

Communicating Health Equity and Value-Based Care in Dental Education: An Environmental Scan

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Background & Objective

- Dental education programs develop effective future practitioners by educating students in the most innovative approaches to patient care delivery
- As the dental workforce steadily grows, dental schools should be visible in communicating how both didactic education and patient care experiences align with that growth
- This environmental scan of dental schools aims to assess how dental schools communicate educational approaches and organizational commitment to health equity, care integration, public health, and value-based care (VBC) through their websites

Methods

- An environmental scan was completed using websites of all 68 dental schools measuring 24 data points
- Data were analyzed to evaluate differences based on size, type of school, geographic location and organizational infrastructure.

Principal Findings

- The US currently has 25,995 students enrolled in predoctoral dental education programs. Of the 68 accredited dental schools, 41 are public institutions, 23 are private and 4 are private-state related
- 61% (75% of public and 35% of private) dental schools have a diversity, equity, and inclusion initiative, however, one fifth (21%) listed equity in the school's mission, vision or objective
- Other findings are summarized in Table 1

Key Findings

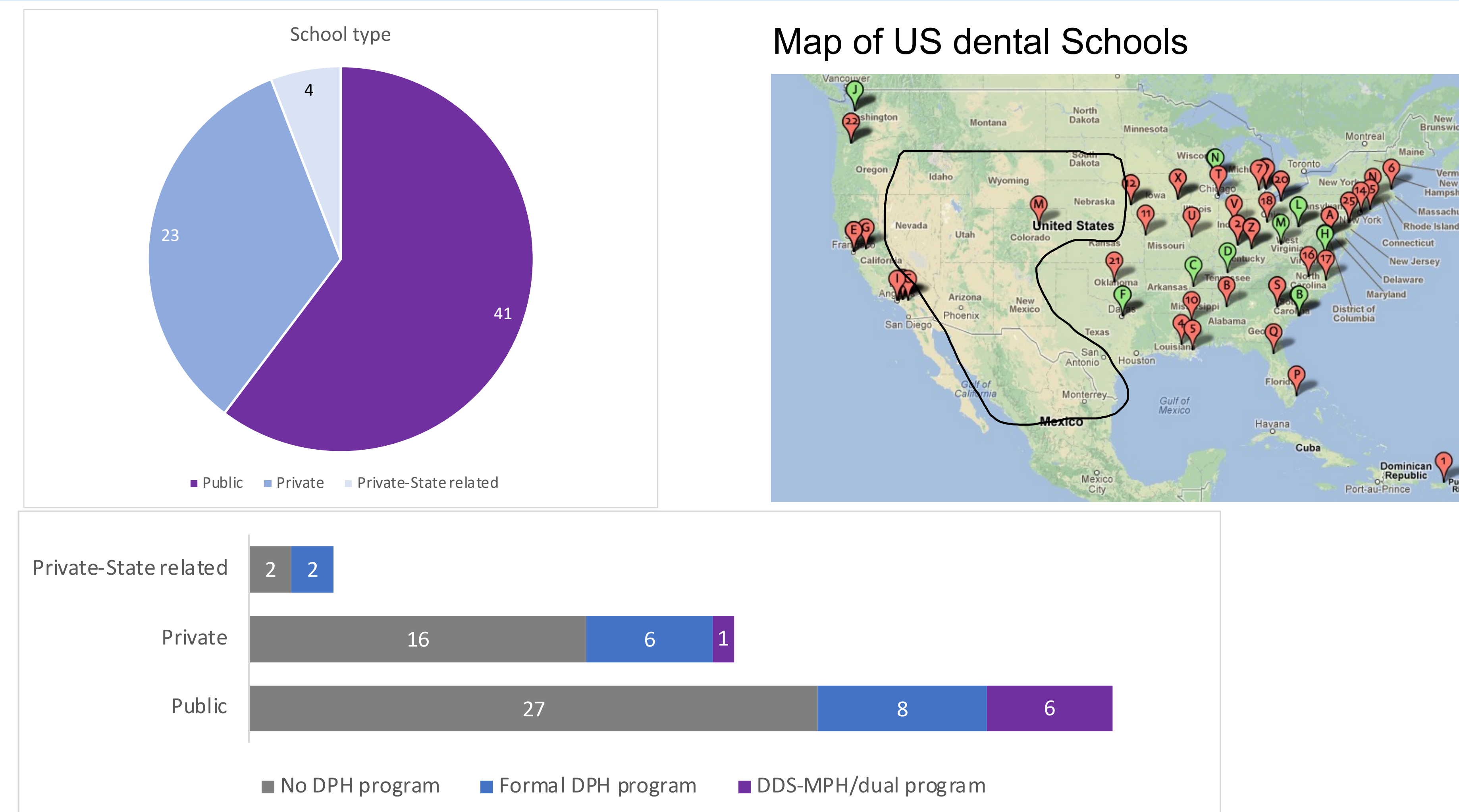


Table 1

Data	Overall (n, %)	Private (n, %)	Public & Private-State related (n, %)
School type	68 (100%)	23 (34%)	45 (66%)
Has a DPH program	16 (23%)	6 (26%)	10 (22%)
Promote intra-professional training on website	33 (48%)	10 (43%)	23 (51%)
Promote inter-professional training on website	41 (60%)	17 (74%)	28 (62%)
CE training on Value based care	9 (13%)	1 (4%)	8 (18%)
Equity in vision, mission, values of school	7 (10%)	4 (17%)	3 (6%)

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Discussion

- A strong understanding of the models of dental care delivery, their cost and quality outcomes is essential to improve the quality of care provided
- A value-based care model incentivizes prevention and personalization in care, as well as reduces waste, lowers costs, and importantly, improves oral health outcomes for patients.
- However, dental schools currently fall behind in the training provided to students in relation to value-based care, and promotion of team-based care approaches through inter-and intra-professional training.

Implications for Dental Schools

- Websites are the primary source of information for students and patients to learn about dental schools
- While some schools listed diversity within their values or mission statement, few dental schools integrated health equity into their mission statement or patient care philosophy
- Schools need to provide adequate training in models other than fee-for-service to ensure that students are well-equipped to transition to more team-based approaches that focus on the value of care delivered rather than volume.

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