

# Pediatric dentists' attitudes towards expanded function dental assistants: A knowledge, attitude, and practice-based study



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## INTRODUCTION

In its policy statement, the AAPD “encourages the greater use of expanded function dental assistants/auxiliaries and dental hygienists under direct supervision by a dentist to help increase the volume of services provided within a dental home” (American Academy of Pediatric Dentistry: 2020:47).

This research project seeks to answer the following question: Are pediatric dentists aware of the benefits associated with hiring an EFDA, and are they open to utilizing them in their practices?

## PURPOSE

The purpose of this study is to discover if pediatric dentists are aware of the benefits associated with hiring an expanded function dental assistant, and if they are open to utilizing expanded function dental assistants in their practices.

## METHOD

A recruitment email was sent to pediatric dentists who are members of the western district of the AAPD. The study population consisted of 1,600 members. Subjects were asked to complete a brief one-time anonymous survey in REDCap about their views towards expanded function dental assistants to answer the research question: Are pediatric dentists aware of the benefits associated with hiring an expanded function dental assistant, and are they open to utilizing expanded function dental assistants in their practices?



## RESULTS

- 109 surveys were collected.
- Most respondents (70.6%) have been in practice for 10 or more years.
- 52.3% of respondents answered that their state currently allows expanded function dental assistants to place & condense amalgam, or place & finish composite.
- 70.6% felt neutral towards expanded function dental assistants and 53.2% felt the most limiting factor to their acceptance was the quality of their work.
- 61.5% would hire or work with an expanded function dental assistant.

## CONCLUSIONS

Respondents with 10+ years of experience felt positive about the utilization of expanded function dental assistants. There was a statistically significant finding that dentists in states that allow EFDA's feel legislature is the most limiting factor to their nationwide acceptance (p=0.009).

## REFERENCES

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