

## Discussion Questions for Task Force

In general, to successfully recruit and retain well-qualified dental professionals, you and your task force should keep the following basics in mind:

Nearly 81% of Minnesota's dentists are members of the Minnesota Dental Association. Member dentists have a wealth of experience, expertise and genuine interest in ensuring that communities have a sufficient dental workforce.

- What connections do you or your task force members have to your local district dental society?
- What factors must dentists consider when deciding where to practice?
- What about their family's needs?
- Where will the spouse work?
- Where will the children go to school?
- How is the housing market in the area?
- What resources are readily available for recreation, healthcare, shopping, and other lifestyle needs?
- What resources would a recently-graduated dentist need to establish a rural practice?

Dentists typically graduate with an enormous educational debt, often over \$150,000.

- Are there bankers, realtors, and accountants who can help a dentist get a new practice and home established?

Urban dentists at mid-career may be looking for a less hectic lifestyle, so don't limit your search to only recently-graduated dentists.

- What would attract dentist with years of experience to relocate in your community?

Successful contemporary dental practice hinges on being able to remain current in the field...and thus be able to provide high quality patient care. Dental specialists of all types are most likely to practice in metro areas, so it's imperative that general dentists in rural communities have easy access to them electronically.

- What kinds of technologies are available to allow a dentist to stay connected with dental and other healthcare colleagues in urban areas, universities, etc.? What is the best that your community has to offer in terms of a healthy lifestyle?
- What is it that attracts people to the community?
- How will people in town "meet and greet" newcomers to help them feel warmly welcomed?
- Do you have printed materials or web-based information that positions your community in the best possible light?

***In summary, recruiting and retaining a quality dental workforce is a community-wide effort.***