

# Oral Health Workforce for Low Income Children

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Shelly Gehshan, Senior Program Director  
National Academy for State Health Policy

# Dentists' and physicians' practice patterns differ

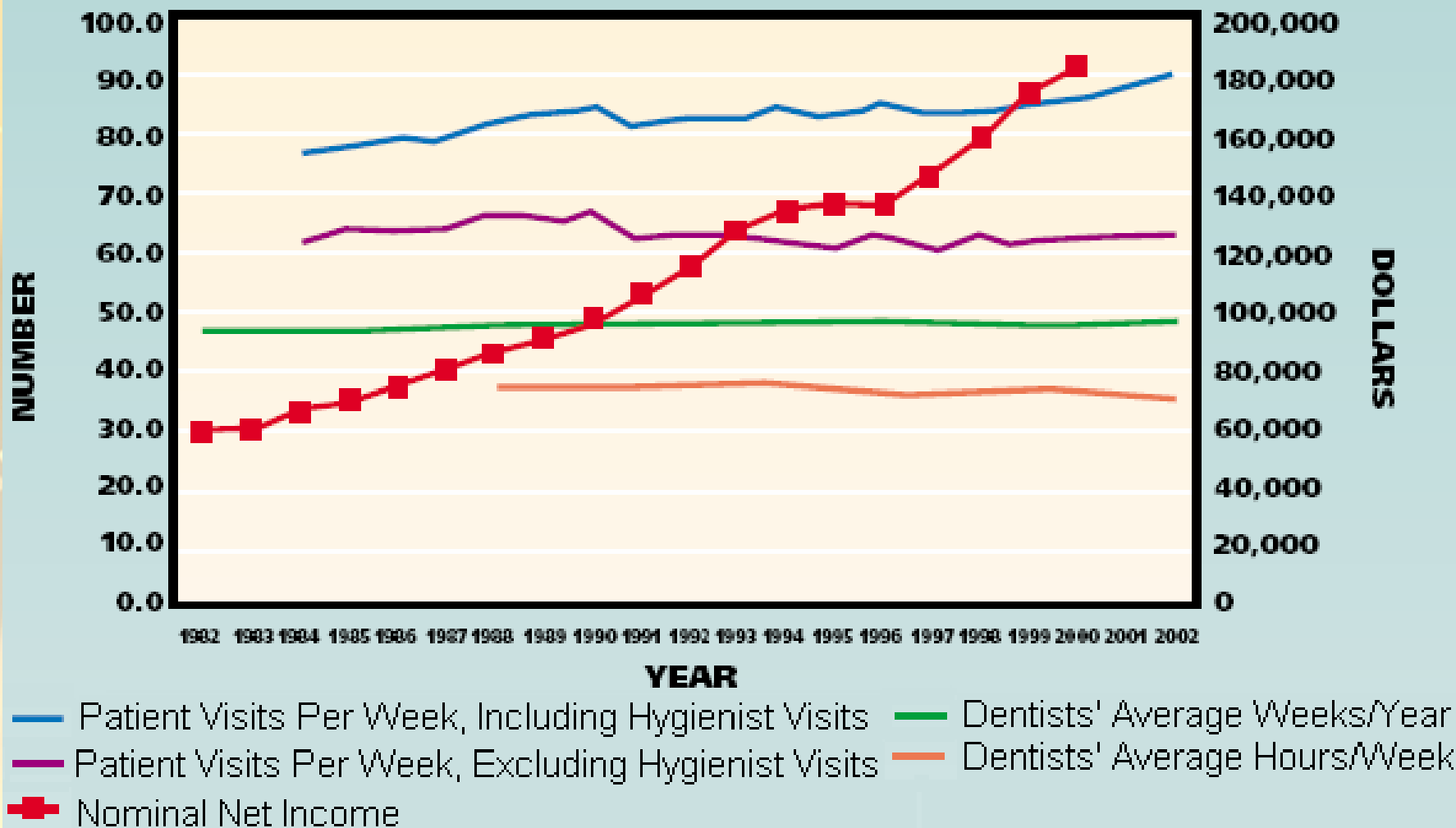
- 90% dentists are in private practice
- 76% dentists are solo practitioners
- 80% are general practice dentists
- Ave. net income \$125K for general dentists, \$192 for specialists
- 33.3 hours/week treating patients
- 50% physicians are in private practice
- 25% are solo practitioners
- 30% are primary care practitioners
- Ave. net income \$164K for primary care, range is \$120K - \$205K for specialists
- 51.6 hours/week treating patients

# Factors Limiting Participation in Medicaid/SCHIP

- Average debt for graduating dentists: \$119,000 in '03
- Cost to lease equipment \$150,000/year; costs for space, staff \$200,000/year
- Dental services: 57% inflation since 1997
- Average debt for graduating physicians: \$104,000 in '03
- Most physicians practice without expensive equipment
- Physician services: 36% inflation since 1997

# Dental practice Income

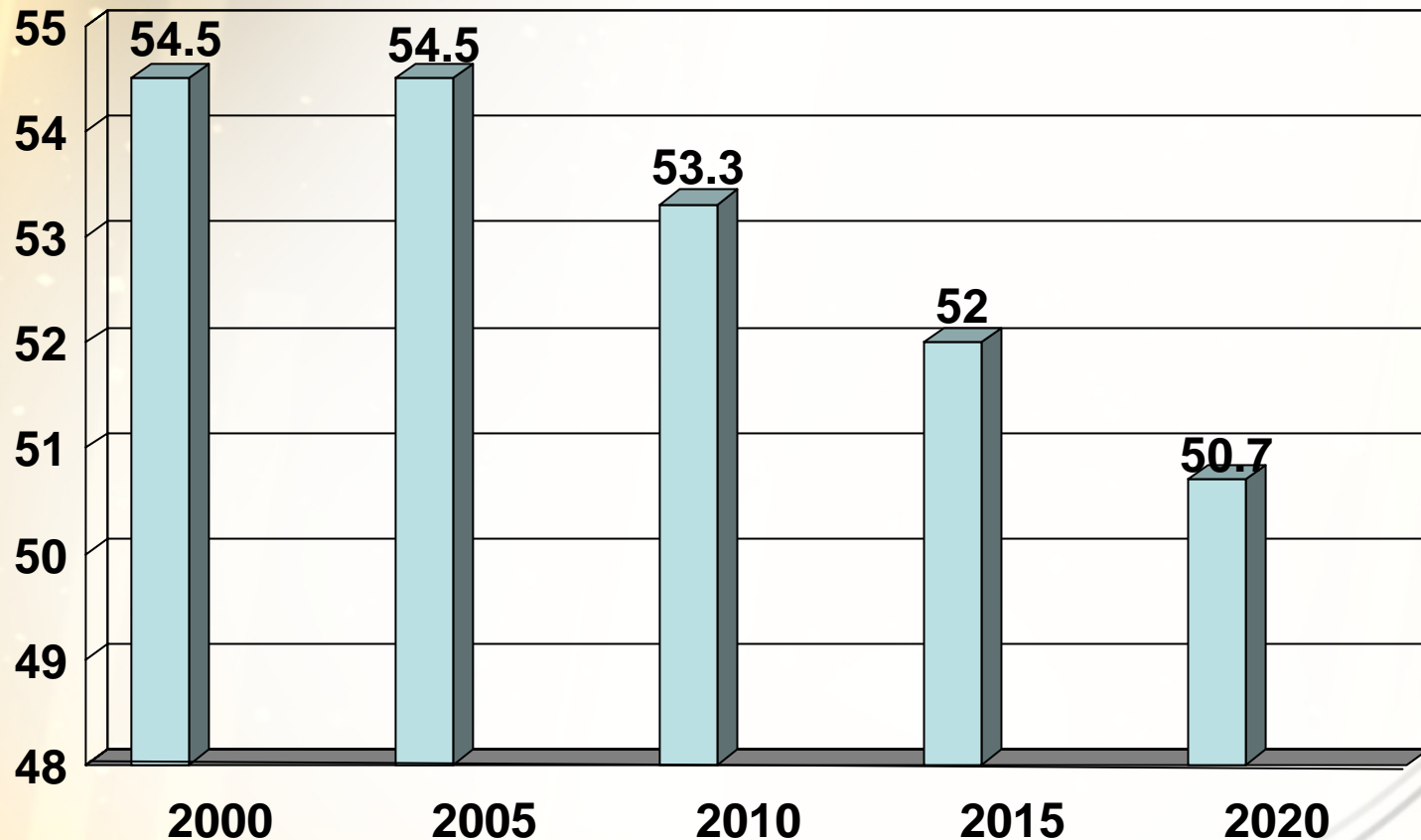
- About 45% of patient visits are for hygiene services
- About half from insurance, half cash
- Very sensitive to downturns in the economy
- Overhead averages about \$.60-\$.65 of each dollar earned



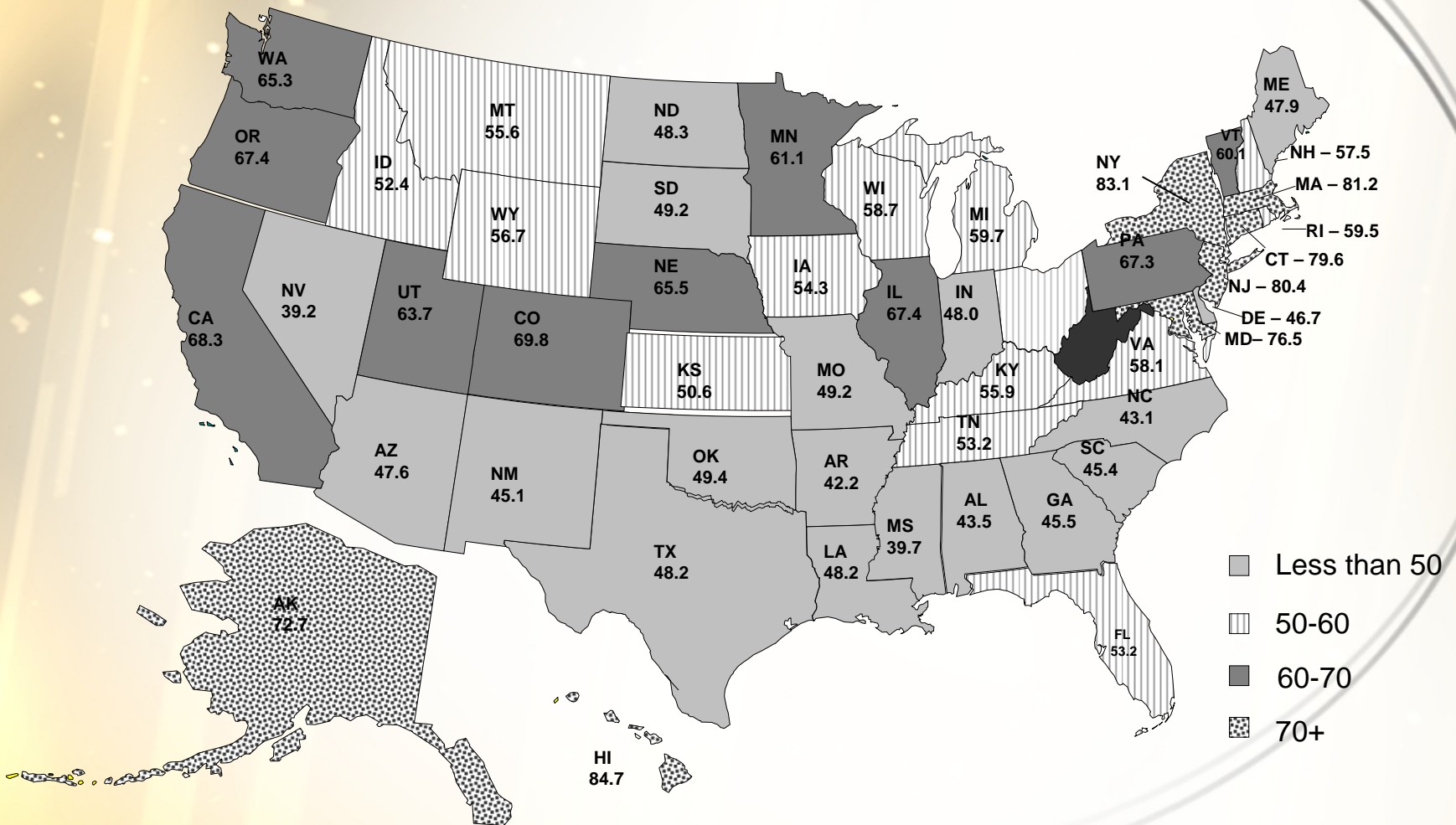
Source: Albert Guay, "Dental Practice: Prices, Production, and Profit," JADA, Vol. 136 (March 2005), 359.

# Is there a shortage?

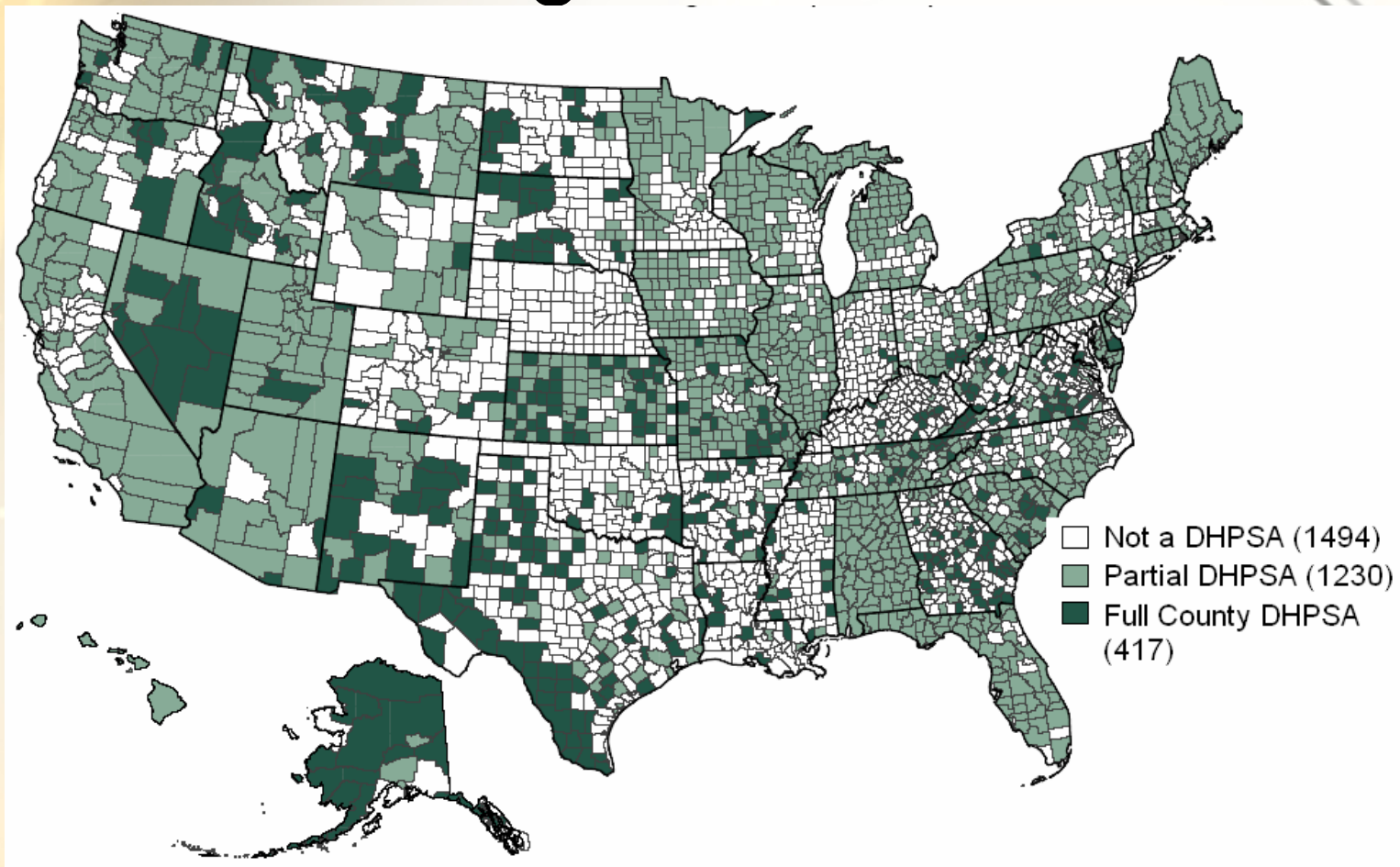
## Active dentists per 100,000 population



# Dentists per 100,000 population (2000)



# Dental Health Professional Shortage Areas, 2004



Source: UNC at Chapel Hill, <http://www.healthworkforce.unc.edu/maps/dhpsa04.pdf>

# Is there a shortage of hygienists?

Bureau of Labor Statistics reports:

- 158,000 hygienists in 2004
- Expected to grow much faster than average (>27%) by 2014
- ADHA says that, due to supervision requirements in many states, hygienists must locate where dentists are, so they are “maldistributed” as well

# Pediatric Providers...

- See children 13 times before age 5 (AAP)
- Can do: oral health evaluation, apply fluoride varnish, educate patients and parents, dispense oral health supplies, prescribe antimicrobials, do limited cleanings, refer to dentists
- Can be reimbursed by Medicaid in several states

# Practice laws on medical providers

- 32 states allow MDs, and 4 states allow RNs, to provide preventive oral health services
- 13 states allow MDs to provide limited oral health services (emergency, institutions)
- 4 states allow registered nurse anesthetists to provide anesthesia for dental care

# Supervision of hygienists

- Dental hygienists may...
  - be supervised for appropriate services by physicians
  - perform procedures without the physical presence of the supervising dentist in CHCs, RHCs, clinics, schools, nursing homes and practices that serve large numbers of low income patients

# Supervision and Payment for Hygienists

- General supervision in 45 states in dental office or some settings
- Direct access to patients in some settings in 20 states (AZ, CA, CO, CT, IA, KS, ME, MI, MN, MO, MT, NH, NM, NV, NY, OK, OR, RI, TX, WA)
- Medicaid can reimburse hygienists directly in 12 states (CA, CO, CT, ME, MN, MO, MT, NM, NV, OR, WA, WI)

# Mid-levels in dentistry

- ADHA model — Advanced dental hygiene practitioner
- Dental health aid therapist (Alaska), dental nurse, New Zealand model
- ADA model — Community Dental Health Coordinator

# Dental therapists

- 8 practicing in Alaska on reservations
- Prevention: fluoride treatments, sealants
- Treatment: x-rays, prophylaxis, gingival scaling
- Restoration: simple restorations, stainless steel crowns, extractions
- Supervision: general supervision under standing orders, dentists review x-rays and treatment plans electronically

# Advanced Dental Hygiene Practitioner—ADHA

- Prevention: comprehensive services
- Treatment: manage periodontal care, prophylaxis
- Restoration: simple restorations, extractions
- Supervision: unsupervised or general supervision, collaborative practice with dentist, physician, clinic manager

# Community Dental Health Coordinator—ADA

- Prevention: education, fluorides, sealants
- Treatment: gingival scaling, polishing
- Restoration: none
- Supervision: direct or indirect for patient care, general supervision for education