



THE CANADIAN DENTAL
HYGIENISTS ASSOCIATION
L'ASSOCIATION CANADIENNE
DES HYGIÉNISTES DENTAIRES

For immediate release (Disponible en français sur la demande)

Media Release

Dental Hygienists Celebrate International Women's Day

March 5, 2015 (Ottawa, ON) — On March 8, dental hygienists across Canada will join in the worldwide celebration of International Women's Day. First established in 1911, this annual event commemorates women's achievements while continuing the call for full gender equality in all facets of life.

In Canada, this year's International Women's Day activities will highlight the important role of women in the nation's economy. According to the federal government, women now represent 47.2% of the labour force, and women-owned businesses employ more than 1.5 million Canadians. Registered dental hygienists, 98% of whom are women, count significantly among these numbers. They contribute to domestic prosperity as both employees and entrepreneurs, working in traditional dental offices or as independent practice owners in a variety of alternative settings. In fact, there are now more than 600 female dental hygienists operating their own clinics in 8 provinces. As Canadian Dental Hygienists Association (CDHA) president Mandy Hayre explains, "Changes in provincial legislation have allowed dental hygienists to begin working independently, providing essential oral health care services for people of all ages."

As primary health care providers, Canada's independent dental hygiene practice owners conduct comprehensive oral health examinations, including oral cancer screening, offer preventive treatments and strategies to encourage good oral health, and provide referrals to specialists as required. And as business owners, they create employment opportunities in their communities. Mandy Hayre adds, "An entrepreneurial spirit, coupled with a passion for prevention, has prompted female independent practitioners to change the face of oral health care in Canada, while simultaneously moving the economy forward. Their achievements are definitely worth celebrating on March 8."

Serving the profession since 1963, CDHA is the collective national voice of more than 26,800 registered dental hygienists working in Canada, directly representing 17,000 individual members including dental hygienists and students. Dental hygiene is the sixth largest registered health profession in Canada, with professionals working in a variety of settings, including independent practice, with people of all ages, addressing issues related to oral health. For more information on oral health, visit www.dentalhygienecanada.ca

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Angie D’Aoust, Director of Marketing and Communications
1-800-267-5235 ext. 134, or email adaoust@cdha.ca

www.cdha.ca

