

INQUIRY COMMITTEE RECORD OF DECISION

FILE NAME: DH1180

FACTS

In March 2011, the Registrar received a written complaint from a member of the public, against a registrant of the College, related to standard of practice.

The complainant informed the Registrar that on February 11th, 2011, she received dental hygiene services from a registrant of the College. The complainant stated that she had received “unacceptable treatment,” and specified the following:

- “mistreated my 6 teeth by shaving the side edge and bottom edge of my teeth instead of cleaning the plaque”
- “each of them is damaged in a different degree”
- “four of my teeth are clearly visible that they have been trimmed in a particular shape and two of them are thinned with no strength”
- “Ever since that day, I could not eat properly and I felt pain on my teeth every day. It affected my talking and also I barely got any sleep.”

In accordance with section 33(1) of the *Health Professions Act*, the Inquiry Committee resolved to investigate the matter.

COMMITTEE DECISION

The investigation consisted of written information received from the registrant and examination of the complainant’s dental chart. In addition, a CDHBC Inspector interviews the complainant in order to gain a thorough understanding of the elements of complaint.

It was confirmed that during the dental hygiene appointment in question, the dental hygienist had used hand instruments only for removal of calculus. Hand instruments are not able to re-shape sound hard tooth enamel therefore there was no evidence to support the teeth being “trimmed,” or “shaved” as indicated by the complainant.

The Committee felt that the complainant’s description of the appointment and what was experienced after the appointment indicated that, most likely, the complainant had a large degree of calculus removed by the registrant. Often this can cause some sensitivity and may have resulted in the perception that teeth were being ‘shaved.’ The Committee noted that removal of all calculus, no matter the degree, is within the dental hygiene scope of practice.

After reviewing all information the Committee determined that sensitivity or discomfort is not necessarily an indication of wrongdoing or impaired practice related to the dental hygiene scope of practice; therefore, there had been no misconduct or wrongdoing by the dental hygienist who is the subject of the complaint. In accordance with the *Act*, the case was dismissed.

RELEVANT PROVISION OF ACT, REGULATION, OR BYLAWS: Act s. 32(1); 32(2); 33(1); 33(5); 33(6)(a)

STATUS: Closed

LEGISLATIVE AUTHORITY: *Health Professions Act*, s. 32 and 33