



# 2022 INDEX

Executive Summary: Dental Industry

# DENTAL INSIGHTS LEAD TO GREATER AUTOMATION AND COST SAVINGS

The CAQH Index has been a unique and important resource for government, industry decision makers, researchers and media.

By tracking automation along the healthcare administrative workflow and identifying opportunities for improvement, report findings have enabled health plans, providers, government, and vendor organizations to benchmark progress and set a course for achieving greater efficiency and cost savings.

Given the importance of the Index and the commitment to increasing automation, dental health plans representing 126 million members, 48 percent of covered lives, now contribute data to the research.

In 2021, while COVID admissions and cases were declining and healthcare utilization was increasing, use of electronic transactions continued to rise for most transactions. Automated processes implemented during COVID-19 resulted in more timely responses and outcomes. Staffing shortages during the pandemic, however, increased salaries by almost 10 percent as medical facilities were forced to pay more to attract and retain workers,<sup>4,5</sup> countering the savings achieved from the transition to automated workflows. Higher staff salaries impacted costs to complete administrative tasks and overall spend as transaction volumes increased. In several cases, the workforce shortage resulted in providers completing administrative tasks or less experienced staff being hired, impacting the time to complete tasks. Often it took longer for inexperienced or new staff to complete tasks due to a lack of relevant knowledge and skills.

**“The definitive industry benchmark for the adoption rates of administrative transactions for ten years, the CAQH Index has proven to be an invaluable tool for policymakers and healthcare stakeholders.”**

**Robert M. Tennant, MA**  
Vice President, Federal Affairs, *WEDI*

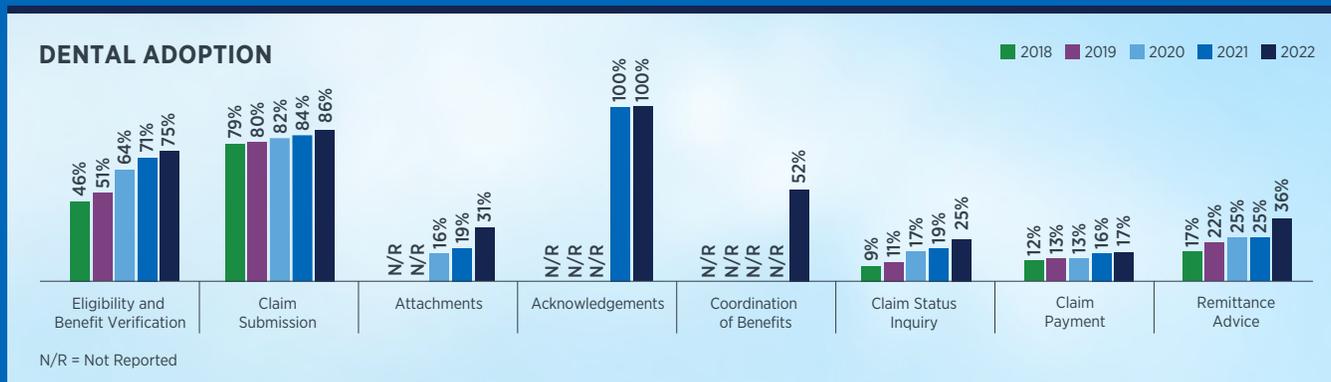
4 Jakob Emerson, Kelly Gooch, Alia Paavola, Marissa Plescia, “Hospitals are bolstering wages. Is it sustainable?” Becker’s Hospital Review, April 4, 2022, <https://www.beckershospitalreview.com/compensation-issues/hospitals-are-bolstering-wages-is-it-sustainable.html>.

5 Are health care wages unsustainable?” Advisory Board, April 7, 2022, <https://www.advisory.com/daily-briefing/2022/04/07/hospital-wages>.

# DENTAL INDUSTRY KEY FINDINGS

All dental transactions **improved** except for acknowledgments which remained stable. Use of automated processes by health plans and providers, brought on by the pandemic, expanded.

## Dental Plan Adoption of Fully Electronic Administrative Transactions, 2018-2022 CAQH Index



Dental administrative transaction volume **increased** after decreasing in 2020. Utilization increased as offices slowly re-opened and social distancing requirements were relaxed.

## Dental Industry Estimated National Volume, 2013-2022 CAQH Index (in billions)



**+9%**

**increase** in overall **dental** transaction volume increase from 2021 to 2022

During the second year of COVID-19 (2021), dental spend on administrative transactions **increased** 23 percent to \$5.4 billion as higher utilization and provider time to complete transactions resulted in higher total annual spend.

### Dental Industry Estimated National Spend, 2013-2022 CAQH Index (in billions)



**+23% to**  
**\$5.4B**

The amount **dental** spending **increased** after decreasing in 2020  
 (Largest increase in spend: remittance advice (43 percent).)

The cost savings opportunity for the dental industry remained stable at \$2.6 billion.

### Dental Industry Estimated National Cost Savings Opportunity, 2016-2022 CAQH Index (in billions)



The **dental** industry cost savings opportunity **remained stable** at

**\$2.6B**

**“We have been able to utilize the CAQH Index as a comparison tool for cost and utilization for our administrative transactions. Seeing the baselines and ranges helps us determine where there may be opportunities in cost reduction.”**

**Tab Harris** | Senior Director, Provider Connectivity Solutions, Florida Blue

## Dental Provider Time Savings Highlights



### 31 Minutes

A dental provider practice could save 31 minutes on average for a patient requiring all **five** transactions by switching from **manual** to **fully electronic**.



### 12 Minutes

A dental provider practice could save 12 minutes on average for a patient requiring **three** transactions by switching from **partial** to **fully electronic**.

\*Eligibility and benefit verification, claim status inquiry, remittance advice

### How to Participate in the CAQH Index

All dental plans, providers and vendors are encouraged to contribute data to the CAQH Index. Data collection begins in Summer 2023. To participate in the 2023 CAQH Index and for more information, please visit [caqh.org/insights](https://caqh.org/insights)



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