



The Association of Dental Support Organizations (ADSO) is a non-profit organization committed to supporting its members, allowing affiliated dentists to focus on patients, expand access to quality dental care, and improve the oral health of their communities.

The ADSO represents Dental Support Organizations (DSOs) before the public, policymakers, and the media. We appreciate the invitation from Senator Dave Argall and the Senate Majority Policy Committee to provide comments on the shortage of dental care providers, particularly in underserved areas, and partner with policy makers to provide solutions to enhance access to oral healthcare.

ADSO's 12 members in Pennsylvania support over 200 dental practices that employ 350 Dentists and nearly 900 Dental Hygienists. Our members support practices that provide 1 million patient visits per year in the Commonwealth.

Despite all that, like the U.S., Pennsylvania is experiencing a dental care workforce shortage. Thirty-five of Pennsylvania's 67 counties are considered dental shortage areas which means that there is less than 1 dentist per 5,000 residents in those areas. Pennsylvania ranks 20th in the U.S. in the number of dentists per 100,000 in population.

DSOs play a critical role in the dental industry by allowing dentists to focus on practicing dentistry and ensuring high-quality patient care. DSOs provide a suite of back-office support services for a management fee. This centralized support platform typically creates economies of scale for supported dental practices, reducing vendor costs, discounted equipment and supplies, and more favorable lease terms. For dentists who are not business savvy or desire to focus on practicing dentistry rather than running a small business, a DSO can ensure that their practices have the resources and best available technology required to compete and continue providing care to their patients.

Nationwide, DSO-supported dental practices have mitigated access to care concerns for Medicaid populations that predominantly involve low-income families. In fact, in 2020, of the 43% of American dentists who participated in Medicaid, 63% of those dentists received non-clinical support from a DSO. Because DSO-supported dental practices benefit from economies of scale and access to additional resources, they can better sustain a viable business model that involves significant Medicaid program participation. In short, DSOs are critical to the continued care and expanded access to care of these vulnerable and underserved populations. For these reasons and others,

today, 34% of dental school graduates choose to work for DSO-supported dental practices.

The ADSO supports passage of legislation that will expand access to care by making it easier for qualified dentists and dental hygienists from other states to relocate and practice in the Commonwealth. The Dental and Dental Hygienist Compact (DDHC), introduced this session as SB 81 and HB 1127, was developed by the Council of State Governments through a grant by the U.S. Department of Defense. Already passed in 12 states, if passed in Pennsylvania, dentists and dental hygienists will be better able to provide critical services without geographic restrictions, expanding access for and improving the oral health of patients across the Commonwealth.

Oral healthcare is an essential healthcare service. ADSO stands ready to join the conversation on how best to graduate greater numbers of qualified dentists and hygienists, and how to best leverage new technologies in the dental office and for remote care.

Respectfully submitted,

Gray McGinnis, ADSO Vice President of Government Relations

June 10, 2025