

Guideline: Dual Health Care Practices

The College has established the following guideline to clarify the obligations of registrants who practise in more than one health care discipline.

INTRODUCTION

CDHO registrants may have dual health care practices (i.e., they may practise in more than one profession if they are qualified to do so).

While this may benefit clients, it complicates the understanding of regulation and accountability for health professionals, clients, and insurers. If there is overlap in the scope of practice within the dual health care practices, there is potential to further increase client misunderstanding of the role of the dental hygienist.

Registrants are accountable to the College of Dental Hygienists of Ontario when practising and billing for services as dental hygienists. If the other practice is regulated, the health care professional is also accountable to another health regulatory body. If the other practice is unregulated, the health care professional is not directly accountable to a regulatory body for that other practice.

DEFINITIONS

Dual Health Care Practice - The circumstance where a College registrant practises as a dental hygienist as well as in another health care discipline regulated or unregulated (i.e., massage therapist, denturist, nurse, homeopath, respiratory therapist, Reiki instructor, personal trainer/life coach, etc.)

In the event of any inconsistency between this guideline and any legislation that governs the practice of dental hygienists, the legislation governs.

Registrants who have dual health care practices are responsible for administering their practices as separate and distinct entities and for ensuring that their clients understand which role they are adopting when they provide health care services.

PERFORMANCE EXPECTATIONS

A dental hygienist demonstrates her/his understanding of the guideline by:

1. Keeping the roles of the dual health care practice separate and distinct by having: different appointment books; client records, or entries in client records when they are created as part of an interdisciplinary care team; and billing records and financial records that are separate.
2. Ensuring that treatments/interventions recommended by the registrant as a dental hygienist, and provided by the registrant as a member of a different health discipline, are based solely on clients' needs.

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3. Ensuring that clients are provided with information needed to understand the dental hygienist's role and accountability when she or he is performing the treatment, thus reducing the confusion for the client.
4. Ensuring that clients are provided with the services that they initially sought unless this is determined to be inappropriate.
5. Ensuring that the clients' records clearly demonstrate which services have been provided to clients at each encounter.
6. Participating in and documenting quality assurance activities directly related to the practice of dental hygiene.

REFERENCES

College of Dental Hygienists of Ontario, *Dental Hygiene Standards of Practice*
Dental Hygiene Act, 1991

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Adapted with permission from the College of Physiotherapists of Ontario