

Fair Registration Practices Report

Dental Hygienists (2008)

The answers that you submitted to OFC can be seen below.

Provision of Information About Registration Practices (1 / 13)

Describe how you make information about registration practices available to individuals applying or intending to apply for registration. Specify the tools used to provide information, and the manner in which you make that information available, current, accurate and user friendly in each of these subcategories:

a) steps to initiate the registration process

When an applicant contacts the CDHO, they are provided with an application package which includes a guide to the process of registration. For those who contact the CDHO by e-mail, they are referred to the CDHO's website where there is information on the registration process. There are three guides available on the CDHO's website: one for graduates of accredited dental hygiene programs, one for graduates of non-accredited dental hygiene programs and a Career Map to assist the internationally trained understand the registration process. There are also three different registration packages for each of the different types of graduates. The guides are updated regularly and were last updated in September 2008.

b) requirements for registration

An applicant must successfully complete a two-year dental hygiene program accredited either by the Commission on Dental Accreditation of Canada (CDAC) or the American Dental Association Commission on Dental Accreditation (ADA/CODA) or a dental hygiene program considered equivalent to an accredited program. Applicants must also successfully complete the National Dental Hygiene Certification Examination (NDHCE). In addition, applicants from non-accredited programs must also successfully complete a clinical competency assessment.

Applicants enter the profession of dental hygiene in Ontario through one of two streams. The first stream is for graduates of accredited programs who are automatically eligible to take the NDHCE.

The second stream is for graduates of non-accredited dental hygiene programs, which includes internationally and provincially trained applicants, who are required to have their course of study evaluated by the NDHCB to determine eligibility to write the NDHCE. Applicants who are deemed ineligible to write the NDHCE may request a review by the Registration Committee of the CDHO. If the

applicant's course of study meets the educational requirements, the applicant will be permitted to take a written certification examination set or approved by the CDHO's Registration Committee.

c) explanation of how the requirements for registration are to be met, such as the number of years of schooling required for a degree to be deemed equivalent to an Ontario undergraduate degree, length and type of work experience, credit hours or program content

Graduates of accredited dental hygiene programs are permitted to take the NDHCE without evaluation of their credentials. Most Canadian and US dental hygiene programs are accredited.

Graduates of non-accredited programs have their programs of study evaluated by the National Dental Hygiene Certification Board (NDHCB). The program must be at least two academic years in length. The CDHO accepts the evaluation criteria established by the NDHCB, which are competency based, and if an applicant is deemed eligible to sit the NDHCE, no further educational assessment is required.

Work experience is not required.

d) any education or practical experience required for registration that must be completed in Ontario or practice that must be supervised by a member of the profession who is registered in Ontario

There is no work experience required for registration with the CDHO beyond the practical/clinical work built into the course of study of approved dental hygiene programs. However, if an applicant has not practised dental hygiene within the previous three years, s/he must successfully complete an approved refresher course prior to obtaining their certificate of registration.

Part of the registration process includes attendance at a CDHO Jurisprudence presentation to familiarize applicants with the rules and regulations which govern dental hygiene in Ontario.

e) requirements that may be satisfied through acceptable alternatives

If an applicant is not eligible to participate in the NDHCE, s/he may apply to have their course of study reviewed by the CDHO Registration Committee. As the process for assessing the course is based on the same criteria as the NDHCB, it is unlikely that the applicant will meet the educational requirements. However, sometimes an applicant may present additional information relating to other courses of study taken that may be relevant to dental hygiene which were not reviewed by the NDHCB. Applicants who are deemed to be close to having an approved course of study by the Registration Committee are usually required to successfully complete a course to address the deficiencies noted.

f) the steps in the assessment process

If an applicant is eligible to participate in the National Dental Hygiene Certification Examination, there is no need for further assessment by the CDHO with respect to their course of study.

Applicants who require an assessment of their course of study must submit their transcripts of results, along with a detailed course description including the number of hours spent in each subject, information on the number of hours spent specifically on dental hygiene procedures and the dental hygiene process of care along with information on how many and what types of clients the applicant was required to perform these procedures on.

g) the documentation of qualifications that must accompany each application; indicate which documents, if any, are required only from internationally trained applicants

Graduates of non-accredited dental hygiene programs, which includes internationally and provincially trained applicants, must have their course of study assessed to ensure that it meets the educational requirements. Therefore, additional documentation respecting their course descriptions is required. This evaluation is conducted by the NDHCB.

The CDHO application requires an official transcript of results to be submitted from the College of graduation for all applicants.

Additional information respecting educational qualifications is only required by the CDHO if an applicant is not eligible for the NDHCE and requests a review by the Registration Committee.

h) alternatives to the documentation if applicants cannot obtain the required documentation for reasons beyond their control

Where there are mitigating circumstances where an applicant cannot obtain documentation, the Registration Committee determines, on a case by case basis, whether an alternative document can be substituted. In some cases, the CDHO has used documentation relating to a course of study from information that has been submitted by another applicant. In other cases, the CDHO has written directly to the educational institute to assist the applicant in obtaining documentation.

Documentation that has been provided to the NDHCB will also be accepted. This alleviates the need for the applicant to obtain duplicate information for both the NDHCB and the CDHO.

In some cases, the Committee has accepted explanations as to why certain documents cannot be provided by the applicant, e.g. certificate of professional conduct.

i) how applicants can contact your organization

Applicants can contact CDHO by phone, fax or e-mail.

j) how, why and how often your organization initiates communication with applicants about their applications

Inquiries respecting registration are usually responded to within three business days or less. During peak periods, such as renewal time, it may be five business days before a request is responded to. Contact is usually in the manner that the inquiry was initiated e.g. by phone or e-mail. Most applicants contact the CDHO by e-mail.

When a completed application is received it is processed within 10 business days or less and the certificate of registration is mailed out. When parts of an application form are received, the applicant is usually contacted to acknowledge receipt of the documentation and advised what is required to complete their application.

k) the process for dealing with documents provided in languages other than English or French

The CDHO requires an official translation of documents submitted in languages other than English or French. This does not only apply to the internationally trained applicants. There are many graduates in Ontario who lived elsewhere and some of the documentation required to complete their application form, e.g. information relating to their previous practice, name change, is in a language other than English or French.

l) the role of third-party organizations, such as qualification assessment agencies, organizations that conduct examinations or institutions that provide bridging programs, that applicants may come into contact with during the registration process

The CDHO utilizes the NDHCB, which administers a national examination and conducts educational evaluations, as part of the registration process.

m) any timelines, deadlines or time limits that applicants will be subject to during the registration process

If an applicant has not practised in the previous three years, s/he must successfully complete a refresher course.

Both the NDHCE and provincial examinations are limited to four attempts before an applicant would have to obtain another diploma in dental hygiene.

n) the amount of time that the registration process usually takes

For graduates of accredited programs, applicants could have their application forms ready upon receipt of the results of their NDHCE or at the time of their graduation if the NDHCE results are already posted prior to their graduation. Upon receipt of a completed application, it takes approximately 10 business days to process. In less busy times, the process time is less.

Graduates of non-accredited programs, whether from Ontario or internationally trained, take longer to meet the requirements as they must successfully complete a provincial clinical competency assessment once they have successfully completed the NDHCE. If an applicant is successful on the first attempt at the NDHCE and the clinical competency assessment, the process would take approximately six months. The CDHO has tried to accommodate the increase in the number of non-accredited dental hygiene graduates. A number of private educational institutions have begun to provide courses of study in dental hygiene in Ontario. Many of these programs are non-accredited and their graduates must first

be assessed by the NDHCB and they must also successfully complete the clinical competency assessment. The failure rates for these applicants is high and, therefore, the registration process takes longer. For example, in 2008, the CDHO held clinical competency assessments for 349 candidates, 137 of whom failed.

o) information about all fees associated with registration, such as fees for initial application, exams and exam rewrites, course enrolment or issuance of licence

NDHCB Examination fee \$500
NDHCB Examination Rewrite Fee \$400
NDHCB Eligibility Evaluation Fee \$375
CDHO Initial Application Fee \$75
CDHO Assessment of Course of Study Fee \$250*

CDHO Provincial Written Certification Examination \$350
CDHO Clinical Competency Assessment \$350
CDHO Annual Certification Fee – General/Specialty \$250
CDHO Annual Certification Fee – Inactive \$50

*** If the applicant meets the educational requirements, the CDHO will credit this amount towards the applicant's initial certification of registration fee**

p) accommodation of applicants with special needs, such as visual impairment

Special accommodations have been provided to applicants with special needs both at the NDHCB and the CDHO.

Amount of Fees (2 / 13)

Are any of the fees different for internationally trained applicants? If yes, please explain.

The CDHO has an assessment fee of \$250. Graduates of non-accredited dental hygiene programs are required to have an assessment of their course of study to ensure that it meets the educational requirements. The NDHCB conducts an evaluation of an applicant's course of study which is acceptable to the CDHO. If an applicant does not meet the evaluation requirements of the NDHCB and requests an assessment by the Registration Committee of the CDHO, they are required to pay the \$250 fee. However, if the applicant's course of study is considered substantially equivalent, this fee is applied towards their certificate of registration. To date, the only applicants who have had assessments conducted by the Registration Committee are internationally trained.

Provision of Timely Decisions, Responses and Reasons (3 / 13)

a) What are your timelines for making registration decisions

If a completed application is submitted and the applicant meets all the requirements, the application is processed within 10 business days and a certificate of registration is mailed to the applicant. There is no formal decision for this issue.

If the Registrar refuses to register an applicant, a notice of referral is sent to the applicant, within 10 business days, stating why the application is being referred and advising that s/he has the right to make submissions on the issue.

b) What are your timelines for responding to applicants in writing

In many cases, as the process is quite straightforward, contact will be made with applicants by telephone or e-mail advising them of what is outstanding on their application. This is usually done within three business days of determining what is outstanding.

c) What are your timelines for providing written reasons to applicants about all registration decisions, internal reviews and appeal decisions

Refer to section 6

d) Explain how your organization ensures that it adheres to these timelines.

The CDHO understands the importance of these decisions to the applicant and strives to forward the decisions as soon as reasonably possible after receiving the signed decision and reasons.

Access to Records (4 / 13)

a) Describe how you give applicants access to their own records related to their applications for registration.

There are very few requests from applicants to access their application file as most of the information is submitted by the applicant.

In cases where documentation relating to course descriptions is submitted directly by the College of graduation, a copy is forwarded to the applicant and they are asked to advise the CDHO if the documentation does not accurately reflect their course of study.

If an applicant requests an appeal of a Registration Committee decision, a copy of all the documentation upon which the decision was based is provided to the applicant.

b) Explain why access to applicants' own records would be limited or refused.

To the best of my knowledge, an applicant has never been refused access to her/his application file.

c) State how and when you give applicants estimates of the fees for making records available.

The CDHO has no fee for providing applicants with a copy of their application file.

d) List the fees for making records available.

The CDHO has no fee for providing applicants with a copy of their application file

e) Describe the circumstances under which payment of the fees for making records available would be waived or would have been waived.

The CDHO has no fee for providing applicants with a copy of their application file

Resources for Applicants (5 / 13)

a) List and describe any resources that are available to applicants, such as application guides, exam blueprints or programs for orientation to the profession.

The CDHO provides an application guide to a potential applicant.

The NDHCB has documents available to assist an applicant prepare for the NDHCE. These documents include an examination blueprint and a guide to candidates for the examination. The NDHCB has also developed a 75-item preparatory test available to examination candidates at a cost of \$20.

The CDHO provides a Registrant's Handbook to applicants and conducts Jurisprudence presentations to assist applicants in becoming familiar with the rules and regulations that govern dental hygiene in Ontario. Part of this presentation addresses preparing for the clinical competency assessment for graduates of non-accredited programs. Information on the clinical competency assessment is also available on the CDHO website.

b) Describe how your organization provides information to applicants about these resources.

The application package is provided upon initial contact with the CDHO.

The CDHO registrant's Handbook is provided to applicants once they have registered for a CDHO Jurisprudence presentation or while they are a student in an accredited dental hygiene program in Ontario. The handbook is also available on-line as are the CDHO guidelines and practice standards.

The NDHCB Blueprint, Candidates' guides and application forms along with the preparatory test are available from the NDHCB website.

Internal Review or Appeal Processes (6 / 13)

This section refers to initial internal reviews or appeals.

a) List your timelines for completing internal reviews or appeals of registration decisions.

If an assessment of a course of study is required by the Registration Committee, it is usually completed in three months or less once all the required documents have been received. In some cases, when after its initial review, the Committee requires additional information, the process may take longer. Occasionally, in complex cases, the process takes longer. For example, in 2008, one case which required an assessment of a course of study took six months.

If the matter refers to a request from an applicant for acceptance of alternative documentation or waiving an exemptible requirement, the matter can usually be dealt with in about two to four weeks by teleconference or by e-mail with the members of the Registration Committee. The same timeframe exists for applicants who make

declarations of criminal or civil offences on their application forms.

There are also internal appeals related to the CDHO's clinical competency assessment. These appeals are informal. An applicant has 30 days to appeal the results of a clinical competency assessment. In accordance with the process approved by the Registration Committee, the results of the internal appeal will be provided to the applicant within 10 business days.

If an applicant is not satisfied with the results of the internal appeal, s/he can request a formal Registration Committee decision which is appealable to the Health Professions Appeal and Review Board.

All other decisions handed down by the Registration Committee are appealable to the Health Professions Appeal and Review Board directly and must be submitted within 30 days of the applicant receiving the decision. To date, the only appeals that the CDHO has dealt with are from applicants who were unsatisfied with the results of the assessment of their course of study.

i. State the number of internal reviews or appeals of registration decisions that exceeded your timelines.

One

ii. Among internal reviews or appeals that exceeded your timelines, state the number that were from internationally trained applicants.

One (Same case as referred to above)

b) Specify the opportunities you provide for applicants to make submissions regarding internal reviews or appeals.

In the Notice of Referral, the applicant is advised that they have the right to make submissions. The applicant is advised if the Committee has any follow-up questions or requires further information, and provided with a further opportunity to make submissions.

With respect to the internal review respecting the clinical competency assessment, the candidate is provided with an opportunity to make a written submission outlining the reasons why they are dissatisfied with the results of the assessment. The submission is provided to the appeal panel in conjunction with the evaluators' results of the clinical competency assessment.

c) Explain how you inform applicants about the form in which they must make their submissions (i.e., orally, in writing or by electronic means) for internal reviews or appeals.

The CDHO requests the submission in writing, either by mail, fax or e-mail.

All candidates who are unsuccessful on the clinical competency assessment are provided with a copy of the appeal process. In addition, those candidates who are considering an appeal usually contact the Registrar for further clarification on the process. Candidates may

submit their concerns in writing via mail, e-mail or fax.

d) State how you ensure that no one who acted as a decision-maker in a registration decision acts as a decision-maker in an internal review or appeal of the same registration decision.

Members of the Registration Committee who have prior involvement with the applicant would be excluded from sitting on the Panel dealing with the current issue. For example, a member of the Registration Committee who was involved in the initial informal appeal from an examination candidate would not be on the Panel when a formal decision is requested.

e) Describe your internal review or appeal process.

The only internal appeal/review is the one related to clinical competency assessments as addressed above.

All formal Registration Committee decisions are appealable to the Health Professions Appeal and Review Board.

f) State the composition of the committee that makes decisions about registration, which may be called a Registration Committee or Appeals Committee: how many members does the committee have; how many committee members are members of the profession in Ontario; and how many committee members are internationally trained members of the profession in Ontario.

There are six members on the Registration Committee, two of which are public members appointed by the Ministry of Health and Long-Term Care.

Three of the four professional members who currently sit on the Registration Committee graduated from Ontario dental hygiene programs. The other graduated from a dental hygiene program in the United States.

Information on Appeal Rights (7 / 13)

This section refers to reviews or appeals that are available after an internal review or appeal. Describe how you inform applicants of any rights they have to request a further review or appeal from a decision.

If the decision is negative, the covering letter addresses the applicant's right to appeal, advising them of the timeframe to appeal (30 days) and includes a copy of the section of the RHPA relating to the appeal procedures along with the appropriate address and contact information of where to submit their request for an appeal

Assessment of Qualifications (8 / 13)

This category covers your processes for assessing all qualifications, such as academic credentials, competencies, language ability or practical experience.

a) List the criteria that must be met in order for an applicant's qualifications to satisfy the entry-to-practice requirements for your profession.

The applicant must

have graduated from an accredited dental hygiene program or one considered equivalent.

successfully completed the National Dental Hygiene Certification Examination (NDHCE) or, if an applicant is not eligible to take the NDHCE and the Registration Committee determines that they meet the educational requirements, a provincial written examination.

Graduates of non-accredited dental hygiene programs must also successfully complete a clinical competency assessment.

The CDHO does not have a language requirement at this time. An applicant would have to be reasonably fluent in either English or French to successfully completed the NDHCB and, in some cases, including all internationally trained, the clinical competency assessment.

b) Describe the methodology used to determine whether a program completed outside of Canada satisfies the requirements for registration.

If an applicant is eligible to take the NDHCE, the educational program completed by the applicant is deemed to have met the educational requirements and no further assessment by the CDHO is necessary.

Those applicants who are not eligible and request a review of their course of study are referred to the Registration Committee. A Panel of the Registration Committee reviews all the documentation submitted by or on behalf of the applicant to determine whether the applicant's course of study meets the educational requirements. The Registration Committee is made up of six members, two of whom are public members appointed by the Ministry of Health and Long-Term Care. The Committee is appointed by the Executive Committee in accordance with the CDHO Bylaws. The Committee will always have at least one member who is an dental hygiene educator.

The complete application file is forwarded to the Panel in advance of the meeting. The Panel reviews the information submitted and completes a worksheet consistent with the criteria outlined below under section i). At the meeting, the members of the Panel discuss their findings and determine whether the course of study is substantially equivalent.

c) Explain how work experience in the profession is assessed.

If an applicant has practised dental hygiene in a recognized jurisdiction within the three years prior to registering with the CDHO, they are not required to complete a refresher course. Recognized jurisdictions include the 25 member countries of the International Federation of Dental Hygienists.

d) Describe how your organization ensures that information used in the assessment about educational systems and credentials of applicants from outside Canada is current and accurate.

In most cases, the diploma/degree and documentation provided by the College of graduation provides information on the type of educational institute the course was completed in, e.g. formal, non-formal. The CDHO conducts very few assessments as it accepts the evaluations/assessments conducted by the National Dental Hygiene Certification Board (NDHCB). The NDHCB requires an educational credential evaluation prior to evaluating a course of study.

There was only one assessment completed in 2008 by the Registration Committee. In that case, the CDHO contracted an educational consultant to verify information about the educational institution and educational system in the country where the applicant graduated.

The CDHO is proposing to amend its registration regulations to require an external evaluation for those applicants requiring an assessment of their course of study by the Registration Committee.

e) Describe how previous assessment decisions are used to assist in maintaining consistency when assessing credentials of applicants from the same jurisdictions or institutions.

Each application is considered on its own merit. The Registration Committee recognizes that courses of study can change over time and that applicants could have taken different courses (electives) within the same course of study. However, where there is previous information available that was submitted by another applicant from the same jurisdiction or institution, the Committee will review it to ensure consistency. In one case, the Committee granted a request from an applicant to use information submitted by another applicant respecting course content. The Committee agreed as both applicants graduated from the same institution at roughly the same time.

f) Explain how the status of an institution in its home country affects recognition of the credentials of applicants by your organization.

An approved dental hygiene program must be given in a formal structured, supervised and comprehensive educational setting. According to the Commission on Dental Accreditation of Canada:

“foundational knowledge must be integrated throughout the program and must be of sufficient depth, scope, quality and emphasis to ensure achievement of the program's defined objectives and outcomes. Particular attention must be given to the interrelationship of knowledge, especially to the application of theoretical and empirical information into the clinical and community health curricula, so that the program comprises a related body of knowledge rather than a collection of individual and separate subjects. The sequencing of learning experiences must be managed in a rational and logical way. Foundation knowledge must be established early in the dental hygiene program, and must be of appropriate scope and depth to permit students to demonstrate competence in all defined program competencies.” (section 2.3.2, Accreditation Requirements for Dental Hygiene Programs)

Therefore, the status or type of institution where the program was completed would have a bearing on the Registration Committee's decision. For example, an institution that provided on-the-job training in dental hygiene, rather than in a supervised educational setting,

would not be acceptable.

g) Describe how your organization accommodates applicants with special needs, such as visual impairment.

Accommodations have been made for candidates for the clinical competency assessment.

Candidates must produce a valid medical certificate, two weeks in advance of the clinical assessment, indicating that they require special accommodation for the clinical evaluation. Where possible, accommodation is made.

h) State the average length of time required to complete the entire registration process, from when the process is initiated to when a registration decision is issued.

It is difficult to estimate the time from initial contact to a registration decision as it sometimes takes an applicant time to gather or arrange for documents to be submitted. Sometimes, the delays are because the applicant has not followed up with the application for reasons other than difficulty in obtaining documentation. Once an applicant has submitted all the documentation required for an assessment, it takes approximately three months for the Registration Committee decision to be handed down.

i. State whether the average time differs for internationally trained individuals.

The only requests received by the CDHO to have the Registration Committee assess an applicant's course of study have been from internationally trained individuals. Therefore, the timeframe outlined in section h) applies.

ii. If the average time differs for internationally trained individuals, state whether it is greater or less than the average for all applicants, and the reasons for the difference.

See answer to i) above.

i) If your organization conducts credential assessments:

i. Explain how you determine the level (e.g., baccalaureate, master's, Ph.D.) of the credential presented for assessment.

In most cases, the diploma/degree and documentation provided by the College of graduation provides information on the type of educational institute the course was completed in, e.g. formal, non-formal. The CDHO conducts very few assessments as it accepts the evaluations/assessments conducted by the National Dental Hygiene Certification Board (NDHCB). There was only one assessment completed in 2008 by the Registration Committee. In that case, the CDHO contracted an educational consultant to verify information about the educational institution system in the country where the applicant graduated. The NDHCB requires an educational credential evaluation. The CDHO is proposing to amend its registration regulations to require the same external evaluation.

ii. Describe the criteria that are applied to determine equivalency.

The Committee established an equivalency process based on a review of the applicant's documents for consistency with:

1. Accreditation Requirements for Dental Hygiene Programs, 2005

Commission on Dental Accreditation of Canada (CDAC)

**2. Accreditation Standards for Dental Hygiene Education Programs
Commission on Dental Accreditation, American Dental Association, 2006**

**3. College of Dental Hygienists of Ontario (CDHO)
Dental Hygiene Standards of Practice, 1998**

**4. Dental Hygiene Program Standard
College Standards and Accreditation Council (CSAC), June 1996**

5. National Dental Hygiene Certification Examination - Blueprint - 2005

The dental hygienist must be educated to be able to fulfill responsibilities in the areas of:

- 1. Clinical therapy**
- 2. Health promotion**
- 3. Education**
- 4. Administration, and**
- 5. Research**

The Curriculum must include foundation knowledge in the following areas:

- a) Behavioural sciences**
- b) Biomedical sciences**
- c) Oral Health sciences**
- d) Dental hygiene theory and practice**

This foundation knowledge must be integrated throughout the program and of sufficient depth, scope, quality and emphasis to ensure achievement of the program's defined abilities. Particular attention must be given to the interrelationship of knowledge, especially to the application of theoretical and empirical information into the clinical and community health curricula, so that the program comprises a related body of knowledge rather than a collection of individual and separate subjects.

The dental hygiene process of care involves procedures and activities that are undertaken in four phases:

- 1. Assessment/Diagnosis**
- 2. Planning**
- 3. Implementation**
- 4. Evaluation**

The equivalency process developed by the Registration Committee is divided into six sections. This process assists the Registration Committee to look at individual competencies. However, the Registration Committee then has to assess the entire picture. The dental hygiene process of care, commonly referred to as ADPIE, must be an integral part of the entire course. The term ADPIE refers to the five steps

of the dental hygiene process of care which is the foundation of professional dental hygiene practice. The five steps are: assessment to include the systematic collection of data to identify client problems, needs, and strengths; diagnosis to include the identification of client oral health problems that dental hygiene interventions can improve; planning to include the establishment of dental hygiene interventions that can move a client closer to optimal oral health; implementation to include the process of carrying out the dental hygiene care plan designed to meet the needs of the client and; evaluation to include the measurement of the extent to which the client has achieved the goals specified in the plan of care. The dental hygiene process provides a framework for delivering quality dental hygiene care to all types of clients in any environment. The process requires decision making and assumes that dental hygienists are responsible for identifying and resolving client problems within the scope of dental hygiene practice. (Darby, M., Walsh, M., (2003) Dental Hygiene Theory and Practice, ED 2. USA: Saunders)

The sections established by the Committee are as follows:

- 1) **BIOMEDICAL SCIENCES:** - Anatomy (gross), Physiology, Microbiology and Immunology, Embryology and Histology, Pathology, Pharmacology and Nutrition
- 2) **ORAL HEALTH SCIENCES:** - Anatomy, (Head & Neck, Oral and Dental), Oral Pathology, Periodontology, Radiology (Imaging technique and Interpretation)
- 3) **ORAL HEALTH SPECIALTIES:** - Pedodontics, Orthodontics, Geriatrics, Endodontics, Oral and Maxillofacial Surgery, Prosthodontics and Restorative
- 4) **BEHAVIOURAL SCIENCES:-** Communication, Psychology and Sociology, Community Dental Hygiene, including Program Planning and Community Placement, Epidemiology, Statistics and Teaching Techniques.
- 5) **PROFESSIONAL AND SAFE PRACTICE:** - Professional practice including Ethics and Jurisprudence, Dental Hygiene Materials, Medical Emergencies, Infection Control, Radiation Safety, Documentation, Periodontal charting and symbols, including oral hygiene and periodontal indices.
- 6) **DENTAL HYGIENE PRACTICE:-** Pre-clinic Practice, Dental Hygiene Process of Care, comprised of Assessment, including Medical, Dental and Social Histories, Extra and Intra Oral Assessment, Periodontal Assessment, Dental Hygiene treatment planning, Implementation including Oral Health Education, Manual instrumentation, Powered instrumentation, use of Topical Agents, Client Comfort Management and Evaluation on Diverse Client Populations.

iii. Explain how work experience is taken into account.

Work experience is not considered when determining whether a course of study is equivalent to an Ontario dental hygiene program. As stated in the registration regulations, it is a non-exemptible requirement that an applicant must have successfully completed a course of study in dental hygiene of at least two years at an educational institution outside of Ontario that the Registration Committee considered to be the equivalent to the educational program currently being taught in Ontario. Work experience is not considered a substitute for training in a formal, supervised educational setting. Work experience does not provide the structure, supervision, evaluation and feedback that is part of an educational program. For example, work experience can simply reinforce learning gaps or bad habits.

j) If your organization conducts competency assessments:

i. Describe the methodology used to evaluate competency.

The CDHO conducts clinical competence evaluations for candidates from non-accredited schools. The evaluation is conducted clinically with a client of the candidate's choosing. The criteria for the client is posted on the CDHO web site. The candidate is evaluated on client selection (assessment), planning, implementation and evaluation. Client safety is paramount at all times and undue tissue trauma constitutes an unsuccessful result. Evaluators work in teams of two, and each candidate's work is evaluated independently by each member of the team. The evaluation session is timed and candidates are required to complete their assigned work within that time frame. The candidate is asked at the mid-point if s/he is able to complete the assigned treatment area. The assignment may then be reduced. Self-evaluation by the candidate is a critical component of the evaluation.

ii. Explain how the methodology used to evaluate competency is validated, and how often it is validated.

At each clinical evaluation session the Chief Evaluator conducts a calibration exercise with the evaluators. If the members of the evaluation team of two do not agree on the candidate's result, then the Chief Evaluator will conduct a third assessment.

At the conclusion of the session, a debriefing occurs and improvements are made to the system where required. Any new forms or components of the evaluation are posted on the CDHO web site prior to the next clinical evaluation session.

iii. Explain how work experience is used in the assessment of competency.

Work experience is not taken into consideration in the clinical evaluation. The clinical evaluators do not know if the candidate is a new graduate or an experienced clinician.

k) If your organization conducts prior learning assessments:

i. Describe the methodology used to evaluate prior learning.

ii. Explain how the methodology used to evaluate prior learning is validated, and how often it is validated.

iii. Explain how work experience is used in the assessment of prior learning.

l) If your organization administers examinations:

i. Describe the exam format, scoring method and number of rewrites permitted.

The CDHO has a written examination for those candidates who have been approved by the Registration Committee but who are not eligible to write the National Dental Hygiene Certification Examination.

The exam format parallels the format used by the NDHCB. A pass of 66% is required. A candidate may attempt the exam a maximum of four times.

ii. Describe how the exam is tested for validity and reliability. If results are below desired levels, describe how you correct the deficiencies.

The CDHO written exam is rarely required. The exam is reviewed by an external evaluator who updates the exam as required.

iii. State how often exam questions are updated and the process for doing so.

As this exam is rarely used, the exam is updated when required.

Third-Party Organizations (9 / 13)

a) List any third-party organizations (such as language testers, credential assessors or examiners) relied upon by your organization to make assessment decisions.

The National Dental Hygiene Certification Board (NDHCB)

The Commission on Dental Accreditation of Canada (CDAC)

American Dental Association Commission on Dental Accreditation (ADA/CODA)

[The CDHO recognizes this as a parallel organization to the CDAC because the two commissions recognize each other and have a reciprocity agreement. The reciprocity agreement is based on the fact that both the CDAC and the ADA/CODA conduct site-visits to programs and follow the same process. Also, representatives from Canada and the USA participate yearly in each other's process. Therefore, because the process is the same for both the CDAC and ADA/CODA the process has not been repeated below.]

b) Explain what measures your organization takes to ensure that any third-party organization that it relies upon to make an assessment:

i. provides information about assessment practices to applicants

The NDHCB's policies are transparent and are outlined on its website at www.ndhcb.ca. Applicants are directed to this website by CDHO either by phone or e-mail. There is also contact information provided in our guides as well as a link to the NDHCB from our website.

The CDAC's policies and procedures are transparent and available on their web site. Potential dental hygiene students are directed to the web site to view the accreditation status of the school they are researching. The CDAC mission is to evaluate and improve educational programs located in post secondary institutions that prepare oral health providers to serve the Canadian public.

ii. utilizes current and accurate information about qualifications from outside Canada

The NDHCB requires an external educational credential evaluation from applicants who graduated outside of Canada and the US.

The CDAC evaluates dental hygiene programs in Canada and has a reciprocal agreement with the American commission. The CDAC does not assess individuals.

iii. provides timely decisions, responses and reasons to applicants

The NDHCB strives to conduct its evaluation of credentials within 6-10 weeks. A member of CDHO staff sits on the NDHCB and is provided with monitoring reports on a number of issues including the length of time it takes to conduct evaluations. 85% of evaluations were conducted within 6 weeks in 2008.

The CDAC posts the annual results of its evaluations on its web site by December 1st each year.

iv. provides training to individuals assessing qualifications

The NDHCB contracted a dental hygiene consultant to assist with assessing qualifications. This consultant is a former dental hygiene program director, a former Subject Matter Expert and has been a member of the on-site visits for CDAC. The consultant also attended a World Education Service (WES) workshop on internationally credentially equivalency evaluation in 2008. An Applications Committee is sometimes used to assess qualifications. This Committee met to receive training on how to conduct an evaluation and to ensure that their methods were calibrated.

The CDAC has an extensive training session for those individuals who assess programs.

v. provides access to records related to the assessment to applicants

Upon request, the NDHCB has forwarded documents relating to an applicant's course of study to the CDHO to assist the applicant in the CDHO's application process.

As CDAC accreditation is a voluntary process, the educational institutions receive a thorough

report including recommendations and suggestions for improving the program.

vi. accommodates applicants with special needs, such as visual impairment

A member of CDHO staff sits on the NDHCB and is provided with monitoring reports on a number of issues including the number of requests for accommodation. In 2008, all 18 candidates who requested special accommodations were granted it.

When conducting a site visit the CDAC monitors how educational programs accommodate students with special needs.

c) If your organization relies on a third party to conduct credential assessments:

i. Explain how the third party determines the level (e.g., baccalaureate, master's, Ph.D.) of the credential presented for assessment.

For applicants who graduated from a program outside of Canada or the United States, the NDHCB requires a report for educational credential evaluation covering the country of education, name of the institution(s) attended, the year and the specific credential received (degree, diploma or certificate), the length of the program, the area(s) of specialization and the Canadian equivalency, prepared and submitted directly by the credentialing agency.

For applicants from a non-accredited program in Canada or the United States, the NDHCB requires a notarized copy of the written notification confirming that the dental hygiene program is established as a separate school, faculty, division or department recognized by the appropriate government agency in the country where the program is established at a post secondary institution which is also recognized by the appropriate government agency. This document must be submitted directly by the dental hygiene educational institution of graduation.

The CDAC only evaluates entry-to-practice dental hygiene programs. It is the educational institution that determines if it is offering a diploma or degree. The CDAC requires a letter from the Ministry confirming the status/level of the educational institute.

ii. Describe the criteria that are applied to determine equivalency.

There is an established review process and application guide respecting the evaluation of academic qualifications of individuals from non-accredited dental hygiene programs for the determination of eligibility to write the NDHCE. Graduates of accredited* dental programs are eligible to write the NDHCE without further evaluation of their academic qualifications.

The evaluation standards are based on current:

1. Commission on Dental Accreditation of Canada's Accreditation requirements for Dental Hygiene Programs;

- 2. Canadian Dental Hygienists Associations's Policy Framework for Dental Hygiene Education in Canada;**
- 3. Canadian Dental Hygienists Association's Dental Hygiene: Definition, Scope and Practice Standards;**
- 4. Curricula from Canadian Dental Hygiene Programs; and**
- 5. Dental Hygiene Educator's Canada's 2004 Learning Outcomes for Canadian Dental Hygiene Education.**

*** Accredited shall mean accredited by the Commission on Dental Accreditation of Canada (CDAC) or the American Dental Association Commission on Dental Accreditation (ADA/CODA).**

The Evaluation process reviews whether an applicant's education is substantially equivalent to the education of a graduate from an accredited dental hygiene program in Canada. The NDHCB evaluation process is built on the following principles:

- 1. Dental Hygiene is a regulated health profession encompassing the theory and practice of oral therapeutic interventions, preventive interventions and health promotion;**
- 2. Dental Hygiene has a unique body of knowledge, distinct expertise, recognized education and practice standards, and a Code of Ethics;**
- 3. The education and experience of dental hygienists must prepare them to work in a collaborative relationship with the client and other health care professionals and, depending on the jurisdiction, without the direct supervision of a dentist;**
- 4. Dental Hygiene practice utilizes a systems approach to services which includes Dental Hygiene Process (DHP) assessment and Diagnosis, DHP planning, implementation and DHP evaluation; and**
- 5. Applicants for evaluation are not required to meet different standards than those required of dental hygienists from accredited Canadian programs.**

The CDAC criteria are extensive and listed on the web site. The first step is providing documentation to the CDAC to indicate that the program is striving towards meeting the published requirements: curriculum, facilities, faculty and administrative procedures. The CDAC then does a paper review. If the CDAC determines that the submitted documentation appears to represent all of the elements of a dental hygiene program according to CDAC

guidelines, then the program will receive notification that it is Program Status under Review and will be followed by a on-site visit during the final clinical session of the final year.

The site-visit is to determine if the program is indeed adhering to the CDAC criteria. Following the site-visit the information is evaluated by the CDAC Dental Hygiene Committee which makes a recommendation to the Commission Board for decision. The CDAC then grants or denies the program accreditation status. Subsequent to the initial site visit, the program is visited at defined intervals by the CDAC. All accredited programs are required to provide yearly updates to the Commission.

iii. Explain how work experience is taken into account.

The NDHCB does not take work experience into account when considering whether academic qualifications are substantially equivalent.

As the CDAC does not conduct individual assessment, work experience is not relevant.

d) If your organization relies on a third party to conduct competency assessments:

i. Describe the methodology used to evaluate competency.

The CDAC evaluates how the competencies are taught in the program and the methods to evaluate those competencies. There is no individual student testing.

ii. Explain how the methodology used to evaluate competency is validated, and how often it is validated.

The CDHO has representation on all site teams that visit the schools in Ontario. In addition, the Federation of Dental Hygiene Regulatory Authorities has a seat on the CDAC Board. Calibration of processes is done yearly.

iii. Explain how work experience is used in the assessment of competency.

e) If your organization relies on a third party to conduct prior learning assessments:

i. Describe the methodology used to evaluate prior learning.

ii. Explain how the methodology used to evaluate prior learning is validated, and how often it is validated.

iii. Explain how work experience is used in the assessment of prior learning.

f) If your organization relies on a third party to administer examinations:

i. Describe the exam format, scoring method and number of rewrites permitted.

The NDHCE examination is a multiple choice test. Items consist of a stem which poses a problem in question format, followed by a list of four possible answers. Only one of the possible answers is correct. The other possible answers

are called distractors which may divert the inadequately prepared candidate.

Case study test items consist of a description of a client in a clinical or community health situation followed by a series of three to six multiple choice test items. The description in the case study will be entirely written information, and may include radiographic material.

The standard for the examination is established by using the professionally accepted and widely used modified Angoff method and/or Statistical Equating. The Examination Approval Subject Matter Experts (SME) will set the specific passing (cut off) score for each version of the NDHCE using that method. The modified Angoff method is based on the concept of the borderline or minimally competent candidate. The minimally competent candidate is one who possesses the minimum level of knowledge and skills necessary to perform at a certified level.

The examination is computer scored by the testing agency contracted by the NDHCB. To confirm that the Examination meets or exceeds professional standards, a comprehensive statistical analysis is conducted on the Examination. Items that do not meet established criteria are not used in calculating candidates' scores.

A candidate will be allowed a maximum of four opportunities to write the NDHCE.

ii. Describe how the exam is tested for validity and reliability. If results are below desired levels, describe how you correct the deficiencies.

The NDHCB implements a rigorous test development process that meets all professional standards as specified in the most recent edition of American Psychological Association Standards for Standards for Educational and Psychological Testing including the requirements of periodic evaluation. This test development process is summarized below.

Competency Study

As the foundation for a criterion-referenced examination, the competencies (i.e., knowledge, skills, abilities, attitudes, and judgments) required for the safe and effective practice of an entry-level dental hygienist were identified by NDHCB SMEs (subject matter experts). The competencies undergo an extensive review by focus groups of other SMEs from across Canada (i.e., educators, practitioners, administrators, researchers) to establish their validity. The dental hygiene competencies undergo a regular periodic review to ensure that the competency profile for entry-level dental hygiene practice remains

current.

Blueprint Development

An examination Blueprint outlining the content to be tested in the Examination was developed and is reviewed periodically by the NDHCB. The Blueprint includes the competencies - that is, the content domain that forms the basis for test development. It also specifies variables that provide structure for the examination, as well as guidelines and specifications for weighting the competencies to ensure that the examination accurately reflects the domain of entry-level dental hygiene.

Item Development

Examination items are developed by SMEs who are trained in item writing. The examination items measure the specified competencies in accordance with the guidelines identified in the examination Blueprint. After an item is developed, it is evaluated and refined by the group of subject matter experts, and sent for review by different SMEs

Item Review

Other SMEs (Item Appraisers), from different regions across Canada review each new item to ensure that they measure content that is consistent with current Canadian entry-to-practice standards as well as regional standards of practice for entry-level dental hygiene practitioners. They also ensure that that stereotypes are not found in the items and that examinees are not disadvantaged by the examination content.

An Examinations Committee meets annually to set the examination for the following year. Item writing workshops are held to develop new questions for the dental hygiene item bank. The new items are sent to teams of nine dental hygiene educators across Canada who either reject the item or accept it with or without modifications.

iii. State how often exam questions are updated and the process for doing so.

Training (10 / 13)

a) Describe the training that your organization provides to:

i. individuals who assess qualifications

There is an annual orientation session provided to all members of the Registration Committee which addresses the criteria used and the methodology of conducting assessments. As well, there is always at least one dental hygiene educator on the Committee who can provide guidance on issues relating to course content.

Some members of the Committee attended a workshop "Fair Registration Practices & Procedures: a training session for Staff and Committee members" in November 2008.

ii. individuals who make registration decisions

There is an annual orientation session provided to all members of the Registration Committee which addresses issues related to making registration decisions.

Some members of the Committee attended a workshop "Fair Registration Practices & Procedures: a training session for Staff and Committee members" in November 2008.

iii. individuals who make internal review or appeal decisions

There is an annual orientation session provided to all members of the Registration Committee which addresses issues related to making registration decisions. The internal appeal process for appeals from the clinical competency assessment is reviewed at the orientation session.

Some members of the Committee attended a workshop "Fair Registration Practices & Procedures: a training session for Staff and Committee members" in November 2008.

Agreements on the Recognition of Qualifications (11 / 13)

Examples of agreements on the recognition of professional qualifications include mutual recognition, reciprocity and labour mobility agreements. Such agreements may be national or international, between regulatory bodies, associations or jurisdictions.

a) List any agreements on the recognition of qualifications that were in place during the reporting period.

The CDHO participated in a Mutual Recognition Agreement (MRA) that included all Canadian jurisdictions with the exception of Quebec, New Brunswick and Nunavut.

Currently, the provinces accept the clinical evaluation results from other provinces that also conduct clinical evaluations for graduates of non-accredited schools.

b) Explain the impact of these agreements on the registration process or on applicants for registration.

The MRA will expire as per the AIT on April 1, 2009. Consequently, there is the possibility that candidates who have proven to be unsuccessful on either the NDHCB exam or the clinical evaluation may have to be registered in Ontario if another jurisdiction has registered them. The CDHO strongly objects to registering candidates who have not been assessed independently.

Data Collection (12 / 13)

Languages in which application information materials are available

a) Indicate the languages in which application information materials are available.

Language	Yes/No
English	Yes
French	Yes
Other (please specify)	

Paid staff employed by your organization

b) State the number of paid staff employed by your organization in the following categories.

Category	Staff
Total staff employed by the regulatory body	11
Staff involved in appeals process	3
Staff involved in registration process	6

Enter "n/a" when the process does not exist in your registration practices. Enter "0" when the process exists in your registration practices but the correct value is zero.

Countries where internationally educated applicants were initially trained

c) List the countries where your internationally educated applicants* were initially trained in the profession, and the number of applicants trained in each country.

Applicants	Country of training (Canada excluded)	Number of applicants**
Largest number	Israel	1
Second-largest number	Japan	1
Third-largest number	Sweden	1
Fourth-largest number	0	0
Fifth-largest number	0	0

* Persons who have applied to start the process for entry to the profession.

**Enter "n/a" when the process does not exist in your registration practices. Enter "0" when the process exists in your registration practices but the correct value is zero.

Jurisdiction where members were initially trained

d) Indicate where your members* were initially trained in the profession (use only numbers, do not enter commas or decimals).

Jan. 1 to Dec. 31	Jurisdiction where members were initially trained in the profession (before they were granted use of the protected title or professional designation in Ontario)					
	Ontario	Other Canadian Provinces	USA	Other International	Unknown	Total

Applicants who were issued an alternative class of license*	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	0
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Enter "n/a" when the process does not exist in your registration practices. Enter "0" when the process exists in your registration practices but the correct value is zero.

Additional comments:

	Class of License	Description
a)		
b)		
c)		

Reviews and appeals your organization processed in the past year

f) State the number of reviews and appeals your organization processed in the past year (use only numbers, do not enter commas or decimals).

Jan. 1 to Dec. 31	Jurisdiction where members were initially trained in the profession (before they were granted use of the protected title or professional designation in Ontario)					
	Ontario	Other Canadian Provinces	USA	Other International	Unknown	Total
Applications that were subject to an internal review or that were referred to a statutory committee of your governing council, such as a Registration Committee	9	1	0	2	n/a	12
Applicants who initiated an appeal of a registration decision	0	0	0	1	0	1
Appeals heard	0	0	0	0	0	0
Registration decisions changed following an appeal	0	0	0	0	0	0

Enter "n/a" when the process does not exist in your registration practices. Enter "0" when the process exists in your registration practices but the correct value is zero.

Additional comments:

I hereby certify that:

- - I have reviewed the information submitted in this Fair Registration Practices Report (the "Report")
- - all information required to be provided in the Report is included; and
- - the information contained in the Report is accurate.

Name of individual with authority to sign on behalf of the organization:

Evelyn Waters

Title:

Deputy Registrar

Date:

February 27, 2009