

Preliminary Findings from the New York Dental Hygienists Re-registration Survey

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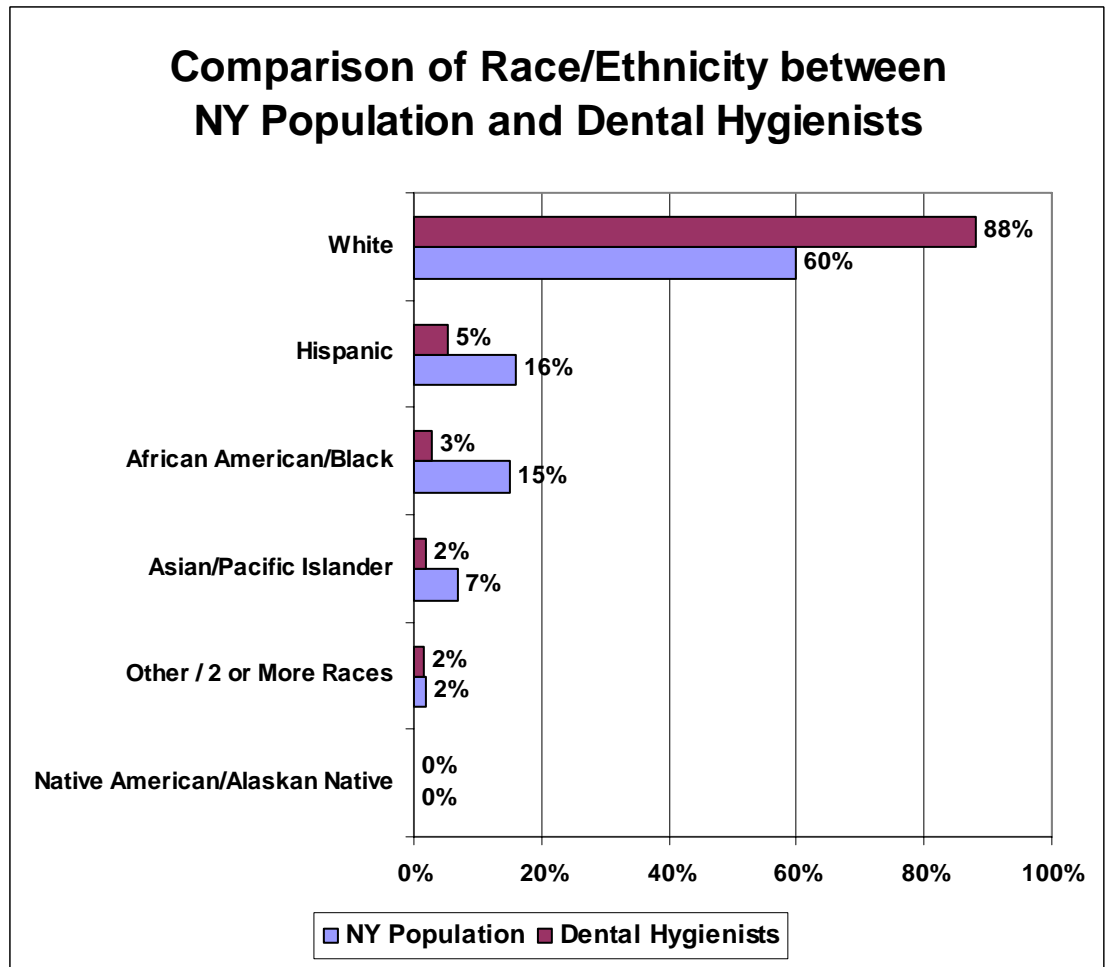
Background

Beginning in September 2007, the Center for Health Workforce Studies, with support from the New York State Department of Health and the New York State Education Department, began conducting a survey of dental hygienists at the time of license renewal. Approximately 49% (2,866) of dental hygienists who received the survey completed it. Of the total number of respondents, 486 (17% of survey respondents) were inactive, retired, or practicing outside of the state. This research brief describes the basic characteristics of the 2,380 active dental hygienists working in the state who completed the survey. Since this represents only 29% of all licensed dental hygienists in New York, caution should be taken in drawing conclusions from the findings presented below. When possible, the results from the dental hygienist re-registration survey are compared to additional data on dental hygienists nationwide obtained through a survey conducted by the Center for Health Workforce Studies in 2007.

Preliminary Findings

The majority of dental hygienists in New York were non-Hispanic White, female and, on average, in their late 40s.

- The vast majority of dental hygienists in the state were female (98.6%), which is consistent with the percentage nationally (99%).
- The median age of dental hygienists in the state was 47, while the median age for the national civilian labor force was 41. Nationally, the median age of dental hygienists was 45.
- Approximately 88% of dental hygienists were non-Hispanic White compared to 60% of the state population. Nationally, 91% of dental hygienists were non-Hispanic White.



The vast majority of dental hygienists reported living in New York prior to beginning their dental hygiene education.

Eighty-five percent of dental hygienists lived in New York when they graduated from high school. Ninety percent of actively practicing dental hygienists attended a dental hygiene education program in New York, and 93% obtained their initial dental hygiene license in New York.

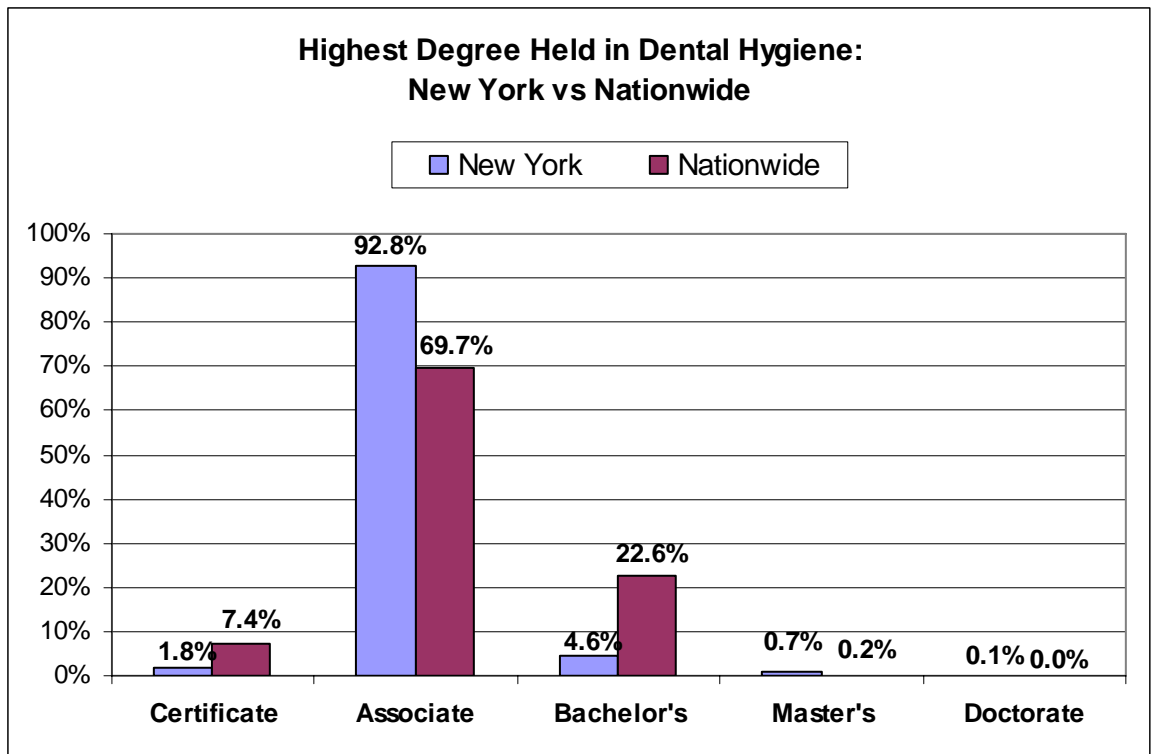
The vast majority of dental hygienists in New York held an associate degree as their highest degree in dental hygiene.

Dental hygienists in New York were less likely to hold a bachelor's degree or higher as their highest degree earned in dental hygiene compared to dental hygienists nationwide.

Slightly more than half of dental hygienists reported working full time.

Fifty-two percent of dental hygienists reported working full time (32 hours or more), with the remaining 48% working

part time (31 hours or less). This is comparable to dental hygienists nationally, where half reported working full time and half reported working part time. Additionally, 28% of dental hygienists reported working at a second practice location, which is comparable to dental hygienists nationally.



New York dental hygienists were slightly more likely to work for specialty dentists than their national counterparts.

New York dental hygienists were less likely than dental hygienists nationally to work for general practice dentists in both their primary (85% versus 90%) and their secondary (76% versus 82%) practice locations. In contrast, New York dental hygienists were more likely than dental hygienists nationally to work for specialty dentists in both their primary (15% versus 10%) and their secondary (24% versus 18%) practice.

Conclusion

Many of the preliminary findings from the dental hygienist re-registration survey are comparable to findings from the Center's nationwide survey of dental hygienists, with the exception of dental hygienists' highest degree and distribution by race/ethnicity. As the number of survey responses increases, a more detailed profile of dental hygienists practicing in New York will be developed, including analysis at county and sub-county levels.

The Center for Health Workforce Studies

This brief was prepared by the Center for Health Workforce Studies at the School of Public Health, University at Albany, State University of New York. The Center's mission is to provide timely, accurate data and conduct policy-relevant research about the health workforce.

The New York Dental Hygienist Re-registration Survey is part of the Center's New York Health Workforce Data System which is designed to support ongoing monitoring of the state's health workforce. The components of the system include licensure re-registration surveys for physicians, dentists, dental hygienists, and registered nurses; annual surveys of residents completing training in the state and registered nursing education programs; and the annual state health workforce tracking report.