

Texas Dental Providers Face

# A CHALLENGING ROAD TO RECOVERY

The COVID-19 pandemic continues to be a major public health concern for many dental providers, especially in the state of Texas. On August 2020, The DentaQuest Partnership for Oral Health Advancement conducted a survey with participating providers in the DentaQuest network to assess the continued impact of COVID-19 on dentistry.

**97% (n=431) of dental providers in Texas are open for all services, but there are ongoing struggles with patient volumes and revenues:**

- 75% of Texas providers report significant reductions in patient volumes since the COVID-19 pandemic began, compared to 62% of providers in other states who responded to the survey. Similarly, 73% report less payment and collection for Texas, compared to 62% of other providers.
- 32% of Texas providers reported seeing less than half of their overall pre-COVID maximum number of patients, compared to 24% of others.
- 52% of Texas providers are seeing fewer new patients than pre-COVID, compared to 43% of others.
- 61% of Texas providers are seeing more patients without commercial dental insurance due to unemployment caused by COVID-19, compared to 50% of others.

**Despite Texas not permitting the use of teledentistry, Texas dental providers are open to it:**

- 1 in 5 are confident that they can utilize teledentistry to see patients, if given the chance, and nearly that many believe that the increased use of teledentistry will be a long-term change in dentistry.
- Nationally, 3 in 10 providers are currently seeing patients via telehealth or virtual platforms.
- Teledentistry is particularly useful in rural environments. Nationally, dental providers in rural areas are more likely than those in urban/suburban environments to use teledentistry to triage patients, prescribe needed medications, and visually examine the teeth and mouth.



## Teledentistry shows promise in oral health innovation

Teledentistry can offer multiple forms of technology to improve oral and overall health, offer flexibility of care settings, enhance patient engagement, close the gap in access to dental services, create and preserve jobs, and potentially save money for states and consumers. In a recent [study](#) by Advantage Dental and the DentaQuest Partnership, researchers found that 7 in 10 patients reported that their concern was taken care of during the teledental visit, while 9 in 10 patients said they would recommend it to another person. It is evident that patients are satisfied with the use of teledentistry.