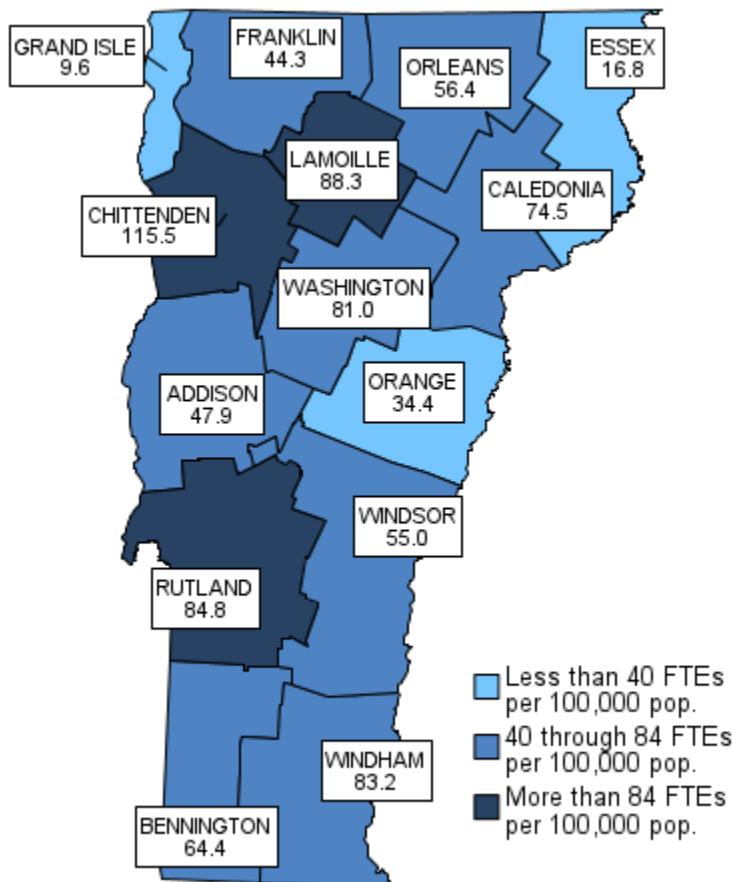


Overview

This dental assistant census is part of the Vermont Department of Health's healthcare provider data program, which is used to monitor and measure the supply of health care providers in our state over time. Vermont dental assistants are relicensed every two years. Data for this report was obtained during the September 2017 relicensing period and represents a snapshot of the profession at that time.

Dental assistants work under the direct supervision of a dentist. They perform a variety of tasks ranging from patient care (including tooth polishing, patient education, taking impressions and assisting the dentist during procedures); to laboratory functions (including creating casts models and instrument sterilization); to administrative tasks such as placing orders for dental supplies.

Dental Assistants FTEs per 100,000 population by county



In Brief

Workforce

Survey period: September 2017
 Response Rate: 96.6%
 Licenses renewed: 642
 Active in VT: 588
 VT Full-time Equivalents: 484.8

Type of Assistant

Traditional: 83.0%
 Certified: 17.0%
 Expanded Function: 8.8%

Demographics

% Female: 98.6%
 Median Age: 40
 % 60 or older: 9.5%

Education and Training

Had on the job training: 49.1%
 Educated in Northeast: 95.4%

Current Employment

Working in a dental office: 90.0%
 Working 40+ hours/week: 30.1%
 Working at multiple sites: 11.9%
 Planning to reduce hours: 1.9%

Geographic Distribution

(FTEs per 100,000 population)
 Highest: 115.5 Chittenden County
 Lowest: 9.6 in Grand Isle County

Trends in Statewide FTEs

2015: 493.2
 2017: 484.8

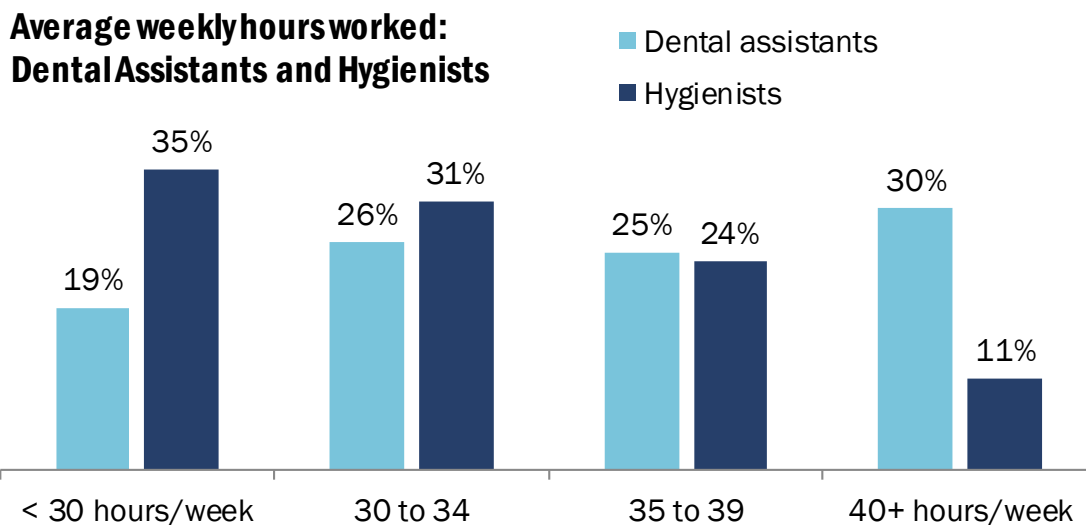
Vermont has three levels of dental assistants. Traditional Dental Assistants primarily receive on-the-job training. Certified Dental Assistants have completed coursework and passed the Dental Assistant National Board exam. Expanded Function Dental Assistants (EFDAs) have additional training allowing them to complete reversible procedures such as filling teeth prepared by the dentist.

Workforce

- 642 dental assistants renewed their licenses during the surveyed period and 620 of these completed the workforce survey for a response rate of 96.6%.
- Out of the 620 respondents, 588 (94.8%) indicated they were actively practicing as dental assistants in Vermont.
- Of the 32 respondents reporting a non-active status, six (18.8%) indicated they were planning to start working as a dental assistant in Vermont within the next 12 months.
- The remainder of this report is based on the 588 dental assistants who reported actively working in Vermont.

Full Time Equivalent (FTEs)

- 588 dental assistants provided 484.8 total FTEs.
- 100 Certified dental assistants provided 84.5 total FTEs.
- 30.1% (177) of dental assistants worked on average 40 or more hours per week.
- Dental assistants worked more hours per week compared to dental hygienists who were surveyed separately during the same time period. The average weekly hours for dental assistants was 33.0, while the average weekly hours for hygienists was 29.3.



Trends in Statewide FTEs

Dental Assistants 2017

- Dental assistant FTEs decreased by 8.4 from 493.2 in 2015 to 484.8 in 2017.

Demographics

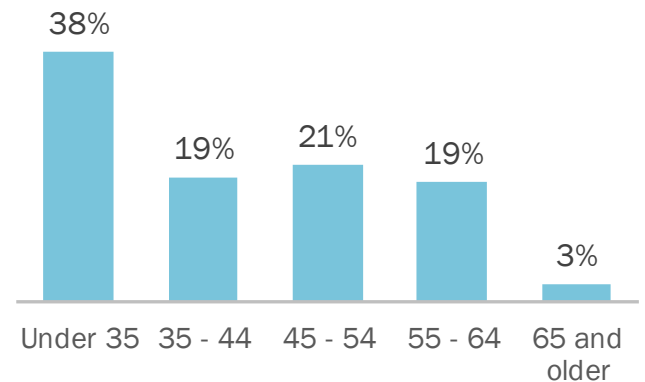
Gender

- 98.6% of the dental assistants in Vermont (580) were female and 1.4% (8) were male.

Age

- 38.4% (226) were under 35 years of age.
- 40.3% (237) were between 35 and 54 years of age.
- 21.3% (125) were 55 years of age and older.

Age Distribution of VT Dental Assistants



Race and Ethnicity

Respondents were asked to select their race and could select multiple responses or choose not to answer. Therefore, numbers may not equal the total number of dental assistants.

- 547 dental assistants were white (93.0%), 1.2% were Asian, 1.0% were Black, 0.7% were American Indian or Alaskan Native, <0.5% were Native Hawaiian or Pacific Islander. 2.2% preferred not to answer. 9 preferred to self-describe about race (1.5%).
- 16 dental assistants (2.7%) were Hispanic, Latino/a, or of Spanish origin, and 554 (94.2%) were not. 3.1% (18) preferred not to answer the question.

Education and Trainings

- When reporting their highest degree or certificate relevant to their dental assistant practice, 49.1% identified on the job training, 39.6% technical school training or a certificate/diploma, and 11.3% an Associate or other degree.
- 17.0% (100) of the dental assistants were certified.
- Certified dental assistants can complete additional training to become expanded function dental assistants (EFDAs). Fifty-two of the certified dental assistants completed the training and 48 said they use that certification in their work.
- Most of the 588 dental assistants in Vermont in 2017 completed their training in the Northeast (95.4%).

Region where training/education occurred	Number	Percent
Vermont	476	84.5%
New Hampshire	16	2.8%
Northeast excluding VT & NH	45	8.0%
South	11	2.0%
Central	6	1.1%
West	7	1.2%
Outside of US	2	0.4%
* Missing data from 25 individuals		

Practice Characteristics

Number of sites

- 88.1% of dental assistants worked at a single location. The rest worked at two or more locations.

Practice Setting

- Most dental assistants worked in dental offices rather than a healthcare setting.
- Traditional dental assistants made up the majority of dental assistants.

Main Practice Setting	Traditional	Certified (non EFDA)	Certified EFDA	Total
Solo Practice	187 (38%)	10 (21%)	8 (15%)	205 (35%)
Practice of 2 dentists	118 (24%)	17 (35%)	14 (27%)	149 (25%)
Practice of 3 dentists	140 (29%)	18 (38%)	17 (33%)	175 (30%)
Health center	41 (8%)	2 (4%)	11 (21%)	54 (9%)
Other (including hospital/clinic)	2 (0.4%)	1 (2%)	2 (4%)	5 (1%)
Total	488	48	52	588

Specialties

- All levels of dental assistants worked primarily for dentists with a specialty in general practice.
- 67.2% (395) worked for dentists with a specialty in general practice.
- 10.0% (59) worked for dentists with a specialty in orthodontics.

Specialty at main location	Traditional	Certified (non EFDA)	Certified EFDA	Total
General Practice	308 (63%)	38 (79%)	49 (94%)	395 (67%)
Pediatric Dentistry	12 (2%)	0 (0%)	0 (0%)	12 (2%)
Orthodontics	57 (12%)	2 (4%)	0 (0%)	59 (10%)
Periodontics	11 (2%)	0 (0%)	0 (0%)	11 (2%)
Oral and Maxillofacial Surgery	42 (9%)	2 (4%)	1 (2%)	45 (8%)
Endodontics	11 (2%)	1 (2%)	0 (0%)	12 (2%)
Multi-specialty practice	24 (5%)	3 (6%)	1 (2%)	28 (5%)
Public Health	11 (2%)	0 (0%)	0 (0%)	11 (2%)
Other (including Prosthodontics)	12 (3%)	2 (4%)	1 (2%)	15 (3%)
Total	488	48	52	588

Current Experience

- Dental assistants had a median of 10 years of practice in Vermont and 13 years anywhere.

Future Plans

- 1.0% (6) planned to retire, stop working in Vermont, or seek employment in another field.
- 2.4% (14) planned to increase hours.
- 1.9% (11) planned to reduce hours.

Key Takeaways

- Dental assistant FTEs decreased slightly between 2015 and 2017.
- Relative to population, dental assistants were most common in Chittenden and Lamoille counties.
- Dental assistants in Vermont were predominately female and relatively young, with a median age of 40.
- The most common settings for dental assistants were dental offices.

For more information, contact: AHS.VDHPhysicianCensus@vermont.gov

Appendix

Active Dental Assistant

A dental assistant who reported working in Vermont as a dental assistant (regardless of how many hours) is considered active.

Census

The census was taken during the biennial dental assistant relicensing process which ended on September 30, 2017. The data include all licensed dental assistants except for new licensees enrolled less than three months before the renewal date (July - September 2017), as their license was valid until the next renewal date of September 30, 2019. Census questions are available upon request.

Full Time Equivalent (FTE)

Full time is defined as 40 or more working hours in Vermont per week, 48 weeks or more per year. A dental assistant reporting more than 40 hours per week is defined as one FTE regardless of the number of hours over 40 per week worked.

Main Practice, Site, Setting, and Specialty

The main practice, site, setting, or specialty refers to the practice in which the dental assistant worked the greatest number of annual hours.

Map Quartiles

Map colors define quartiles. The lowest 25% of FTE equivalents to population ratio is displayed in the lightest color, the middle 50% in medium, and highest 25% in the darkest color.

Missing data

Unless otherwise noted, missing data are excluded from tables. Thus, totals may vary from table to table.

Population Estimates

Population estimates are for July 2017 and were provided by the Department of Health.

Primary Practice, Site, Setting, and Specialty

The primary practice, site, setting, or specialty refers to the practice with the greatest number of reported annual hours per individual.

Weekly Hours

Average weekly hours are based on hours and weeks reported, adjusted to a full-time 48-week working year (hours * (weeks/48)). Thus, the average weekly hours for a dental assistant working 40 hours a week for half the year (24 weeks), is 20.