

Root of the Matter: Updates to Interpretation Guidelines

Updates and changes to three of the College's [Interpretation Guidelines](#) have recently been approved by the Quality Assurance Committee and the Board. To promote registrant awareness of these updates, a summary is provided, as follows:

- 1) **[Antibiotic Premedication \(Cardiac Conditions\)](#)**: This publication, which provides guidance on antibiotic prophylaxis for clients with certain cardiac conditions, has been updated to reflect recent changes to the guidelines published by the American Heart Association and the American College of Cardiology. Updates to this publication include:
 - The current indications for antibiotic prophylaxis to prevent infective endocarditis which have been updated and summarized into a table format.
 - The addition of a statement recommending that appointments for clients who require prophylactic antibiotics be scheduled at least ten days apart in order to reduce the risk of antibiotic resistance.
 - The removal of clindamycin from the list of antibiotic agents recommended for clients with allergies to penicillin or ampicillin (due to more frequent and severe reactions associated with clindamycin). Doxycycline has replaced clindamycin as an option for clients with penicillin or ampicillin allergies who are able to take oral medications.

As a reminder, dental hygienists are expected to consult with the client's cardiologist, physician or dentist to determine whether antibiotic premedication will be prescribed.

- 2) **[Consultations and Referrals by Dental Hygienists*](#)**: This publication, which provides guidance on collaboration with other health professionals, has undergone minor updates to reflect the contexts of both referrals and consultations in dental hygiene practice. Of particular note, a statement has been added on obtaining client consent prior to initiating consultations or referrals. Additionally, statements that referenced requirements for the former 365-Day Rule Exempt registration category have been removed.

*Note: This Interpretation Guideline was previously titled *Referrals by Dental Hygienists*

- 3) **[Exposing Radiographs](#)**: This publication provided guidance on the context in which registrants can initiate radiographs as part of the dental hygiene process of care, as well as expectations for client consent, following the exposure principles of ALARA (as low as reasonably achievable), radiographic interpretation, documentation, and referrals. Since this publication was last updated, this content has been established in CDHBC [Practice Standard Policy #9](#) concerning radiographs. Additionally, the publication's content on retention of radiographic records has since been established in [CDHBC Practice Standard Policy #10](#) concerning private dental hygiene practice ownership. Given the coverage of these topics in the Practice Standards, this publication has been retired from the College's collection of Interpretation Guidelines.

The information here provides a snapshot of the recent updates and changes. However, reviewing the full versions of the resources linked above is recommended as registrants are responsible for keeping current with the practice expectations that are identified in the College's [Interpretation Guidelines](#) and [Practice Standards](#).