MISSOURI DEPARTMENT OF
HEALTH &
SENIOR SERVICES
Office of Dental Health

Oral Preventive Assistant-EFDA Pilot Project

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DENTAL WORKFORCE SHORTAGE

BECKER'S
DENTAL + DSO REVIEW

In Benchmarking

Ariana Portalatin

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Listen AA TEXT

States ranked by shortage of dental providers — California is No. 1

The U.S. is in need of 11,742 dental practitioners to relieve shortage areas, according to data from the Health Resources and Services Administration.

Here are all 50 states and Washington D.C. ranked by number of HRSA-designated shortage areas in 2022:

California: 513

Missouri: 341

Alaska: 317

Texas: 317

Florida: 269

Illinois: 247

ESTIMATED LOSS

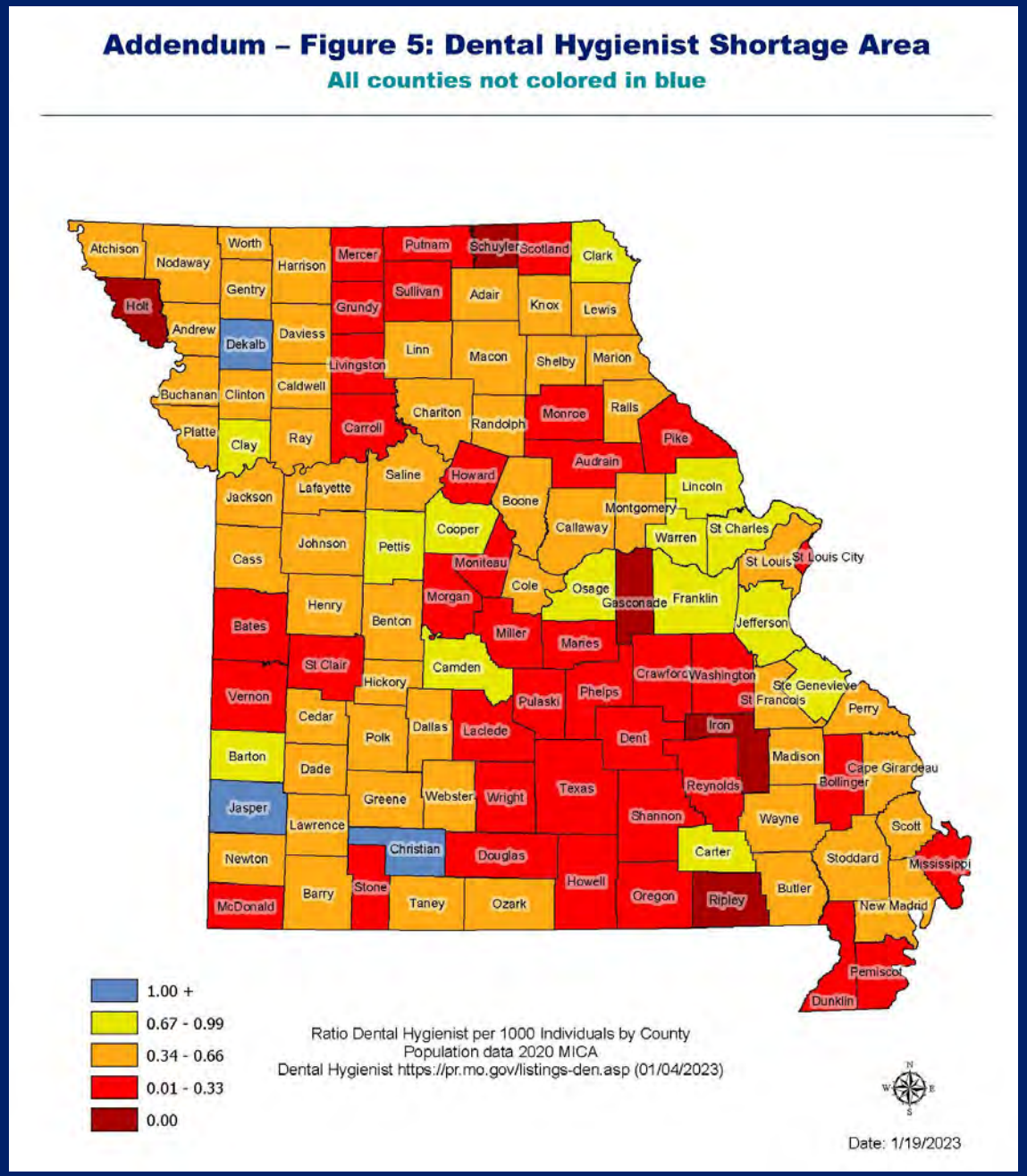
5.8%
Dentists

8%
Hygienists

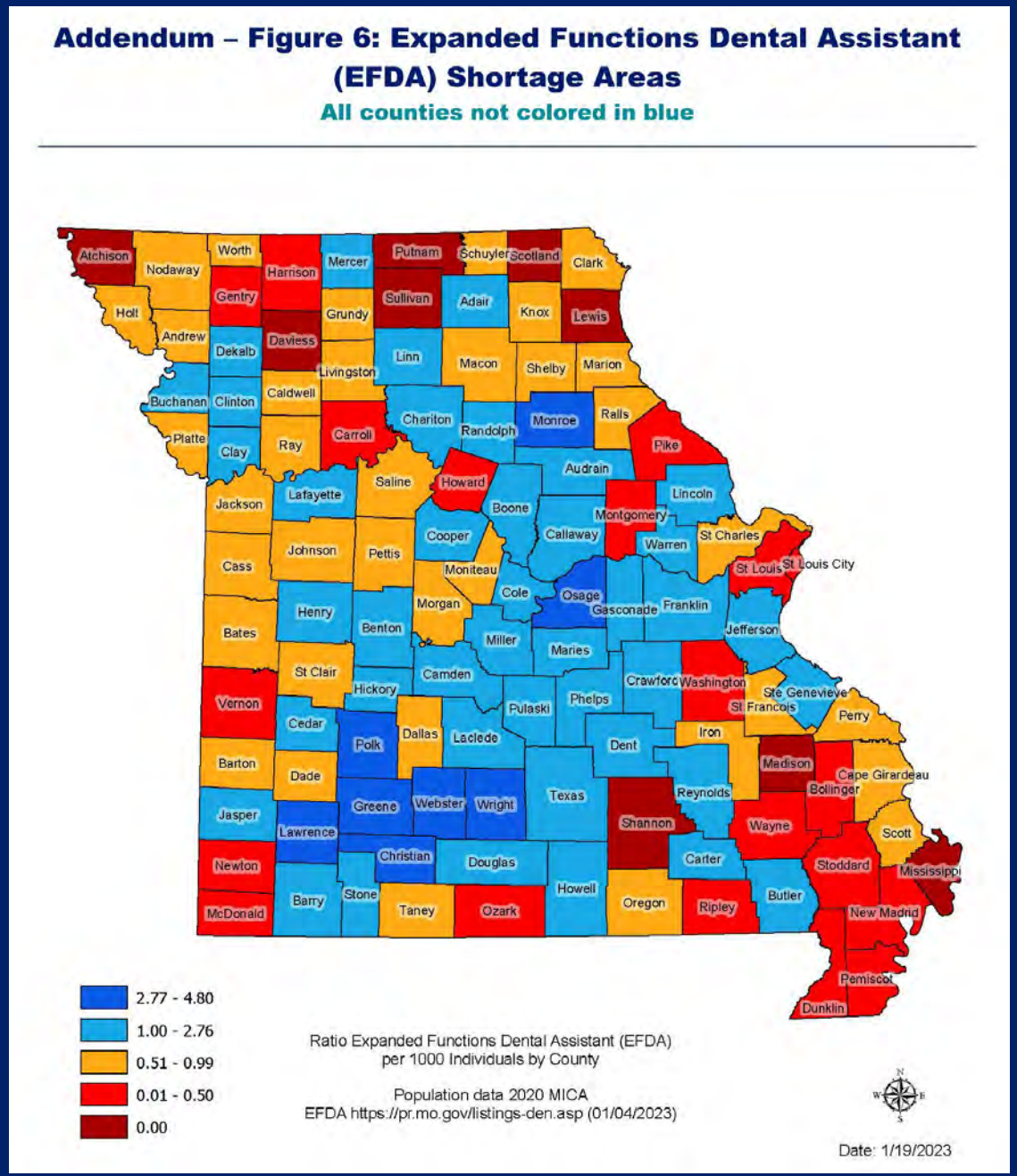
3-5%
Administrative

5-12%
Dental Assistants

Gurenlian JR, Morrissey R, Estrich CG, et al. Employment patterns of dental hygienists in the United States during the COVID-19 pandemic. J Dent Hyg. 2021;95(1):17-24.



- Access to care in rural areas and Medicaid clinics have a dire shortage of hygienists.
- This map of RDH by county displays that even though Missouri has produced a great number of hygienists in the last 20 years, few are going to rural areas, and few are opting to work in Medicaid clinics in sufficient numbers. (The darker the color, the more severe shortage of DH)



- Missouri also has produced a great number of Expanded Function Dental Assistants in the last 20 years.
- This map of EFDA by county displays better distribution of existing EFDA throughout the state and therefore—with approval of a pilot project—the chance to further train these and future EFDAs to provide preventive care on healthy patients in underserved areas.

Possible Solutions Using a Pilot Project: Nursing Home Dental Care

Nursing Home Dental Care

Using Teledentistry and Dental Team Collaboration

1. ODH project authorized by Missouri Dental Board in September 2022
2. RDH/DA teams working under the supervision of dentists
3. Using Teledentistry for dentists to review and write disease control treatment plans and triage patients according to severity of need

Possible Solutions Using a Pilot Project: Dental Assisting Pipeline

Dental Assistant Pipeline

Develop a Dental Assistant Pipeline through Missouri High School Career Centers (HSCC)

1. ODH project, currently seeking funding
2. In cooperation with an HSCC, develop a 10-month educational pilot program for high school juniors and seniors
3. Would allow students to graduate with HS diploma and dental assisting certificate, plus EFDA certification

Possible Solutions Using a Pilot Project: Oral Preventive Assistant (OPA) EFDA

Oral Preventive Assistant-EFDA

Develop an Oral Preventive Assistant (OPA)-EFDA

1. ODH requesting MDB to authorize this pilot project to address workforce shortages, to be carried out by the ODH and the Missouri Dental Association
2. OPA EFDA would deliver oral health instruction and preventive care, including supragingival scaling on patients, under direct supervision of a dentist or hygienist
3. Pilot would include curriculum development, training, testing and measurement with reporting to MDB and ODH

Why a Pilot Project?

Pilot Project for an OPA-EFDA

A pilot project isn't the final answer …

- It's a trial effort to implement a new care method to underserved areas in a controlled manner to see if it improves access to and/or quality of care.
- It occurs in specifically selected, limited settings and with specific measurement and reporting requirements to allow decision makers—in this case, the Missouri Dental Board—decide if it's worthwhile, needs to be improved or needs to be discarded.

Why an OPA-EFDA?

Pilot Project for an OPA-EFDA

Why a pilot with the Expanded Functions model …

- EFDA is a proven training model, having been successfully in place in Missouri since the late 1990s.
- EFDAs are trained to provide a specific, reversible skill of dental treatment, and under direct supervision. They provide safe, effective care—and are especially critical in this continued dental workforce shortage.
- EFDAs can increase productivity 15-20%, because they allow dentists and hygienists to work at the top of their scopes to provide more advanced care procedures.