



## Determining the Productivity of Professional Staff Members

According to an article in the CDAA Journal November/December 2000 issue by Betty Ladley Finkbeiner CDA RDA MS, titled "How to Determine a Fair and Equitable Salary for Dental Auxiliaries", the research done over the years has consistently shown that a dentist who utilized a dental assistant will see an increase in productivity by approximately 33% – and with the addition of a second dental assistant their productivity increased by about 50%. Data on the productivity/assistant correlation has been available for a long time – however, few employers utilize this data in their negotiations with their staff when salary reviews are done.

Determining productivity for a dentist or a hygienist may be relatively simple and can be easily obtained from your daily production sheets. Determining the productivity of a dental assistant can also be determined by a few simple calculations.

Using the daily fee totals for a single dentist utilizing a single RDA, you can use the 33% research figure to determine the productivity of that RDA as shown in this example:

3 surface composite	\$250
3 emergency exams	\$300
2 simple extractions	\$200
3 full exams	\$450
3 sets bitewing X-rays	\$300
10 periapical X-rays	\$1,000
2 full cast gold crowns	\$2,000
3 prophylaxis	\$450
3 fluoride treatments	\$150
2 units scaling	\$150
4 sealants	\$300
<b>Total</b>	<b><u>\$5,500</u></b>
	33% is \$1,665

The RDA for this dentist increased productivity by 33% of the daily total, and therefore a value of \$1,665 can be attributed to the RDA's productivity. This formula can be applied to the new employee and over the period of a week the employer can see whether the productivity has decreased, and if so how much, or stayed the same, or increased. If the RDA did direct patient treatment without the

dentist, then those amounts would be attributed directly to the productivity of the RDA in addition to the 33% of work done assisting the dentist to provide treatment.

The productivity of the dentist without the RDA would be calculated at 67% of the daily total of work done by the dentist with assistance from the RDA, and therefore a value of \$3,835 can be attributed to the dentist's productivity for that day. If the dentist did direct patient treatment without the RDA, then those amounts would be attributed directly to the productivity of the dentist in addition to the 67% of work done with the RDA assisting.

The goal of the employer will be to review the productivity of professional staff on a regular basis to assist in annual performance reviews and reviews of compensation packages for each staff member. In addition there should be consideration for the following factors that may have changed since the last review, including: increase in experience; new credentials, merit for increased responsibilities; cost of living increases; and, other added value to the practice.

**Article provided by [Edmonton Dental Assistants Association](#)**