

## **Economic Impact of a Small Dental Practice in Rutland County**

**Background.** The goal of the author's research was to determine the local economic impact of expenses from a new dental practice in Rural Vermont, specifically in Rutland County, a region known for its scarcity of opportunities.

**Methods.** The author identified a dental practice in Rutland County, VT, because of the rurality of the area as well as the investments that the practice had made to the infrastructure of their practice and improvements made to the local community. The author used a model used by the American Dental Association to study the national economic impact of new dental practices, in "Economic Impact of Dentists (2004)". The ADA used three measures, direct, indirect, and induced impacts, that the author used to measure impacts on the communities affected. For the purpose of this study the author chose only to measure the direct and induced impacts on Rutland County, as the measurement of indirect impact, was not possible due to the information. The author, and the ADA, used a commonly used and accepted methodology in economics known as input-output analysis to measure these economic impacts. This model helped to demonstrate the relationship between the practice, individuals, local governments and economies. Much of the input-output analysis, in the ADA study, and in the broader field of economics, relies on indirect expenses to measure the flow of monetary value and goods between sectors and industries, but due to the information working and the depth to which the study was conducted, measuring simply the direct and induced impacts seemed more advantageous.

**Conclusions.** The dental practice offers salaries/wages higher than the local, state and national averages, showing that they indeed make a significant impact on the community in which they operate. The practice also spent over a hundred thousand dollars on building improvements in the downtown of their community, further impacting their community. These factors, and several others, point to a highly positive impact made by the practice on their local community, especially in at risk, or underserved, communities such as Rutland County.