



## **CDHA Standards of Practice February 21, 2007**

The dental hygiene profession has unwritten standards of practice expected of members. Such standards are accepted as consensus by members of the profession and socialized through educational programs, continuing education programs, professional literature and informal conversations between dental hygienists. As the dental hygiene profession becomes more complex, dynamic, and larger, the CDHA assists their members to remain current in these standards of practice.

One way that CDHA does this is to publish documents that describe the existing generally accepted standard on recurring or significant issues. The CDHA may also develop continuing educational courses and events for members on standards of practice. Occasionally standards move beyond current boundaries. For example a standard might describe the issues that should be covered in a client health history survey. CDHA carries out a broad consultation process during the development of all standards. This consultation ensures that members have an opportunity to provide input into a document that may move the standard beyond its current boundaries.

The goal of a CDHA standard of practice is to describe minimum standards that must be met by the dental hygiene profession. Standards documents tend to use words such as expect, must, shall, require, oblige. The CDHA creates these documents for the members' to use in the context of quality assurance processes. The CDHA standards act as a unifying voice for the standards across the country.

Provincial/territorial dental hygiene regulatory bodies may adopt or modify these standards and use them in the context of complaints, discipline, quality assurance processes and informal resolution agreements. The legislative regulation of standards falls within the mandate of provincial/territorial dental hygiene regulatory bodies. Therefore dental hygienists must follow the standards developed by the regulatory bodies in order to maintain their license to practice.