



## Expected Growth Rates in the South Carolina Dental Care Workforce

Every two years, the federal Bureau of Labor Statistics and the South Carolina Labor Market Information office in the Department of Employment and Workforce collaborate to estimate the future number of jobs for a wide variety of healthcare occupations. Their most recent state-level data release covers the period from 2012 to 2022. Summarized below are their estimates of how demand for dental care professionals is expected to change in South Carolina over the next few years. The number of anticipated annual job openings include those due to growth (new jobs) and those created when people leave the workforce through retirement, career change, or for other reasons (replacements). These are estimates of jobs, not individuals.

Dentistry and Support Occupations	Employment (# of Jobs)			Total % Change 2012 - 2022	Average Annual Job Openings
	Actual 2012	Estimated 2022	Total Change		
Dental Hygienists	2,515	3,393	878	35%	152
Dental Assistants	3,337	4,194	857	26%	155
Dentists, General	1476	1742	266	18%	63
Orthodontists	97	114	17	18%	4
Dentists, All Other Specialists	45	41	-4	-9%	1

Note: The counts of jobs in this table are based on survey data collected by the Bureau of Labor Statistics and are not related to the count of individual professionals presented in the "South Carolina Health Professions Data Book." This table has been organized according to the total percent change in employment. See [http://www.bls.gov/emp/ep\\_projections\\_methods.htm](http://www.bls.gov/emp/ep_projections_methods.htm) for the BLS methodology used to estimate job growth.

The greatest job growth, both in terms of overall percentage change and by the volume of openings expected each year, is for dental support personnel (Dental Hygienists and Dental Assistants). Over 50% of the anticipated number of annual job openings are related to new job growth for dental support personnel. On the other hand, the majority of annual job openings anticipated for General Dentists is based on the need to replace experienced dentists expected to leave the workforce, mostly due to retirement. Although there is some growth expected for Orthodontists, the annual number of job openings is expected to be small.

In the 2012-13 academic year 56 new dentists were graduated from the state's single College of Dental Medicine located in the Medical University of South Carolina. In that same year, education programs located throughout the state produced 107 new dental hygienists and 148 dental assistants. Depending on the influx of dental hygienists from out of the state, South Carolina may need to increase the production of dental hygienists in the future.

Data Source: Unpublished tables provided by the South Carolina Department of Commerce "2012 - 2022 Healthcare Workforce in South Carolina by Occupational Title." Graduation figures are from the Institute of Education Sciences National Center for Education Statistics "Program Major Completions 2012-2013 Health Professions and Related Clinical Sciences" downloaded November, 2014