

## RESEARCH OBJECTIVE

Created in 2022, the Washington Oral Health Workforce Tracking Program (WOHW) collects and analyzes data to guide practice and policy development and help ensure statewide access to oral health care.

WOHW's objectives are to answer:

- What occupations comprise Washington's oral health workforce, how are they distributed across the state, and how has that changed over time?
- How does Washington's oral health workforce supply compare with other states?
- What are education/training pathways into Washington's oral health workforce and to what extent are they contributing to supply?
- How is oral health workforce demand changing across the state and in what ways, and how does workforce adequacy affect the population's access to oral health care?

## PROGRAM DESIGN

The WOHW dashboard contains data on dentists, dental hygienists, and dental assistants, among other oral health occupations, from multiple primary and secondary sources:

- the current supply of dental occupations from Washington State licensure data;
- supply trends over time from state licensure data and the American Community Survey;
- employer demand from Washington's Health Workforce Sentinel Network (a bi-annual survey on workforce demand among sentinel employers in the state);
- education and training completions from the Integrated Postsecondary Education Data System (IPEDS) and Washington state's workforce board;
- workforce supply information collected via surveys of currently licensed individuals.

## SELECT DASHBOARD EXAMPLES

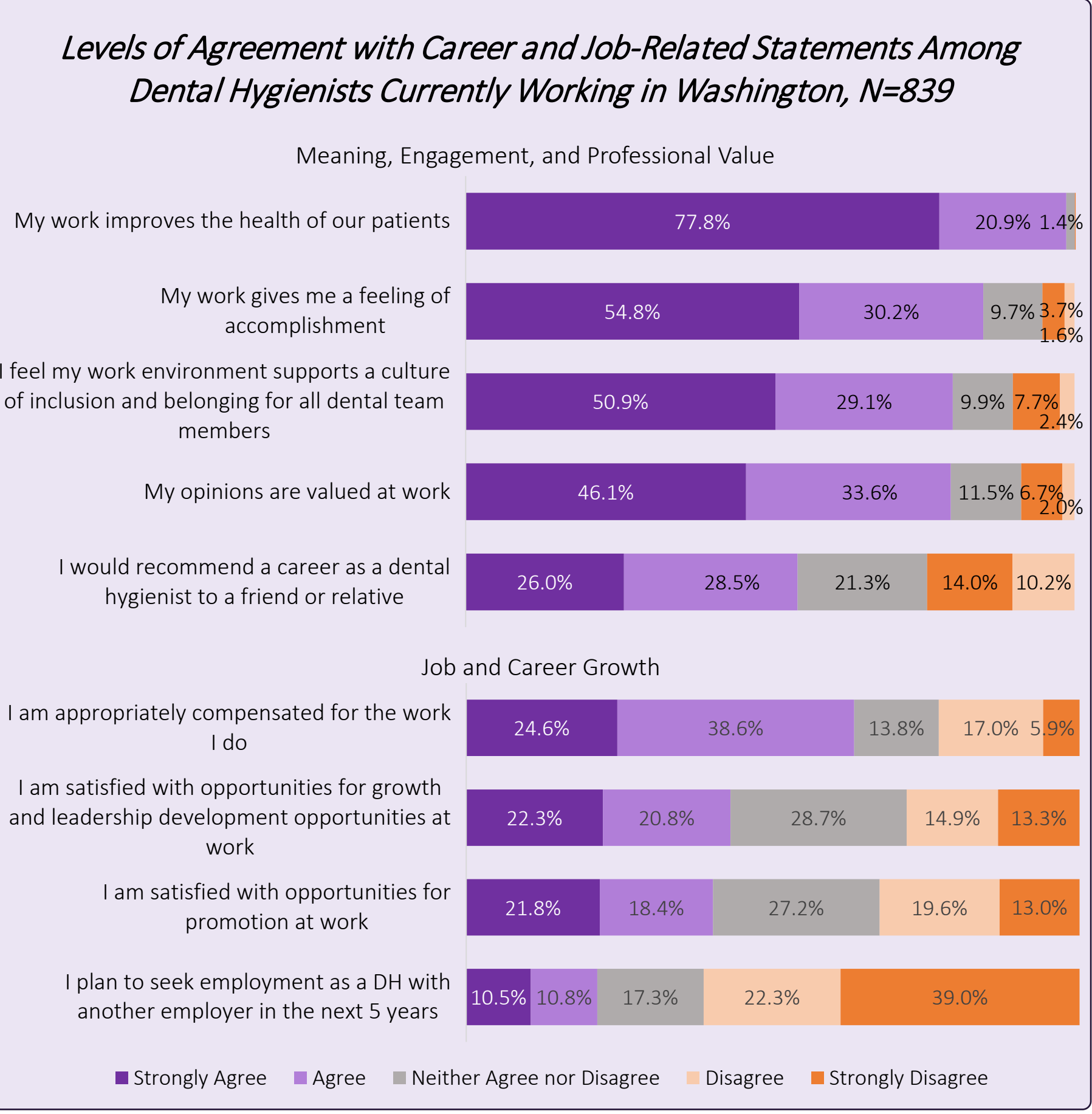
### Dental Workforce Surveys Detail Career Pathways and Key Retention Factors

To date, WOHW has conducted statewide surveys of:

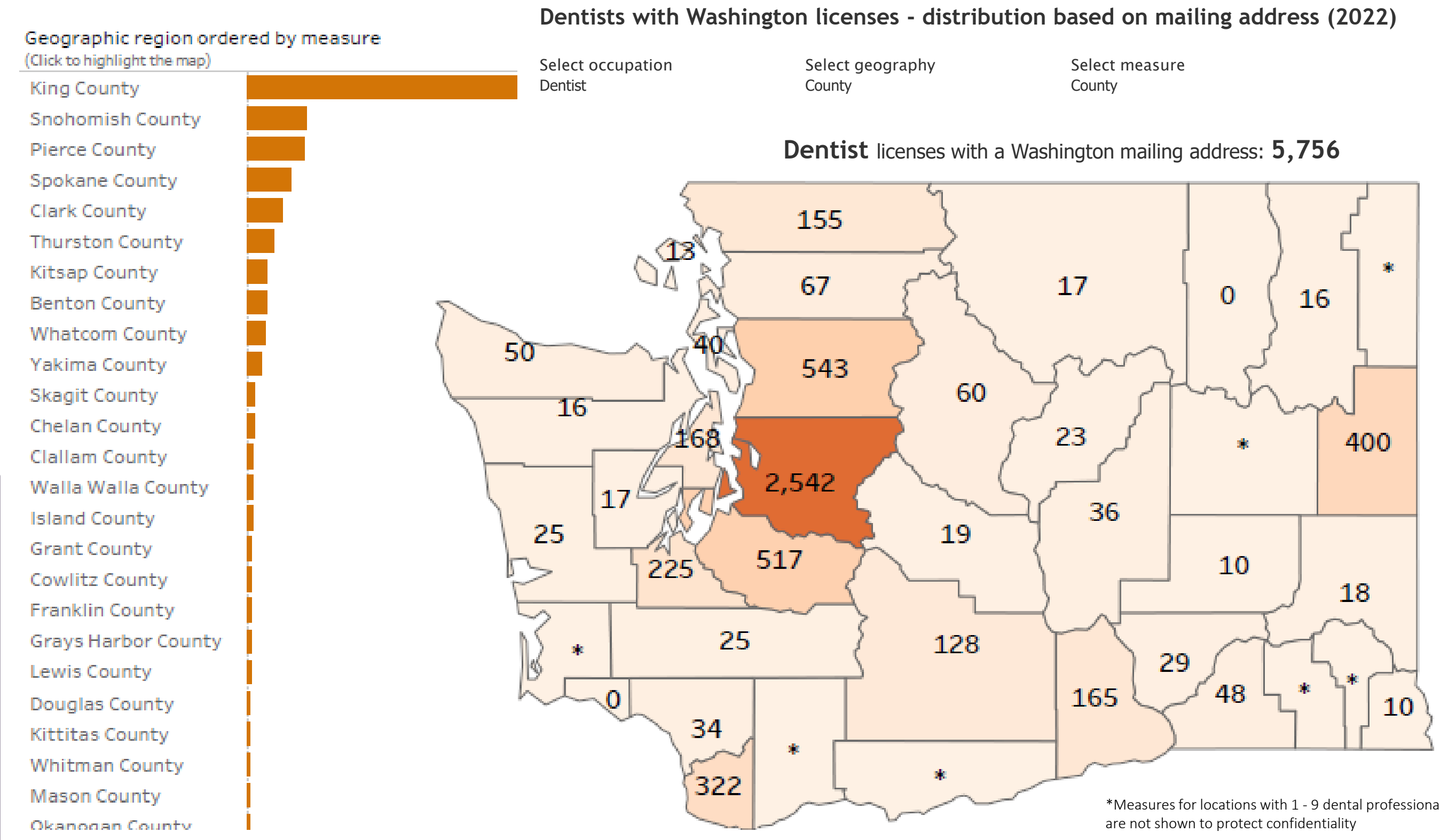
- Dental assistants
- Expanded function dental auxiliaries (EFDAs)
- Dental hygienists

Survey results can be viewed on the dashboard and include:

- Detailed demographic information on each occupation
- Frequency of common job duties and clinical tasks
- Opinions on job satisfaction (example below)
- Work history and career motivation

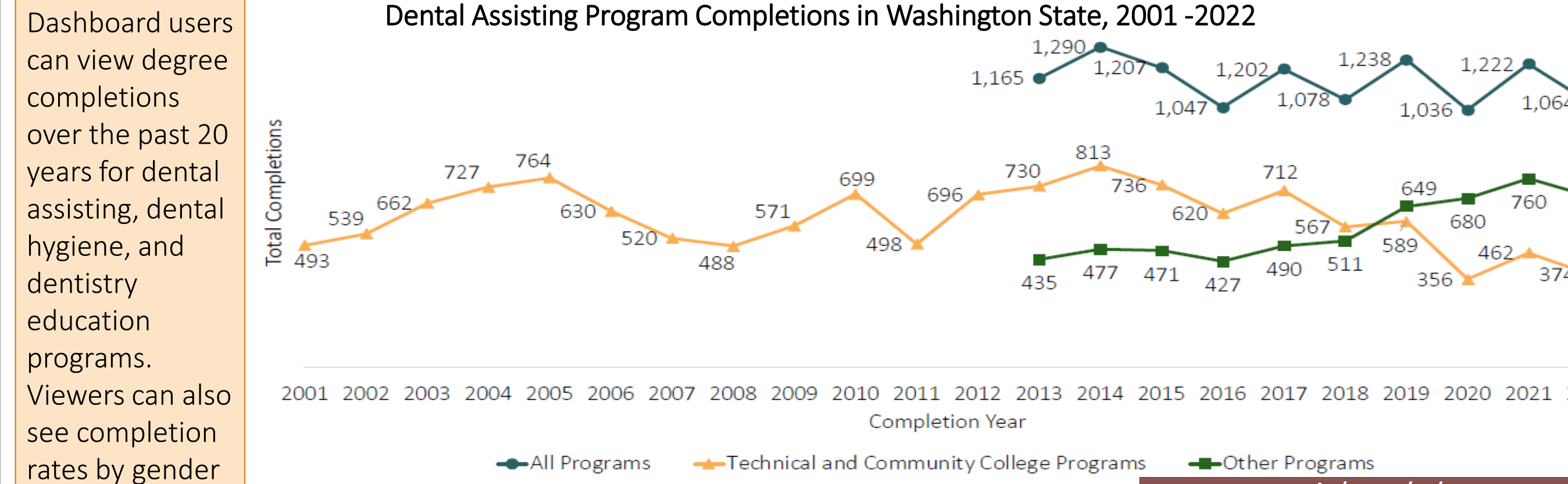


### Dashboard Displays Current Supply of Dental Occupations



State licensure data, displayed using an interactive Tableau dashboard, allows viewers to select on occupation (dentist, dental hygienist dental assistant, EFDA, dental anesthesia assistant, or denturist) and view the distribution (exact count, count per 100k, average age, and gender) of license holders across the state by county, rural/urban location, Accountable Community of Health, or Workforce Designation Area.

### WOHW Tracks Education and Training Trends



Dashboard users can view degree completions over the past 20 years for dental assisting, dental hygiene, and dentistry education programs. Viewers can also see completion rates by gender and race/ethnicity.

Note: 'Other Programs' refer to private training dental assisting programs.  
Source: IPEDS and WA Workforce Training and Education Coordinating Board, 2022

**Acknowledgment**  
The WOHW Tracking Program receives funding from both public and private sources: Delta Dental of Washington initiated funding for three years of program support beginning in 2022 and the Washington State Legislature directed \$225,000 to the Program in FY 2023 (ESSB 5693).

## IMPLICATIONS

- Statewide data available through WOHW's dashboard describe workforce supply and demand trends that assist short- and long-term workforce planning for education/training programs, practice, and state policy.
- WOHW's primary data collection through surveys of dental occupations provides insights to enhance efforts to recruit and retain the workforce for difficult-to-fill jobs.

Explore more oral health workforce data on the full WOHW Dashboard here:



**For more information**  
Samantha Pollack, WOHW Operations Director  
sampo@uw.edu  
<https://familymedicine.uw.edu/chws/>