

# Dental/DSO Industry Newsletter

## Dental/DSO Industry Market Intelligence

### In This Issue

#### CALENDAR OF EVENTS . . . . . 2

#### KEY FINDINGS

DSO Scale, Capital Markets Activity and Broad Consolidation Momentum . . . . 4

Tech-Enabled Operational Innovation and Workforce Strategy Reshaping DSO Competitive Advantage . . . . . 4

#### GENERAL DENTISTRY NEWS

New York Workers' Compensation Board Adopts Revised Dental Fee Schedule. . . . . 5

State Medicaid Budget Pressures Could Put Adult Dental Benefits at Risk . . . . 5

ADA and Coalition Push for Increased Federal Oral Health Funding . . . . . 6

2025 NADP Dental Benefits Report Shows Enrollment Decline . . . . . 6

Medicaid Dental Utilization is Flat Despite Expanded Adult Benefits . . . . . 6

#### DSO EXPANSION & CONSOLIDATION

U.S. Oral Surgery Management (USOSM) Adds Multiple New Partner Practices. . . . . 7

PDS Health Raises Over \$1 Million to Expand Access to Special Care Dentistry . . . . . 7

Alphaeon and Women in DSO Forge Strategic Partnership . . . . . 7

Rock Dental Brands Recognized as a Top DSO for 2025 Due to Focus on Support Services . . . . . 7

#### OTHER DSO NEWS

Smile Doctors Announces New Affiliations and Expansion . . . . . 8

November 2025 DSO Deals Highlight Continued Network Consolidation and Multi-State Growth . . . . . 8

Park Dental Partners Goes Public with Nasdaq IPO . . . . . 9

#### PRIVATE EQUITY

GoTu Technology Secures \$45 Million Growth Investment . . . . . 10

Market Forecast and Valuation Trends Highlight Continued PE Interest in Dental Platforms . . . . . 10

#### PARTNERSHIPS AND INNOVATION

Global Dental Experts Convene in Tokyo to Drive Innovation Across AI, Biomaterials, Teledentistry and 3D Printing . . . . . 11

Overjet Acquires DentalBee to Expand AI-Powered Clinical Documentation . . . . . 11

Pearl Expands Pediatric Capabilities with New AI Platform for Kids . . . . . 12

Digital Dentures Market Expansion Driven by AI, 3D Printing and Teledentistry Trends . . . . . 12

#### LITIGATION

First Choice Dental Agrees to Settle Ransomware-Related Class Action . . 13

Dental Practice Consumer Protection Settlement in Minnesota . . . . . 13

La Costa Dental Excellence Cybersecurity Incident and Potential Litigation . . . . . 14

Appeals Court Denies Immediate Review of Delta Dental Antitrust Ruling . . . . . 14

#### STAFFING

Multiple Workforce Reports Highlight Structural Staffing Challenges Across Dental Roles . . . . . 15

Dental Hygienist Workforce Shrinkage in California . . . . . 15

# CALENDAR OF EVENTS

## **Yankee Dental Congress 2026**

JANUARY 29–31, 2026

Boston, MA

This large regional event, held at the Thomas Michael Menino Convention and Exhibition Center (formerly BCEC), offers over 100 in-person lectures, hands-on workshops, an extensive expo hall and networking opportunities. It attracts professionals from across the Northeast and supports DSOs with updates on clinical innovations, practice management and technology adoption.

For more information, please click [here](#).

## **American Academy of Dental Group Practice (AADGP) 2026**

FEBRUARY 4–6, 2026

Austin, TX

(Hyatt Regency Lost Pines Resort & Spa)

The AADGP 2026 Annual Meeting & Expo is a major national conference focused on dental group practice leadership, operational excellence and collaborative growth. Organized by the American Academy of Dental Group Practice, this event brings together multi-location practice leaders, DSOs, clinical executives and practice managers.

For more information, please click [here](#).

## **Women in DSO® Empower & Grow 2026**

MARCH 5–7, 2026

Caesars Palace, Las Vegas, NV

The Women in DSO® Empower & Grow Conference is a leading industry gathering focused on leadership development, strategic growth and organizational excellence for professionals in dental service organizations. Although historically highlighting women-identifying leaders, the event is open to all DSO industry executives and practitioners.

For more information, please click [here](#).

## **IADR/AADOCR/CADR General Session & Exhibition**

MARCH 25–28, 2026

San Diego Convention Center, CA

The combined General Session & Exhibition hosted by the International Association for Dental Research (IADR), American Association for Dental, Oral and Craniofacial Research (AADOCR) and Canadian Association for Dental Research (CADR) is one of the largest scientific and research-oriented dental events worldwide.

For more information, please click [here](#).

## **International Conference on Dentistry and Oral Health (Dental 2026 – Hybrid)**

APRIL 20–22, 2026

Paris, France & Online

The International Conference on Dentistry and Oral Health (Dental 2026) is a global hybrid event designed to bring together dental professionals, practice managers, researchers and innovators from around the world.

For more information, please click [here](#).

## **Midwest Dental Conference 2026**

APRIL 23–26, 2026

Kansas City, MO

Hosted by the University of Missouri–Kansas City School of Dentistry, the Midwest Dental Conference is a longstanding regional event that blends educational programming, vendor exhibits and networking for dental professionals across the central United States.

For more information, please click [here](#).

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## CALENDAR OF EVENTS (cont'd)

### **2026 ADSO Summit**

JUNE 15–17, 2026  
Chicago, IL

This major three-day event, organized by the Association of Dental Support Organizations (ADSO), is marketed as “Dentistry’s Main Event for the DSO industry’s top leaders and their partners.” The agenda promises networking, thought leadership and innovation sessions geared toward large-scale DSOs, their executive teams and strategic partners. The summit emphasizes peer-connections and meaningful conversations about the most pressing issues in the dental-group/DSO space (including growth strategy, operational scaling, vendor relationships and leadership). Because it’s several months away, registration, sponsorship and program details are still forthcoming.

For more information, please click [here](#).

### **Florida Dental Conference 2026**

JUNE 25–27, 2026  
Orlando, FL

Situated at the Gaylord Palms Resort & Convention Center in Orlando/Kissimmee, this event offers comprehensive continuing education, a large exhibit hall featuring new dental products and services, and business forums. The conference addresses specific challenges and opportunities for DSOs in fast-growing markets like Florida.

For more information, please click [here](#).

### **The Dental Exchange – First Ever Annual Dental Industry Event 2026**

OCTOBER 8–10, 2026  
Grapevine, TX

This upcoming event is billed as “The first ever Annual Dental Industry Event” and will be held in Grapevine, Texas (Gaylord Texan). According to the listing, it intends to bring “all of dentistry together” but is included in the DSO-events category on the calendar, signaling relevance to multi-location practices, DSOs and their partners.

For more information, please click [here](#).



Please contact us if you would like to post information regarding our upcoming events or if you’d like to guest author an article for this newsletter.

Kayleigh DeLaet  
Marketing Content & Brand Specialist  
[kdelaet@beneschlaw.com](mailto:kdelaet@beneschlaw.com)

# KEY FINDINGS

## **DSO Scale, Capital Markets Activity and Broad Consolidation Momentum**

### ***Public and Private Capital Infusion Driving Geographic Growth and Operational Scale***

#### **Continued Network Expansion Across Platforms**

Dental support organizations (DSOs) sustained notable expansion activity in late 2025. [The November 2025 DSO Deal Roundup](#) highlights that multiple platforms grew through both affiliations and de novo practice openings in diverse states, spanning general dentistry, pediatric and specialty care. Major players such as Heartland Dental, MB2 Dental, SALT Dental Partners, Imagen Dental Partners and Smile Partners USA expanded their practice networks in multi-state clusters, while niche growth occurred in regions like New York City (Vitana Pediatric & Orthodontic Partners) and Connecticut (Smile Doctors).

#### **Public Capital Markets Participation**

In early December 2025, Park Dental Partners, a DSO supporting general and multispecialty practices across Minnesota and Wisconsin, [successfully completed its Nasdaq IPO](#), raising approximately \$20 million and beginning trading under the ticker PARK. The IPO signals broader capital markets access for DSOs, providing a public equity pathway in addition to private-capital strategies, and highlights investor confidence in scalable service models and operational support functions (e.g., revenue cycle, IT, administrative services). The proceeds were described as useful for future expansion efforts and potential acquisitions, underscoring DSOs' growth orientation.

#### **Private Equity and Valuation Trends**

Private equity interest in the dental/DSO sector remains strong. Late November 2025 valuation analyses point to continued attractiveness of dental platforms, particularly pediatric and specialty practices with stable demand patterns and predictable utilization rates. Despite broader economic headwinds, sustained deal flow and valuation resilience (drawing near pre-2022 levels) reinforce PE confidence in dental assets and their long-run growth prospects. This trend supports an environment where both traditional add-on acquisitions and capital-market transactions coexist as viable scale strategies.

## **Tech-Enabled Operational Innovation and Workforce Strategy Reshaping DSO Competitive Advantage**

### ***Adoption of AI, Staffing Models and Workforce Solutions as Core DSO Growth Levers***

**AI and Digital Integration Across DSO Operations** Industry intelligence highlights growing adoption of data-driven and technology-enabled practice tools within the DSO landscape. Insights from Benesch's [November 2025 Dental/DSO Intelligence Report](#) emphasize that AI adoption is accelerating, not just within clinical imaging and diagnostics but also across functions that impact revenue cycles, case acceptance and standardized record workflows. For example, growth in AI tools automating claim attachments and narrative generation (e.g., VideaHealth's ClaimsAI) and AI-driven diagnostic solutions illustrates how DSOs are leveraging technology to improve operational performance and clinical outcomes.

#### **Workforce Models Respond to Labor Pressures**

Workforce and staffing remain central strategic concerns for DSOs. Multiple industry sources point to [persistent shortages](#) of hygienists and assistants, fueling innovation in staffing models and operational design. Staffing platforms (e.g., Cloud Dentistry) and flexible workforce solutions offer tools that reduce

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## KEY FINDINGS (cont'd)

costs and improve staffing agility across clinic networks. These cloud-based workforce platforms emphasize scalability, giving DSOs access to large pools of clinicians and support staff without the constraints of traditional hiring cycles.

DSO leaders are reportedly emphasizing labor flexibility and autonomy to retain staff, moving toward models where clinicians, especially hygienists, have greater schedule control and multiple engagement options rather than traditional full-time roles. This aligns with workforce strategies that reduce turnover and support broader service capacity despite labor market constraints.

### **Strategic Tech Partnerships and Innovation Signals**

Beyond internal staffing strategies, broader dental innovation trends, such as [global conferences focusing on AI, teledentistry and 3D workflows](#), as well as acquisitions integrating AI documentation into clinical workflows, reflect an industry-wide orientation toward technology as a competitive differentiator for large clinical networks. AI platforms, hybrid digital care tools and cloud-based practice management systems are likely to impact how DSOs structure care delivery and manage multilocation workflows over the coming years.

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## GENERAL DENTISTRY NEWS

NOVEMBER 12, 2025

### **New York Workers' Compensation Board Adopts Revised Dental Fee Schedule**

The New York State Workers' Compensation Board published a final rule updating the Workers' Compensation dental fee schedule, effective November 13, 2025. The amended rule incorporates an updated dental fee schedule for dental services under the board's jurisdiction. It also specifies that in contested claims ultimately resolved in favor of claimants, payers must increase reimbursement by 25% for services billed under the fee schedule during the dispute. The rule reflects feedback received during the public comment period and aligns dental fees with broader healthcare reimbursement standards within the state's workers' compensation system.

Source: NYSDA Publications

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NOVEMBER 13, 2025

### **State Medicaid Budget Pressures Could Put Adult Dental Benefits at Risk**

A total of 26 Medicaid budget surveys and related analyses have flagged state budget shortfalls and fiscal pressure as a key risk to optional adult dental benefits. Several states have targeted benefits or considered rate changes to balance budgets; this remains on the radar going into FY2026 planning.

Source: KFF

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## GENERAL DENTISTRY NEWS (cont'd)

DECEMBER 4, 2025

### **ADA and Coalition Push for Increased Federal Oral Health Funding**

In early December, the American Dental Association, alongside the American Academy of Pediatric Dentistry, American Dental Education Association and other oral health organizations, sent a letter to the chairs and ranking members of the House and Senate Appropriations committees. They urged the adoption of higher funding levels in the Fiscal Year 2026 Labor-HHS appropriations bill for federal oral health programs affecting dental research, workforce development and disease prevention. The joint advocacy highlighted the role of programs like the CDC's Division of Oral Health and Title VII oral health training programs in expanding care and strengthening the pipeline of dental professionals, noting data that a substantial share of Title VII program graduates practice in underserved areas.

Source: ADA News

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DECEMBER 4, 2025

### **2025 NADP Dental Benefits Report Shows Enrollment Decline**

The 2025 Dental Benefits Report from the National Association of Dental Plans (NADP) shows a 2.3% decline in overall dental benefits enrollment compared to 2024, with coverage now at approximately 284 million Americans. Both commercial and government-funded plans saw declines: commercial dental plan enrollment fell about 2%, and publicly funded plan enrollment fell about 3%. Within public benefits, Medicare Advantage dental coverage enrollment decreased by 11.4 % to about 22.6 million, while Medicaid/CHIP enrollment edged slightly up. Dental Preferred Provider Organization (DPPO) plans remain the dominant commercial plan type, representing about 89% of that market and roughly half of commercial group plans are self-insured.

Source: National Association of Dental Plans

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DECEMBER 9, 2025

### **Medicaid Dental Utilization is Flat Despite Expanded Adult Benefits**

The American Dental Association's Health Policy Institute (HPI) released updated data showing that dental care utilization among Medicaid beneficiaries has remained largely unchanged in recent years. Despite a decade of adult dental benefit expansions in Medicaid across many states, with 38 states plus DC offering enhanced adult benefits, utilization among both adult and child Medicaid enrollees has stagnated compared with privately insured populations. In addition, dentist participation in Medicaid programs has not significantly increased; about 41 % of U.S. dentists participate in Medicaid or CHIP as of 2024, roughly similar to a decade ago. HPI points to low reimbursement rates in many states (often well below private insurance levels) as a persistent barrier.

Source: ADA News

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# DSO EXPANSION & CONSOLIDATION

NOVEMBER 13, 2025

## **U.S. Oral Surgery Management (USOSM) Adds Multiple New Partner Practices**

U.S. Oral Surgery Management (USOSM), a management services organization for oral and maxillofacial surgery (OMS) practices, announced that it has secured partnerships with three new practices across three states: Maryland, New York and Oregon.

Source: GlobeNewswire

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NOVEMBER 20, 2025

## **PDS Health Raises Over \$1 Million to Expand Access to Special Care Dentistry**

PDS Health announced successful fundraising campaigns totaling over \$1 million intended to expand access to special care dentistry for patients with intellectual and developmental disabilities. The initiative reflects the organization's broader mission to support underserved populations through targeted programs and infrastructure investments.

Source: Morningstar

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DECEMBER 03, 2025

## **Alphaeon and Women in DSO Forge Strategic Partnership**

Alphaeon, a third-party patient financing and technology provider, announced a Platinum Industry Partnership with Women in DSO, an organization dedicated to empowering women leaders within dental support organizations. As part of this partnership:

- [Amy Mendoza](#), Alphaeon's Chief Marketing Officer, was appointed to the Women in DSO Advisory Board.
- The collaboration intends to support development, leadership pathways and strategic impact for women in the DSO sector, including networking, mentorship, advocacy and education.
- A key focus is also expanding patient financing solutions that support case acceptance and access to care within DSO-supported practices.

Source: Dentistry Today

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DECEMBER 08, 2025

## **Rock Dental Brands Recognized as a Top DSO for 2025 Due to Focus on Support Services**

Rock Dental Brands was recognized as a Top Dental Support Organization for 2025 by Healthcare Business Review. The announcement highlights Rock Dental's expanding Dental Network Alliance and its leadership in supporting network providers and driving practice growth. While this recognition itself isn't a consolidation event, it underscores ongoing network growth and market momentum as Rock Dental continues to expand support services and affiliated practice collaborations.

Source: RockDental Brands

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## OTHER DSO NEWS

NOVEMBER 21, 2025

### **Smile Doctors Announces New Affiliations and Expansion**

Smile Doctors, the largest orthodontic support organization (OSO) network in the United States, announced a set of new practice affiliations and joint-venture expansions that boost its national footprint and specialist density. According to the organization's November 21, 2025, press announcement, Smile Doctors added two new affiliated practices in Connecticut, Daniels Orthodontics and Team Demas Orthodontics, bringing additional provider capacity into key Northeast markets.

In addition to these affiliations, Smile Doctors also announced two expansion acquisitions structured as joint ventures with affiliated doctors in Texas, True Smile Orthodontics in Harker Heights/Copperas Cove and Pendleton Orthodontics led by Dr. Ryan Pendleton and Dr. Chris Stansbury of Wired Orthodontics. The company emphasized that these new partnerships extend Smile Doctors' network to more than 560 affiliated practices across 36 states, reinforcing its position as a leading orthodontic support network in the U.S. Smile Doctors' leadership noted that technology, resource sharing and collaborative development with affiliated doctors support continued growth while enabling clinicians to focus on patient care and clinical excellence.

Source: PR Newswire

DECEMBER 1, 2025

### **November 2025 DSO Deals Highlight Continued Network Consolidation and Multi-State Growth**

The DSO Deal Roundup–November 2025 published by Group Dentistry Now compiles a series of significant affiliation and expansion moves by DSOs across the U.S., illustrating continued consolidation in late 2025. Several major and regional players expanded their networks through multiple affiliations, de novo practices and partnerships across a range of specialties.

Highlights include:

- Heartland Dental affiliated with Avon Dental Care in Ohio and Water Lily Dental Care in Florida, and also opened four de novo practices in Kentucky, Florida, Colorado and Nevada, reinforcing its national footprint.
- MB2 Dental welcomed a new doctor partner and added three affiliated practices in Texas (Fantastic Smiles of Houston), Illinois (Sunflower Dental) and Arizona (DS Family and Cosmetic Dentistry). It also opened a seventh Dove Family Dentistry location in Raleigh, TN, bringing its 2025 total to 57 practices.
- SALT Dental Partners expanded its network via affiliations with Parker Orthodontics and Yakima Orthodontics in Washington and Brick Pediatric Dentistry & Orthodontics in New Jersey.
- PDS Health opened five new de novo dental practices across Texas (Conroe, Humble), California (Riverside), Colorado (Westminster) and Virginia (Falls Church), supporting its growing integrated healthcare support model now spanning more than 1,000 offices in 24 states.

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## OTHER DSO NEWS (cont'd)

- Imagen Dental Partners announced new partnerships with practices in San Francisco and Phoenix, expanding its California and Arizona presence.
- Smile Doctors added two affiliated practices in Connecticut and completed two joint-venture expansion acquisitions in Texas, True Smile Orthodontics and Pendleton Orthodontics, boosting its network to over 560 practices in 36 states.
- Smile Partners USA formed partnerships with multiple practices in Illinois and Colorado, strengthening its Midwest and Mountain West coverage.
- Vitana Pediatric & Orthodontic Partners expanded in New York City with the addition of Bright Healthy Smiles. The roundup also notes expansions by Lone Peak Dental Group (acquiring a pediatric practice in South Carolina, bringing its total to 10 locations), Accelerate Dental, and others.

Source: Group Dentistry Now

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DECEMBER 12, 2025

### **Park Dental Partners Goes Public with Nasdaq IPO**

Park Dental Partners, Inc. successfully completed its initial public offering (IPO) in early December 2025, marking a major milestone in the dental support organization landscape. Park Dental Partners priced and sold 1,535,000 shares of common stock at \$13.00 per share in its IPO, generating approximately \$20 million in gross proceeds before underwriting and offering expenses. The shares began trading on the Nasdaq Capital Market under the ticker symbol "PARK" on December 3, 2025. The company supports affiliated general and multispecialty dental practices across Minnesota and Wisconsin, providing non-clinical business support services including administrative personnel, facilities, technology and revenue cycle management to enable dentists to focus on delivering patient care.

The organization's network supports over 200 dentists across approximately 85 practice locations offering services such as oral surgery, periodontics, pediatric dentistry, prosthodontics, endodontics and orthodontics. On December 11, 2025, Park Dental Partners leadership and team members participated in a Nasdaq closing bell ceremony in New York to commemorate the listing, an event designed to showcase the company's transition to a publicly traded entity and to signal confidence in its growth strategy. Company leadership highlighted that the IPO proceeds would support general corporate purposes, including future expansion efforts and potential acquisitions, as Park Dental Partners seeks to grow its footprint and further invest in administrative and operational capabilities for its affiliated practices.

Source: GlobeNewswire

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## PRIVATE EQUITY

NOVEMBER 18, 2025

### **GoTu Technology Secures \$45 Million Growth Investment**

GoTu Technology, a technology-enabled dental staffing marketplace, announced that it has raised a \$45 million growth investment led by Long Ridge Equity Partners, with participation from institutional investors advised by J.P. Morgan Asset Management. The funding round was publicly disclosed on Nov. 18, 2025, and is intended to accelerate GoTu's national expansion, product development and innovation within the dental workforce ecosystem.

GoTu operates an on-demand digital platform that connects dental practices with hygienists, dental assistants and associate dentists to fill temporary shifts in real time, addressing an ongoing staffing shortage facing many practices. Since its launch in 2019, GoTu has facilitated over 500,000 dental shifts across 44 states and Washington, D.C., and the new capital is expected to help the company scale its operations further into underpenetrated markets and expand service offerings.

Source: [GlobeNewswire](#)

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NOVEMBER 29, 2025

### **Market Forecast and Valuation Trends Highlight Continued PE Interest in Dental Platforms**

An updated valuation analysis published in late November 2025 emphasizes that pediatric dentistry practices, a specialty subgroup within the DSO landscape, remain particularly attractive to private equity and strategic acquirers due to stable demand, high hygiene recall rates and predictable utilization patterns. Despite broader economic headwinds, this subsector has sustained robust deal flow, with dental practices frequently ranking among the most active healthcare subsectors by deal volume in recent PitchBook updates. Stabilizing interest rates, elevated utilization and competitive dynamics for durable healthcare assets contribute to valuation floors near pre-2022 levels, supporting continued investor confidence in dental assets.

Source: [Focus Bankers](#)

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## PARTNERSHIPS AND INNOVATIONS

NOVEMBER 17, 2025

### **Global Dental Experts Convene in Tokyo to Drive Innovation Across AI, Biomaterials, Teledentistry and 3D Printing**

The Global Conference on Dentistry and Oral Health, held in Tokyo mid-November 2025, brought together researchers, clinicians and technology leaders from around the world to explore recent breakthroughs and future opportunities in dental care innovation. Sessions covered a broad spectrum of topics, including AI in dental diagnostics and treatment planning, advanced biomaterials and tissue regeneration, minimally invasive restorative techniques, 3D printing and CAD/CAM digital workflows, teledentistry and remote consultation platforms, and smart dental wearables. Organizers emphasized the value of global collaborative research and cross-disciplinary engagement in accelerating technology adoption and addressing shared challenges like access to care and preventive strategies.

Source: Dental News

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DECEMBER 2, 2025

### **Overjet Acquires DentalBee to Expand AI-Powered Clinical Documentation**

Overjet, a global leader in dental artificial intelligence, announced that it has acquired DentalBee, a voice-enabled clinical documentation platform. The acquisition was announced on Dec. 2, 2025, and extends Overjet's AI offerings beyond diagnostic imaging into real-time clinical documentation and workflow automation. The integration brings together Overjet's existing AI imaging capabilities, used for high-accuracy dental X-ray analysis, with DentalBee's voice AI tools, which automate tasks like hands-free periodontal charting, automated clinical notes, structured visit data output, referral letters and compliance summaries. By combining these capabilities, Overjet aims to provide dental teams with a unified platform that enhances diagnostic insights, improves documentation quality and compliance, and reduces administrative burden across practice workflows. Overjet leadership noted that this expanded technology suite will deliver comprehensive clinical intelligence tools that streamline operations and strengthen patient care, from initial diagnosis through treatment planning and documentation.

Source: DrBiscupid

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## PARTNERSHIPS AND INNOVATIONS (cont'd)

DECEMBER 5, 2025

### **Pearl Expands Pediatric Capabilities with New AI Platform for Kids**

Pearl, a dental artificial intelligence company known for its X-ray analysis platform, released Second Opinion® for Kids on Nov. 18, 2025, a pediatric-focused extension of its flagship real-time AI diagnostic tool. The new module is specifically designed to aid clinicians in identifying dental conditions in children's radiographs with greater accuracy, helping dentists catch issues earlier in development when treatment is simpler and less invasive. Pearl's announcement highlighted the clinical rationale behind the launch: pediatric oral health presents unique diagnostic challenges, from limited communication with young patients to more subtle presentations of disease. Second Opinion for Kids aims to support dentists by making diagnostic insights more intuitive and engaging, improving communication with both children and parents, and fostering better education around oral health. According to Pearl, thousands of practices already rely on its AI platform and the new pediatric focus enhances diagnostic precision for this critical patient population.

Source: DrBiscupid

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DECEMBER 9, 2025

### **Digital Dentures Market Expansion Driven by AI, 3D Printing and Teledentistry Trends**

A recent market outlook on the global digital dentures market reported strong anticipated growth from \$1.36 billion in 2024 toward an estimated \$ 2.21 billion by 2030. Key drivers include expansion into emerging markets, integration of AI and machine learning into design workflows, adoption of mobile scanning solutions and the use of 3D printing for prosthetics fabrication. The report also points to the rising role of teledentistry and remote scanning tools that allow clinicians to capture high-fidelity digital impressions and coordinate prosthetic design without requiring a specialized in-office visit for each step.

Source: Globe Newswire

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## LITIGATION

NOVEMBER 16, 2025

### **First Choice Dental Agrees to Settle Ransomware-Related Class Action**

First Choice Dental, a network of dental clinics in Wisconsin, agreed to settle a class action lawsuit linked to a 2023 ransomware attack that exposed sensitive patient information—including names, dates of birth, Social Security numbers, health records and financial data. The settlement, preliminarily approved and publicized in mid-November 2025, is valued at up to approximately \$1.225 million.

DETAILS:

**Incident date:** October 22, 2023, initially reported as affecting around 1,000 individuals but later found to impact more than 159,000 patients.

**Settlement features:**

- Three years of identity theft monitoring and an identity theft insurance policy of up to \$1 million per class member.
- Documented out-of-pocket reimbursement up to \$6,000 per individual or a one-time cash payment (often \$50) for those without documented losses.
- First Choice Dental has consistently denied liability throughout the litigation process.

Source: Compliance Junction

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DECEMBER 6, 2025

### **Dental Practice Consumer Protection Settlement in Minnesota**

On December 4, 2025, Minnesota Attorney General Keith Ellison announced a settlement with the bankruptcy estate of Woodbury Dental Arts, a dental practice that closed in March 2024. The settlement enables former patients to obtain refunds for unfulfilled advance payments for dental services through a newly-established Consumer Protection Restitution Account.

DETAILS:

- **Allegations:** The Attorney General's Office alleged that the practice violated the Minnesota Prevention of Consumer Fraud Act and the Uniform Deceptive Trade Practices Act by misrepresenting services and collecting upfront fees while failing to deliver promised care.
- **Relief:** The settlement permits a claims process for patients to reclaim prepaid fees. Claims procedures and further public notices are forthcoming.
- **License surrender:** The former dentist owner surrendered his license in connection with this matter, reflecting regulatory consequences tied to the legal resolution.

Source: FOX 9 Minnesota-St. Paul

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## LITIGATION (cont'd)

DECEMBER 7, 2025

### **La Costa Dental Excellence Cybersecurity Incident and Potential Litigation**

On December 7, 2025, La Costa Dental Excellence, a dental practice based in Carlsbad, California, was reportedly compromised in a ransomware attack attributed to the Qilin threat group. Initial notification indicates that unauthorized access was gained to the organization's systems, potentially exposing patient appointment details, medical records and other sensitive information. The incident was publicly reported by multiple cybersecurity monitoring outlets in the days following discovery.

DETAILS:

- **Threat actor:** Qilin ransomware group claimed responsibility and made public extortion demands shortly after the attack.
- **Exposure:** Exact scope of affected data has not yet been disclosed, but breaches of this type typically target protected health information (PHI) and personally identifiable information (PII) stored by the dental provider.
- **Operational impact:** Cyber incidents of this nature can disrupt practice IT systems, trigger notification requirements under state and federal data-security laws, and lead to follow-on litigation by patients or regulatory enforcement actions.

Source: Breachsense

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DECEMBER 10, 2025

### **Appeals Court Denies Immediate Review of Delta Dental Antitrust Ruling**

On December 10, 2025, a federal appeals court declined to grant immediate review of a lower court's decision in the long-running Delta Dental antitrust litigation. Plaintiffs, a broad group of dental providers, had sought appellate review following a September 2025 ruling rejecting certification of their proposed nationwide class action against Delta Dental and Delta Dental Plans Association. The litigation, originally filed in 2019, alleges violations of federal antitrust law related to territorial arrangements, reimbursement practices and competition restrictions within the dental insurance market.

DETAILS:

- **Background:** The underlying antitrust suit contends that Delta Dental restricted competition by dividing territories and suppressing reimbursement rates for in-network dental providers.
- **Class certification denied:** The U.S. District Court for the Northern District of Illinois denied class certification in September 2025; the appeals court's refusal to expedite review means dentists pursuing claims may need to bring individual actions or await future appellate proceedings in the regular course.
- **Status:** The case remains ongoing beyond class certification issues, with procedural steps continuing through the courts.

Source: ADA News

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# STAFFING

NOVEMBER 25, 2025

## **Multiple Workforce Reports Highlight Structural Staffing Challenges Across Dental Roles**

Dental hygienists and assistants remain among the most sought-after roles, with many practices using temporary staffing services and agencies to fill schedule gaps and maintain production.

Retirement projections and career shifts suggest that a sizeable percentage of current dental staff, including hygienists, billing specialists and front-office personnel, may leave their roles within the next 5-10 years, further intensifying recruitment pressures.

Turnover is notable not only in clinical roles but also in support and administrative positions, pushing practices to invest in retention strategies, compensation competitiveness and professional development opportunities.

Source: Mayday Dental Staffing

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DECEMBER 12, 2025

## **Dental Hygienist Workforce Shrinkage in California**

Decisions in Dentistry, citing reporting from the San Francisco Standard, identifies a notable contraction in the dental hygiene workforce in the Bay Area, where the number of practicing hygienists declined by nearly 9% over four years despite an overall increase in licensed hygienists statewide. Practices in the region report that the local shortage is shaping how care is delivered, with some offices relying more on expanded-duty assistants or associate dentists to absorb tasks traditionally handled by hygienists. The imbalance between demand and supply, exacerbated by retirement, relocation and cost-of-living pressures, has intensified staffing pressures and reshaped practice staffing models.

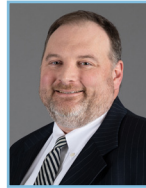
Source: Decisions in Dentistry

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**For more information regarding our Dental Industry/DSO Practice, or if you would like to contribute to the newsletter, please contact:**



**Vince Nardone**  
Partner and Co-Chair, Dental/  
DSO Industry Team  
[vnardone@beneschlaw.com](mailto:vnardone@beneschlaw.com)  
T: 614.223.9326



**Robert A. Marchant**  
Partner and Co-Chair, Dental/  
DSO Industry Team  
[rmarchant@beneschlaw.com](mailto:rmarchant@beneschlaw.com)  
T: 216.363.4489



**Frank Carsonie**  
Partner and Chair, Benesch  
Healthcare+ Practice Group  
[fcarsonie@beneschlaw.com](mailto:fcarsonie@beneschlaw.com)  
T: 614.223.9361



**Ira C. Kaplan**  
Partner, Corporate &  
Securities Practice Group  
[ikaplan@beneschlaw.com](mailto:ikaplan@beneschlaw.com)  
T: 216.363.4567



**W. Clifford Mull**  
Partner, Benesch  
Healthcare+ Practice Group  
[cmull@beneschlaw.com](mailto:cmull@beneschlaw.com)  
T: 216.363.4198