



## COLLEGE OF DENTAL HYGIENISTS OF BRITISH COLUMBIA

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### Inquiry Focus: Collaborating on the QAP Assessment Tool

Unfortunately, each year despite numerous reminders that the tool is to be completed independently, the College is made aware that some registrants do collaborate when completing the QAP Assessment Tool. At the onset of the QAP Assessment Tool, the following reminder appears:

*Registrants are not permitted to reproduce, copy, save or share in any way any of the content of the QAP Assessment Tool in order to help preserve its integrity. It is considered a serious offence to breach the security or confidentiality of the QAP Assessment Tool and registrants are required to read and agree to a security Statement of Understanding prior to beginning the QAP Assessment Tool.*

This past year, two registrants were referred to the Inquiry Committee for Own Motion investigations regarding information it had received concerning allegations the Registrants had collaborated when completing the QAP Assessment.

Following the investigation the Inquiry Committee found that the Registrants had engaged in unethical behaviour by failing to comply with the Statement of Understanding on their completion of the QAP Assessment Tool by collaborating with another registrant. The Registrants' behaviour constituted professional misconduct.

In accordance with their Consent Orders, both Registrants were required to submit a reflective essay outlining the circumstances of their breach of the Statement of Understanding and collaboration with another registrant, their experience with the Inquiry Committee process and what they learned from the process, and to submit it for approval to the Inquiry Committee. The Registrants acknowledged that the reflective essay may be published in the College's online newsletter, "ACCESS" at the discretion of the Registrar.

The Inquiry Committee also found that: (a) there was data to demonstrate that the Registrants completed the QAP Assessment Tool at the same time, in the same location, and submitted identical responses, with the exception of one question, and achieved the same score; (b) the Registrants acknowledged the requirement for individual completion of the QAP Assessment Tool but still collaborated in completing it; and (c) the Registrants apologized in writing and verbally during the interview for their conduct.

Based on a review of the material gathered during the investigation, the Inquiry Committee was concerned that the Registrants had engaged in unethical behaviour by failing to comply with the Statement of Understanding on their completion of the QAP Assessment Tool by collaborating.

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The Mission of the College of Dental Hygienists of British Columbia is to protect the public by developing, advocating and regulating safe and ethical dental hygiene practice in British Columbia.

The Inquiry Committee and the Registrants agreed that the appropriate remedial action is a consent order pursuant to s. 36(1) of the Act in which: (a) the Registrants undertake **not to repeat the conduct of engaging in unethical behaviour by collaborating** with another registrant in completing QAP assessments; (b) the Registrants **consent to a reprimand** in relation to their unethical conduct of breaching the College's Statement of Understanding in the Quality Assurance Program (QAP) Assessment Tool by collaborating with another registrant; (c) **the Registrants undertake to write a reflective essay of not less than 1200 words outlining the circumstances of their breach of the Statement of Understanding and collaboration with another registrant, their experience with the Inquiry Committee process and what they learned from the process, and to submit it for approval to the Inquiry Committee within sixty (60) days of the date of the consent order and to make such changes to the reflective essay as the Inquiry Committee directs if it is not satisfactory.** The Registrants acknowledge that **the reflective essay may be published in the College's online newsletter, "ACCESS"** at the discretion of the Registrar; (d) the Registrants **undertake to complete the British Columbia Dental Hygiene Association's (BCDHA) Module F1: Ethics and Jurisprudence**, at their cost, within six (6) months of the date of the consent order and acknowledges that they must provide written evidence satisfactory to the Inquiry Committee that they have successfully completed the BCDHA Module within one (1) month of the course completion date; (e) **the Registrants agree to pay the sum of \$1,000.00 towards the College's cost of investigation in accordance with College Bylaws Schedule "G" Tariff of Costs (Investigations)** and acknowledged that failure to submit the full payment will constitute a breach of the Consent Order; and (f) the Registrants acknowledge that **the Consent Order is provided in relation to a "serious matter"** as defined in the Act which requires public notification under s. 39.3 of the Act.