Oral Health Infrastructure in the District of Columbia
From the 2017 District of Columbia Oral Health Surveillance System (DC OHSS)

1355 dentists have active licenses in DC. 736 dentists report practicing in DC. 542 dental hygienists and 641 dental assistants have active licenses in DC.

68.3% of the dentists report not currently accepting DC Medicaid, but 26.1% of these dentists report they plan to in the future.

30.5% of the dentists report treating individuals with intellectual or developmental disabilities.

Among the 736 Dentists Who Practice Full or Part-Time in DC,

4% plan to reduce patient hours
1.9% plan to move clinical practice out of DC
4.4% plan to shift time to non-clinical activities
3% plan to retire

12.1% plan to increase patient hours
4.5% plan to move clinical practice within/into DC
10.5% plan to hire additional dentists or hygienists


6 of 8 Federally Qualified Health Centers (FQHC) at 26 locations provide dental services in DC.

On average, about 22% of FQHC patients visited the FQHC’s dental clinic in 2015.

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Health Professional Shortage Areas (HPSA)

DC has two (2) designated dental HPSAs: a low-income population designation covering the neighborhoods east of the river and a homeless population designation covering the District's downtown.

Dental HPSAs & Services
- FQHC with Dental Clinics
- Hospital
- Dental HPSA

Dental ED Visits by Ward

Number of Visits
- 132
- 133 - 188
- 189 - 402
- 403 - 494
- 495 - 692
- 693 - 797
- 798 - 1388

Non-traumatic Oral Health ED Visits by Age

Visit Count
- 0
- 250
- 500
- 750
- 1000

2675 (1.2%) Emergency Department (ED) visits were oral health related in 2015. 95% of the oral health-related ED visits were for NON-TRAUMATIC* conditions.

*Non-traumatic oral health conditions include tooth decay, gum disease, and dental abscesses. Most of these conditions may be resolved through regular visits to dentists.

SOURCE: Health Resources & Services Administration. Health Professional Shortage Areas Data, 2017


District of Columbia
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