Indiana Dental Workforce in Context
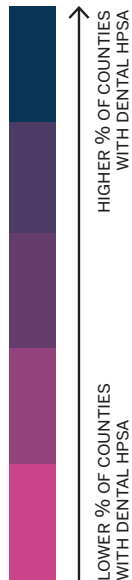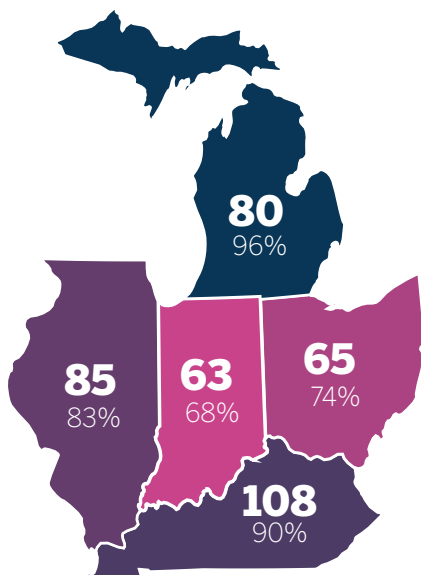
THE WORKFORCE

A dentist is a healthcare professional who takes care of your mouth, teeth, and gums. They check for problems, diagnose issues, and treat them, whether it involves simple procedures like cleanings or more complex ones like surgeries. Dentists are trained and educated to do this work ethically and legally, ensuring your oral health is in good hands. A dental hygienist is a healthcare professional who helps keep your mouth healthy. They check your teeth and gums, figure out if there are any problems, plan and carry out treatments to prevent or fix issues, and keep records of your care. Their main goal is to prevent and control oral diseases.

DOES INDIANA HAVE A DENTAL HEALTH WORKFORCE SHORTAGE?

The Health Resource and Services Administration (HRSA) is a federal agency that supports health infrastructure through a variety of programs including health professionals training , providing financial support to health care providers, and supporting the advancement of telehealth. In addition to these efforts, HRSA designates Health Professional Shortage Areas (HPSA) which indicate there is a shortage of specific types of healthcare providers. These shortages can be identified for a certain geographic location, a specific population group, or within a healthcare facility. Dental Health i s one of three health focus areas of the HPSA designations. The other two are Primary Care and Mental Health. Dental Health HPSAs are based on the number of dentists working in a particular area or serving a specific population. Out of Indiana's 92 counties, 63 (68%) are designated as a Dental HPSA by HRSA.

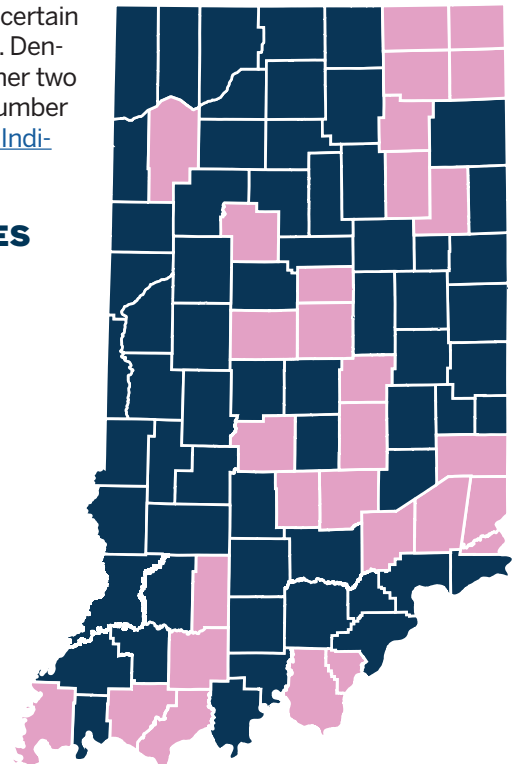## HOW DOES INDIANA COMPARE TO CONTIGUOUS STATES IN THEIR DENTAL HPSAs?

HOW MANY DENTAL HEALTH PROFESSIONALS ARE IN INDIANA?

2,532
DENTISTS

3,825
DENTAL HYGIENISTS

2024 Dentist and Dental Hygienist License and Supplemental Survey Data

HIGHER % OF COUNTIES WITH DENTAL HPSA

LOWER % OF COUNTIES WITH DENTAL HPSA

80
96%

85
83%

63
68%

65
74%

108
90%

Among its immediate neighbors, Indiana has the lowest percentage of counties with dental health shortage designations

INDIANA COUNTIES WITH A DENTAL HPSA

COUNTIES WITHOUT A DENTAL HPSA

BOWEN CENTER
FOR HEALTH WORKFORCE RESEARCH AND POLICY

INDIANA UNIVERSITY
SCHOOL OF MEDICINE

INTERSTATE COMPACTS

WHAT IS AN INTERSTATE COMPACT?

Interstate compacts are contracts between two or more states that are used to address specific issues that the states agree are priority areas. Indiana currently participates in 48 interstate compacts. The Bowen Center completed a Brief Series on Interstate Licensure Compacts that can be found here. Through licensure compacts, states establish uniform standards to lower barriers to interstate mobility and multi-state practice while preserving a state's practice act and initial licensure process. Licensure compacts also enhance public protection through a data system that allows member states to efficiently communicate licensure data, including disciplinary actions against licenses.
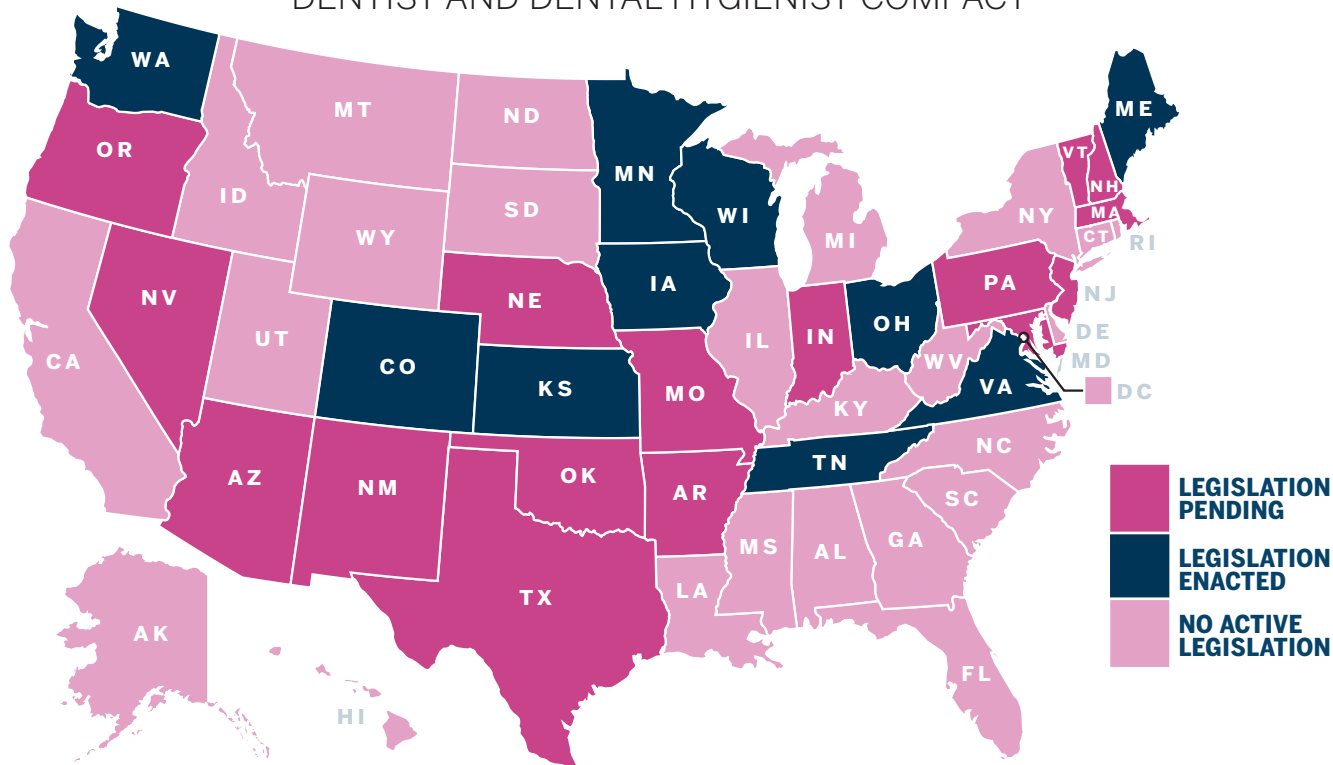
DENTAL AND DENTAL HYGIENIST COMPACT

The Dentist and Dental Hygienist Compact (Compact) is a legally binding agreement between states which allows dentists and dental hygienists that meet certain requirements to provide oral health services in states that have adopted the Compact. The Compact establishes a pathway for dentists and dental hygienists licensed in a state that has enacted the Compact to obtain "Compact Privilege". Compact privilege authorizes these professionals to provide services in other states (remote states) that participate in the Compact. To be granted compact privilege, a dentist or dental hygienist must hold a valid license in their home state, then they may apply for the compact privilege in a remote state, pay any required fees in the remote state(s) and meet any other remote state requirements, such as passing a jurisprudence exam.

The Dental and Dental Hygienist Compact is currently enacted in 10 states, while another 16 states have pending legislation to enact this compact, including Indiana. A state must enact the compact model legislation via the legislative process to join. The Compact is theorized to address workforce shortages of dentists and dental hygienists by supporting interstate mobility of the workforce and reducing regulatory barriers to practice.

When looking at Indiana's neighboring states, Ohio is the only state that has implemented the Compact.

DENTIST AND DENTAL HYGIENIST COMPACT

LEGISLATION PENDING

LEGISLATION ENACTED

NO ACTIVE LEGISLATION

Source: https://ddhcompact.org/compact-map/