



COLLEGE OF DENTAL HYGIENISTS OF BRITISH COLUMBIA

Registrant FAQ's on Proposed Changes to College Bylaws

1) Why is the College changing its bylaws?

BC's Ministry of Health has already put forward proposed amendments to the Dental Hygienists Regulation that includes the removal of the 365-day rule, the removal of the dentist on-site requirement for L/A administration and provides further clarity regarding the dental hygiene scope of practice. As part of this legislated process, the College is required to update its Bylaws to ensure they are aligned with the proposed amendments to the regulations.

To view the Provincial Government's proposed amendments to the Dental Hygienists Regulation, please click here: <https://www2.gov.bc.ca/gov/content/health/practitioner-professional-resources/professional-regulation/dental-hygiene>

These proposed bylaw changes were first discussed in 2016 when the College presented a proposal to Government to modernize and clarify both the Dental Hygienists Regulation and the College Bylaws. The College held numerous information and consultation sessions with stakeholders, including registrants throughout 2016 and 2017. The content of these proposed changes has not substantially changed since those sessions were held. When Government posted the proposed amendments earlier this year to the Dental Hygienists Regulation, this permitted the College to move forward with the proposed bylaw changes that were originally discussed with Government.

2) How will the proposed bylaw changes benefit the public?

In line with the College's public protection mandate, the proposed changes to the College Bylaws are centered around enhancing safety and clarity for the public specifically in the areas of scope of practice, and license categories.

The names of the new registrant categories are designed to be easily understood by the public. In addition, the provisions related to registration, renewal and reinstatement have been enhanced to further ensure that competent and ethical dental hygienists are registered.

In addition, the General Meeting provisions have been changed in order to foster greater public participation in the meeting.

3) When are the proposed College bylaw changes coming into effect?

These proposed Bylaws are posted for the required three month public consultation period. At the conclusion of the consultation period, the College Board will consider all feedback received and determine the next steps. In addition, the College will work collaboratively with



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the Government to harmonize the implementation schedule of both the regulations and bylaws.

At this time, it is important to note that no changes have been made and dental hygienists must continue to follow the current regulations and bylaws.

As this process moves forward, the College will provide clear and frequent communication to registrants and the public as the timelines for implementation are established.

4) I have Full registration. How will these proposed bylaws change the way I practice?

If you are a registrant in the Full or Conditional category, you will be automatically moved into the “Registered Dental Hygienist” category of registration when the proposed changes come into effect. This change will not affect your ability to practice in your chosen setting and your ability to practice the full dental hygiene scope.

5) I own an independent practice. How will these proposed bylaws changes affect my practice?

If you are a registrant in the “365-Exempt” category of registration, you will automatically be moved into the “Dental Hygiene Practitioner” category when the proposed changes come into effect and will be able to continue in your independent practice. Only registrants in the ‘Dental Hygiene Practitioner’ category will be allowed to be the primary owner and operator of an independent practice.

As a practice owner, you will also be able to hire Registered Dental Hygienists who can self-initiate the full scope of practice.

6) I’m an independent practice owner but I do not have my 365-Exempt registration. What will happen to my practice?

Our goal is not to change the practice settings of any dental hygienist when these proposed changes come into effect. These proposed bylaw changes provide for a special “grandfathered” category of registration for individuals who are not “365-Exempt” but who own a private dental hygiene practice. Once in the grandfathered category, we will work with you to determine pathways to achieving your “Dental Hygiene Practitioner” registration. If you are in this situation, we encourage you to contact the College for options as soon as possible.

7) What do you mean by “private dental hygiene practice”? Isn’t that “independent practice”?

While the term ‘independent practice’ is commonly used and understood in the dental hygiene community, it can be a confusing or misleading term for the public as well as other



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health care professionals. To those outside the dental hygiene community, ‘independent practice’ may suggest that dental hygienists engaged in this practice setting are doing so completely independent of any other health care professional. This notion is not accurate and goes against the Practice Standard of collaborative practice.

Therefore, the College believes the term ‘private dental hygiene practice’ more accurately describes a practice setting where a dental hygienist is practicing outside a dental office and also aligns with other commonly used terms; the term ‘private dental office’ or ‘private practice’ is used in dentistry. This new terminology will enhance clarity for the public, other health professionals and registrants.

8) How are you going to define “private dental hygiene practice”?

We are proposing that a “private dental hygiene practice” is considered as including one or more of the following attributes:

- offers ongoing dental hygiene services directly to clients,
- advertises as a private dental hygiene practice or clinic,
- directly bills clients for services,
- is responsible for purchase and maintenance of dental hygiene office equipment such as x-ray equipment, sterilization equipment, etc
- is responsible for the maintenance and retention of client records.

It should be noted that a “private dental hygiene practice” may or may not be incorporated. Dental hygienists who work on contract in a dental office will likely not be considered as a “private dental hygiene practice” but will be dependent on how the contract is arranged.

If you have a unique practice setting where it may not be clear if it is a “private dental hygiene practice” or not, we encourage you to contact the College to inform us of your situation.

9) I have a diploma. Can I open a “private dental hygiene practice”?

If the proposed bylaws are approved, only Dental Hygiene Practitioners can be the primary owner and operate a “private dental hygiene practice”.

The College is currently considering the pathways that may be established to facilitate movement from the Registered Dental Hygienists Category to the Dental Hygiene Practitioner category.

Currently, the most direct pathway to the Registered Dental Hygienists category is by obtaining a Dental Hygiene Degree. The College will work to strike the right balance between upholding the public safety principles of the degree requirement for the Dental Hygiene Practitioner category, while not being unduly restrictive in terms of registrants’



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ability to access the category. Further information on this will be forthcoming.

10) I have a diploma. Under these new proposed Bylaws, will I need to eventually get a degree?

There will be no requirement for existing registrants to get a degree, or to change their practice setting. You can choose to be in the Registered Dental Hygienist category and practice in any setting. However, if you want to obtain your degree or explore other pathways to obtain your Dental Hygiene Practitioner registration, there will be opportunities for you to do that. Both categories of registrants are highly valued and important.

11) Under this proposal, how is the College planning to regulate Local Anesthetic (L/A)?

The College is proposing to move to a 'certification' model of regulating Local Anesthetic (L/A). Under this proposal, registrants already in the Full and "365-Exempt" registration categories will automatically be certified to administer L/A without a dentist on site. Details are still being worked out regarding the requirements to maintain certification.

Registrants in the current 'Conditional' category will be automatically transitioned to the Registered Dental Hygienist category, however, will not receive L/A certification. If these registrants wish to obtain their L/A certification to provide L/A, they must successfully complete a recognized L/A program; there will be no deadline or time requirement to take that program.

For new applicants, in order to obtain L/A certification they must either graduate from a program listed in Schedule I of the College Bylaws or from a program on the substantial equivalent L/A program list. Approved L/A programs may either be included within a dental hygiene diploma, a degree program, or as a stand-alone L/A program.

12) Under these proposed bylaw changes, what type of L/A would I be able to administer?

The selection of anesthesia in the administration of L/A should be based on the medical history of the client, the location of the planned injection, and the duration of treatment. Anesthetics containing epinephrine are categorized as Schedule I drugs and require a prescription by a qualified health care provider who is authorized to prescribe under their regulation. In order to administer a local anesthetic containing epinephrine (e.g. 2% Lidocaine 1:100,000 epi), a prescription must be obtained and documented appropriately in the client chart. Plain anesthetics (without epi) are categorized as Schedule II drugs and therefore do not require a prescription.



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13) Will CPR be a requirement for all registrants?

Yes. Current CPR certification will be a requirement for all registrants in practicing categories as well as for all applicants for initial registration.

Having current CPR certification is best practice for all health care professionals. The proposed amendments to the Dental Hygienists Regulation removes the requirement for a dentist or another person to act in the case of an emergency to administer L/A. Given these two factors, the College feels that it is essential for all practicing registrants to have current CPR certification for public safety.

14) When will the CPR requirement come into effect?

All registrants in practicing categories will need to have current CPR certification on file with the College through the registrant portal in order to renew in 2021. Further communication on this will be forthcoming throughout 2020. If registrants do not have current CPR certification, they are encouraged to do so before the end of 2020.

For initial applicants, the CPR requirement for registration will come into effect when the proposed changes are brought into force.

15) Which CPR courses will be accepted?

The College will recognize the Health Care Provider (HCP), Basic Life Support (BLS) or equivalent level of CPR. At this time, there is not an approved course list. However, the CPR course must:

- Be offered by a recognized provider (e.g., St. John Ambulance, Canadian Red Cross, Alert First-Aid, etc.),
- Provides both didactic and hands-on instruction, and
- Ensures participants successfully complete a final written exam.

16) There seems to be changes to the renewal and reinstatement sections. What does this mean?

The requirements for renewal have remained unchanged other than the CPR requirements.

The provisions for reinstatement within 60 days of the renewal deadline remains unchanged as well.

The main change is related to registrants who do not renew by the deadline and do not reinstate within 60 days following the renewal deadline. Under the current Bylaws, in this



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situation registrants would be required to apply for initial registration, filling out the full application and pay all initial registration fees. However, since this is an initial application for registration there are no additional CE requirements or other mechanisms to ensure currency and competency, except for the requirement to take the QAP within 60-days of registering. Therefore, registrants who have been out of practice for many years are permitted to register without the College being assured of their currency and competency. This may present a risk to the public.

Under the proposed changes, any former registrant beyond the 60-days post renewal deadline, can reinstate their license instead of applying as an initial applicant. This will represent a shorter application form and a reduction in fees. However, there will now be an additional requirement for these reinstatement applicants to complete learning or demonstrate competency as determined by the Registration Committee. The length of absence from practice will be a key determining factor when setting the additional learning requirements. This change will further enhance the ability for the College to ensure all registrants are current and competent to provide safe care to the public.

17) It appears that the section related to the QAP has completely changed. How will this affect the QAP requirements?

The QAP provisions have been updated to enhance clarity and consistency. However, these changes will not change the requirements of the current QAP. Registrants will continue to participate in their QAP in the same way as before the proposed changes.

18) There is a new section regarding student dental hygienist. Is the College registering students now?

The College is not registering student dental hygienists. However, to further enhance public protection the College is proposing to add a section to the bylaws that sets out requirements when students, within a recognized dental hygiene program, provide any restricted activities in the community on members of the public. As these students are neither licensed nor have proven their competency to the College, it is vital that they are supervised appropriately and are practicing as part of the requirements of their dental hygiene program.

19) Why are there changes to the Annual General Meeting Bylaws?

The previous AGM Bylaws were focused on a 'membership' type model where only registrants were able to participate. This structure does not accurately reflect the mandate and mission of the College which is service to the public.

These changes provide greater ability for the public to participate in these meetings while still ensuring that the College is required to be transparent and present important information, such as the audited financial statements, on an annual basis.

The Mission of the College of Dental Hygienists of British Columbia is to fulfill our duty to protect the public through regulatory excellence.



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20) Can I provide feedback on these proposed bylaws?

Absolutely! The College will be establishing many ways for you to learn more about these proposed changes and to provide your feedback. Please stay tuned for dates for free webinars and other opportunities to learn more and provide feedback.

Your comments are always welcome via email to the College at cdhbc@cdhbc.com. We look forward to continuing the dialogue with you about these exciting proposed changes.

The deadline for feedback to the College on these proposed bylaw amendments is **Tuesday, February 7, 2020**. This is set out in Section 55 (3) of the Health Professions Act which requires that at least three months' notice of proposed bylaw amendments must be provided.