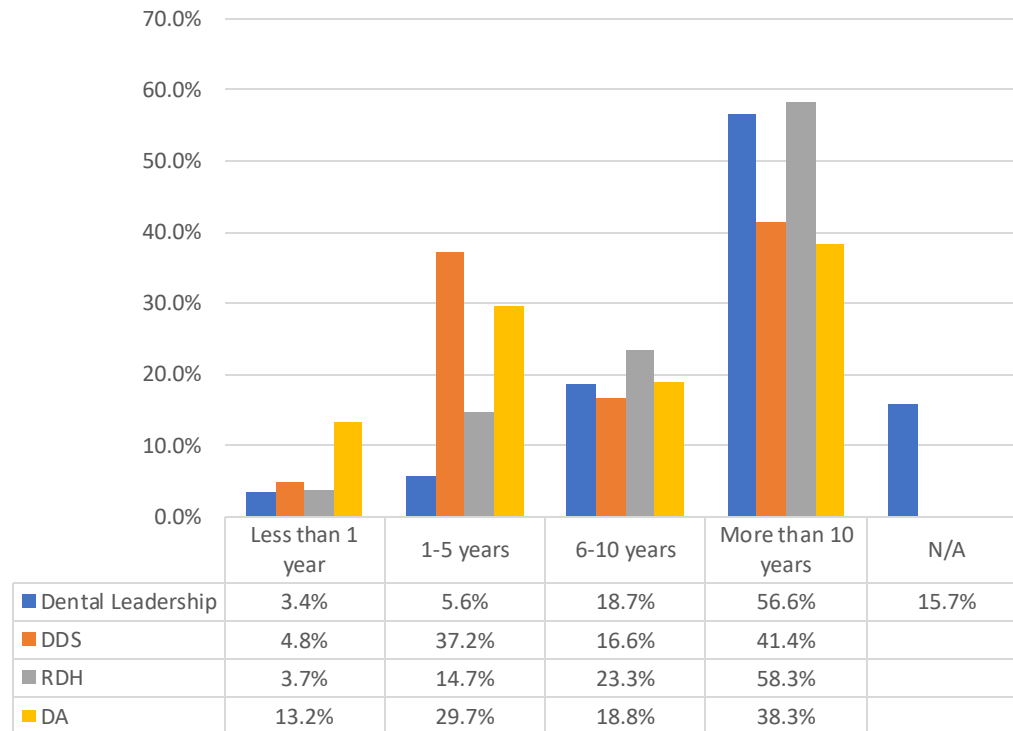
- Last completed in 2021 (usually every 3-5 years)
- Sent via SurveyMonkey link
- Incentive: random drawing for Amazon gift card
- Each team member type has their own survey tool





Years of Experience in Dental Profession

Length of Time Practicing the Profession



- Majority of team members have 10+ years of experience (especially dental leaders and dental hygienists)
- N/A indicates that they are not clinicians
- 37% dentists report 1-5 years of experience

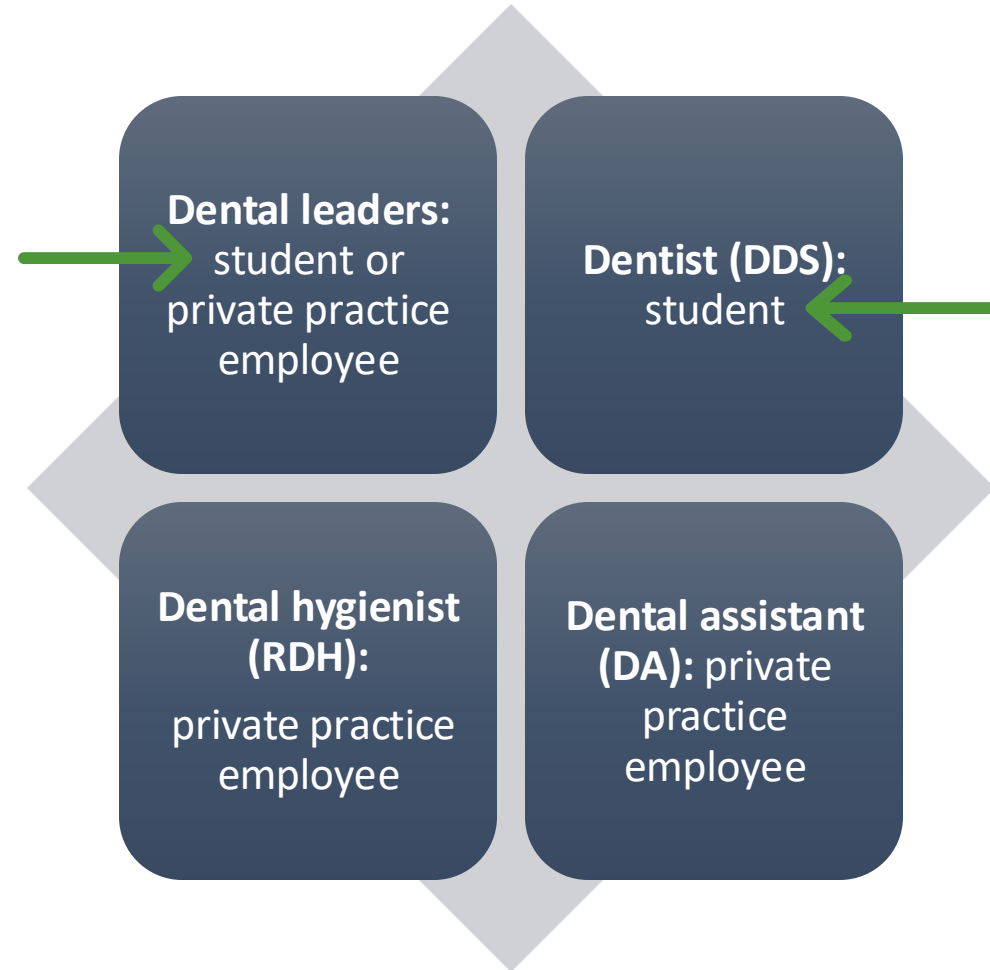


Factors to Choose a Health Center

- Most common reason: **feeling a mission to increase access to dental care**
- Other popular factors:
 - Work schedule
 - Leave policies
 - Fringe benefits
 - Desire to work in a community-based setting



Activity Before Working in a Health Center



Academic Rotations in Health Centers

- Percentage of individuals rotating through a health center as a student:
 - 91% of dental leaders
 - 60% of dentists
 - 39% of dental hygienists
 - 15% of dental assistants



Polling

- Do you have partnerships with dental academic institutions? (select all that apply):
 - Dental students
 - Dental residents
 - Dental hygiene students
 - Dental assistant students



2022 Commission of Dental Accreditation Standards



“Dental education programs must make available opportunities and encourage students to engage in service-learning experiences and/or community-based learning experiences.”



Intent: “Service-learning experiences and/or community-based learning experiences are essential to the development of the oral health care workforce. The interaction and treatment of populations in a community-based clinical environment adds a special dimension to clinical learning experience and engenders a life-long appreciation for the value of community service.”



Benefits of Academic Partnerships

Health Center Benefits

- Recruitment and retention
- Professional development for staff
- CE opportunities
- Improve clinic capacity

Learner/Student Benefits

- Clinical experience in interdisciplinary environment
- Exposure to unique scenarios
- Career opportunity
- Meet school requirements

Academic Institution Benefits

- Achieves CODA standards
- Provide varied clinical experience to students
- Clinical infrastructure



Increase Access to Oral Health Services

- Academic partnerships increases the number of people delivering care in the health center
- Dental assistant (DA) school partnerships allows for more support and staffing for increased efficiency
- Over 50% of health centers report that they do not employ specialty dental providers (pediatric dental, oral surgery, periodontology, endo, ortho, etc.)
- Partnerships with residency programs can help increase access to these specialty services



Unique Learning Experiences

- Health centers provide care to a large variety of patients
- Students and residents can get experience working with different patients and medical conditions
- Exposes students/residents to interdisciplinary care environments, promoting whole person care later in their careers



Awareness of Career Options

- Demonstrates health centers as a viable career option for students or residents
- Loan repayment options
- Resources for students and residents:
 - [Loan Repayment Fact Sheet](#)
 - Factsheets for future dental team members:
 - [Dental assistants](#)
 - [Dental hygienists](#)
 - [Dentists](#)



Team Member Satisfaction and Development

- Creates an opportunity for existing team members to serve as supervisors and mentors of learners
- Health centers report increased provider satisfaction with residents/students
 - Opportunity for professional development
 - Supports existing dental professional shortages
 - Increases dental clinic capacity for more dental services
 - Creates access for specialty services that are not usually provided

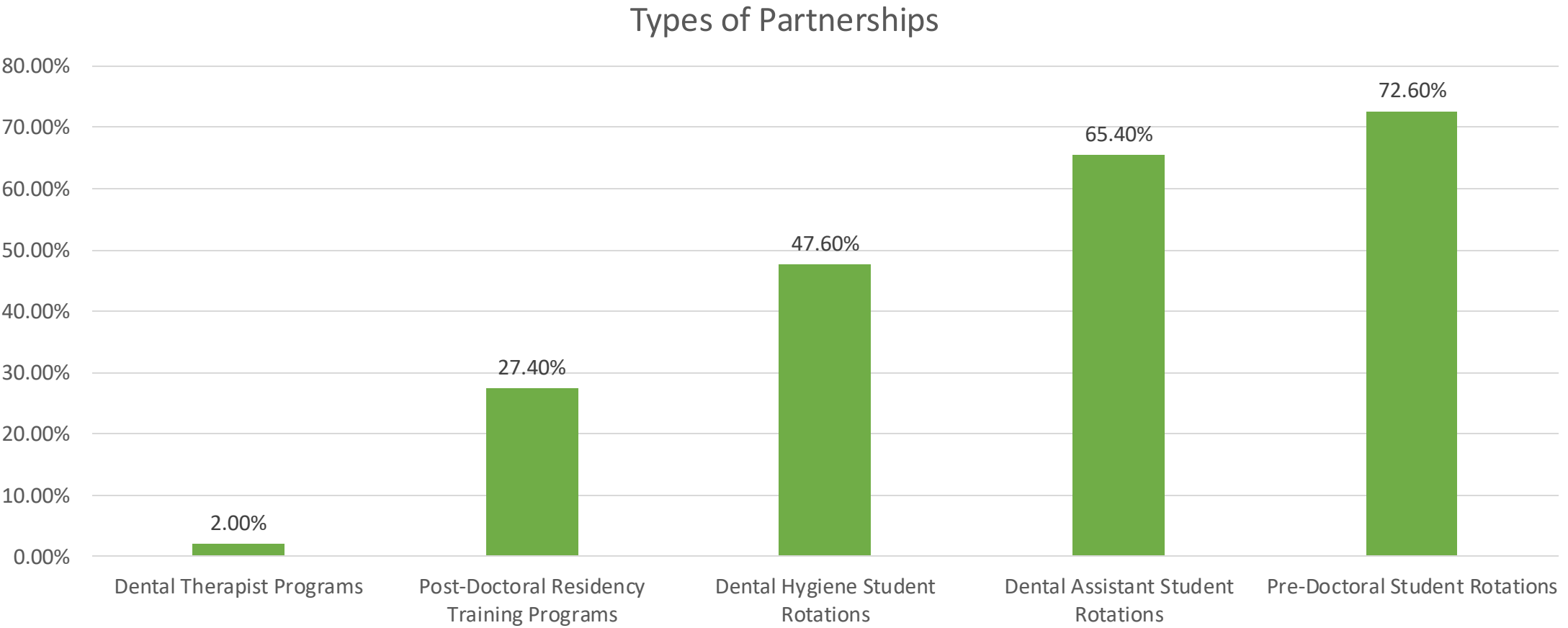


Learning Requirements for the Academic Institution

- Fulfills learning requirements for students/residents
- Exposes students/residents to different types of patients, services, etc.
- Health centers can support learners to achieve competency and address deficiency



Academic Partnership Needs Assessment



Length and Frequency of Service Learning

Educational Model	Length of Rotation	Frequency
Pre-Doctoral Dental Students	3 months	5 days a week
Post-Doctoral Dental Residents	6-12 months	5 days a week
Dental Hygiene Students	3 months or less	2 days a week
Dental Assistant Students	3 months or less	5 days a week
Dental Therapy Students	3 months or less	4 days a week



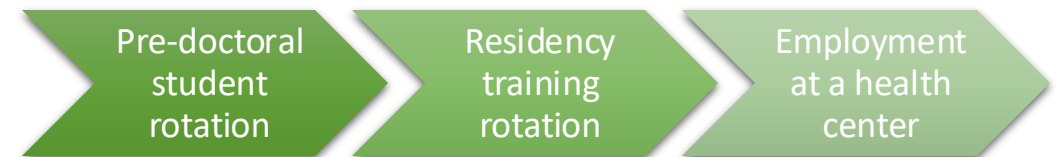
Pre-Doctoral Student Rotations

- Extramural experiences for pre-doctoral dental students
- Can provide treatment directly to the community
- Health center supervising dentists will require flexibility to effectively supervise students
- If there is enough planning, students can offset any potential decrease in productivity caused by longer procedure time, supervision, and chair utilization
- Most health centers report that they do not provide salary or housing stipends to students



Post-Doctoral Residency Training

- Advanced education in general dentistry (AEGD), pediatric dental, endodontics, periodontics, prosthodontics, oral surgery, etc.
- Residents tend to be more productive than students and require less supervision
- Health centers can fill a need for specialty dental services
- Some health centers host both dental students and residents
 - Allows for a comprehensive recruitment model



Dental Hygiene (RDH) Programs

- There are fewer partnerships with dental hygiene schools, compared to dental schools and residencies
- Increase access to preventive dental services and periodontal care
- Can help increase UDS Sealant Measure in states where RDH can apply sealants
- Important to ensure clinical continuity for patients undergoing multiple periodontal treatments (students/supervising faculty)
- Allows for increased exposure to more complex periodontal cases



Dental Assistant (DA) Programs

- Only 15% of health centers have partnerships with DA programs
- Creates career growth opportunities for existing DAs
- Demonstrates different work environments for future DAs
- Opportunity to showcase career growth potential in a health center
- Increases efficiency and capacity with additional DA support while they rotate in the health center



Intent of Partnerships

- Health centers should **not** pursue an academic partnership with the goal of increasing revenue and productivity
- Intention:
 - Increase access for the community
 - Integrate community health into dental academia
 - Serve as potential recruitment and retention tool



Planning Considerations

Operatory space

Team member
capacity and
engagement

Number of
patients and types
of procedures

Academic
institution's
requirements

Scheduling

Faculty
development

Financial
arrangements



Careful Planning

- Health centers must ensure that the rotation will be worthwhile for their organization
 - Frequency
 - Number of learners
 - Types of services that can be provided by students/residents
- Too short of frequencies may actually create burden and lack of care continuity



Financial Arrangements

- Productivity of the supervising dentist may decrease due to loss of operatory space and time. However, they offset by the revenue and production of the student/resident.
- Various financial arrangements between school and health center. The arrangement should be mutually beneficial.



Models of Financial Arrangements

Academic institution covers salary and expenses of students. Health center retains revenue generated from students.

Health center pays the academic institution a negotiated amount because of the revenue generated by students.

The academic institution places its own faculty in the health center to supervise the learners. Health center purchases faculty time from the academic institution and retains the revenues.

Health center provides a travel and housing stipend directly to post-doctoral residents. Health center retains the revenue generated.



Other Considerations for Establishing a Partnership

Assess Organizational Readiness

- Consider the benefits and potential challenges
- Ensure commitment from health center leadership to the academic partnership
- Determine the level of interest from the dental team



Contact Other Health Centers

- Connect with health centers that have academic partnerships
- Learn about their experiences and get ideas/lessons learned



Contact the Academic Institution



- Consider programs that are in the community
- Otherwise, there are many programs that partner with health centers nationwide
- Prepare to discuss benefits, strategies to address potential challenges, financial agreements, patient population/need



Potential Challenges



ENSURE ABILITY TO COMPLY
WITH CODA OR ACADEMIC
INSTITUTION REQUIREMENTS



CAPACITY AND SPACE OF THE
HEALTH CENTER TO
ACCOMMODATE LEARNERS



REVENUE SHARING



CHANGES IN PRODUCTIVITY



Recommendations & Opportunities

- Consider partnerships with dental hygiene and dental assistant training programs
 - Support shortages of workforce
 - Create pathways for careers in the health center
- Service learning should not just simply be clinical rotation
 - Use the opportunity to connect with the learners, cultivate a mission around community health



Expand Academic Pathways

- Academic partnerships allow opportunity to expose future clinicians to the safety net and show health centers as a viable career option

Visit NNOHA's website for [resources](#) on academic partnerships!



Download NNOHA's Workforce Survey



[Access the document here](#)

or

scan the QR code!



Community Health Center Workforce Survey Analysis of 2023 Results

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Additional resources on
Workforce Recruitment
and Retention are
available on [NNOHA's
website.](#)



Contact Us!



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Thank you in advance!





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