

## Healthcare Technology &amp; Distribution

## December dental survey shows continued improvement

Industry Overview

## U.S. Dental volumes improved in the fourth quarter

We see continued signs of stabilization in U.S. dental patient trends based on the latest December survey data from the American Dental Association (ADA). The survey from the ADA published yesterday suggests that practice appointment schedules continued to improve in December (Exhibit 1), up for the 3<sup>rd</sup> consecutive month. December appointment fills rates were up 500bps y/y and 100bps m/m. This follows the improvement in November where appointment fill rates were up 220bps from September and 150bps from October, the largest m/m increase this year. While we acknowledge the limitations of the survey in the context of a large and fragmented dental practice landscape in the U.S., multiple months of positive data points are certainly directionally encouraging, especially given 4Q is typically the strongest quarter for dental names. We look forward to commentary from a handful of management teams within our dental coverage in an upcoming conference next week to corroborate the suggested improvement in trend.

## Survey Details: Monthly survey with 1k+ respondents

The American Dental Association conducts a monthly survey that is sent to 3000+ U.S. panel members across a variety of practice settings. The survey typically generates 1000+ responses. The December survey was conducted on the week of December 11<sup>th</sup> and had 971 respondents. A majority of the respondents in this survey were non-DSO affiliated owners (sole owner, partner, or shareholder) of a dental practice.

## Exhibit 1: Mean patient appointment schedule fill rate

Appointment fill rates show improvement for the 3<sup>rd</sup> consecutive month



Source: American Dental Association. Economic Outlook and Emerging Issues in Dentistry. Health Policy Institute. December 2023.

Available from: [https://www.ada.org/-/media/project/ada-organization/ada/ada-org/files/resources/research/hpi/dec2023\\_hpi\\_economic\\_outlook\\_dentistry\\_report\\_main.pdf](https://www.ada.org/-/media/project/ada-organization/ada/ada-org/files/resources/research/hpi/dec2023_hpi_economic_outlook_dentistry_report_main.pdf)

BofA GLOBAL RESEARCH

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