CDHO
COLLEGE OF DENTAL HYGIENISTS OF ONTARIO

Guidelines for Continuing Competency

As part of CDHO's Quality Assurance Program, all Registered Dental Hygienists (RDHs) are required to engage in continuing professional development (CPD) every year. Engaging in CPD is a requirement for all regulated health professionals in Ontario and is essential to keep practice knowledge and skills up to date and to maintain public trust in the profession.

Through the annual self-assessment, RDHs are provided with suggested learning goals based on their responses to the assessment, or they can create their own learning goals. In a three-year period, RDHs must **complete 60 hours of CPD activities**. At least 80% of learning activities must be directly related to learning goals and practice. The remaining 20% of CPD activities may relate to Dental Hygiene but do not have to support learning goals (e.g., attending conferences and Dental Hygiene society meetings).

All RDHs are expected to keep a record of their learning through a learning portfolio. We encourage you to use the SMILE Portal to keep track of your learning . Otherwise, please keep a record of your learning in a format that works for you. At a minimum, keep a list of learning activities with proof of attendance or participation (e.g., certificate of attendance or completion, receipts, etc.). We also encourage you to complete a brief reflection on what was learned and how that learning related to your practice and clients.

SETTING LEARNING GOALS

The number of goals you select for the year will vary depending on your unique needs. Goals should be completed in one year, but a large goal that would take more than a year to complete can be divided into yearly achievable milestones. You may have goals on related topics from year to year, as long as there is new learning occurring in subsequent years.

If you are in clinical practice, your goals should be directly related to the following:

- Dental Hygiene science
- Ethical and legal obligations
- Communication, cultural competence, inclusive practice
- Infection control
- Record keeping
- Management of QA records
- Equitable access to oral health care
- Interprofessional collaboration, multi-disciplinary practice
- Radiography, radiation safety, radiation protection officer training
- Health and safety, emergency preparedness
- Process of care

If you are not in clinical practice, your goals should be directly related to your practice and/or to general Dental Hygiene knowledge. Goals for educators should relate to their area of teaching and/or educational theory and practice.

SELECTED LEARNING ACTIVITIES

Suggested learning activities for goal-related learning can include:

- Courses or workshops designed for regulated health professionals offered by professional associations, societies or study clubs
- Presentations, publications or learning modules offered by CDHO
- Courses or workshops offered by accredited Dental Hygiene schools
- Courses or workshops offered at community colleges or universities
- Home study courses designed for RDHs offered by reputable sources that have an evaluation component and grant a certificate of completion
- Giving an original presentation of a paper, essay or formal lecture in Dental Hygiene to a recognized group of fellow professionals at a scientific meeting
- Writing an original scientific paper that is published in a scientific professional journal
- Creating an original scientific, educational or clinical exhibit at a professional meeting
- Observation of a peer in practice, if it can be applied to a goal and only if it is combined with other sources of learning
- Self-study conducted using current dental, dental hygiene and/or medical peer-reviewed journals and textbooks.
- CPR and first aid certification or re-certification
- Courses and programs related to ergonomics
- Courses and programs related to mental health

Suggested learning activities for non-goal related learning can include:

- Holding a position with a provincial or national association or CDHO
- Attendance at a Dental Hygiene conference or symposium
- Attendance at society meetings and formal study clubs
- Reading Dental Hygiene scientific journals (note that full bibliography details of every article read must be included in the learning portfolio to be credited for time spent)
- Volunteer work in a community oral health project in Ontario
- Participating in programs that provide substantial pro bono Dental Hygiene services to underserved populations or to persons who reside in areas of critical need in Ontario
- Acting as a mentor to a colleague who requires mentorship through the QA Program
- Receiving mentorship as a requirement of the QA Program

Not every course or learning resource offered by an association or continuing education provider is a suitable CPD activity. If in doubt, always check with CDHO to confirm whether an activity is suitable.

The following activities are **not** considered suitable CPD activities:

- Attending business meetings
- Giving speeches or presentations to community and social groups
- Attending "lunch and learn" or other product demonstrations
- Self-study from non-professional magazines, books or journals

- Discussions with product sales representatives, employers and colleagues, including staff meetings, informal study groups, etc.
- Yoga and fitness classes
- Activities related to increasing profit or productivity, including those related to operating a business, starting a business or opening a practice, marketing, employment or legal matters, etc.
- Activities unrelated to or with no connection to Dental Hygiene

CPR REQUIREMENT

All RDHs involved in clinical practice must hold a current CPR certificate at the **Basic Life Support level (BLS)**. This is the only acceptable certificate level because it includes:

- CPR training for adults, children and infants (one-rescuer and two-rescuer)
- relief of foreign body airway obstructions for adults, children and infants
- use of an automatic external defibrillator (AED)
- use of bag-valve mask/Ambu-bag

Certification or re-certification may be done through the Heart and Stroke Foundation of Canada, the Canadian Red Cross, or an entity with equivalent requirements and must include a hands-on component. **CDHO does not accept online CPR courses**. Time spent on certification or re-certification can count towards an RDH's CPD hours.

Certification is valid until the expiry date noted on the certificate. If the certificate has no expiry date, it is valid for one year from the date the course was taken.

If you have questions about continuing professional development, please contact us at qualityassurance@cdho.org or 1-800-268-2346 (press 3).

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