

Guidelines for Continuing Competency

All Registered Dental Hygienists (RDHs) participate in CDHO's Quality Assurance Program, which provides them with valuable tools and resources to enhance their skills, confidence and professional network.

In addition to completing the Self-Assessment Tool and participating in assessment, all RDHs are expected to engage in continuing professional development (CPD) and keep a record of their learning through a learning portfolio.

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 should complete 75 hours of CPD activities. At least 80% of learning activities must be directly related to your learning goals and practice. The remaining 20% of CPD activities may come from activities that relate to Dental Hygiene but do not necessarily relate to the learning goals (e.g., attending conferences and Dental Hygiene society meetings).

We encourage you to use the [SMILE Portal](#) to keep track of your learning as this will make reporting easier if you are selected for assessment. 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. If selected for assessment, you will be asked to complete this reflection in the SMILE Portal.

SETTING LEARNING GOALS

The number of goals you select for the year will vary depending on your unique needs and the amount of learning required to achieve each goal. Goals should be completed in one year. A large goal that would otherwise take more than one 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, WHMIS
- 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 post-test 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.

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 mentoring 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 suitable to use in your learning portfolio. 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 a speech at a luncheon or banquet
- Giving speeches or presentations to community, school or church groups
- CPR and first aid certification or re-certification
- Attending “lunch and learn” or other product demonstrations
- Self-study from non-professional magazines, books or journals

GUIDELINES FOR CONTINUING COMPETENCY

- Discussions with product sales representatives, employers and colleagues, including staff meetings, informal study groups, etc.
- Activities related to ergonomics or personal health and wellness, such as taking yoga, fitness and/or stress reduction classes, or courses about posture for the RDH
- Reading books related to personal wellness, stress reduction or weight loss
- 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

In addition to the 75 hours, all RDHs involved in clinical practice must hold a current CPR certificate at the basic life support level, which 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.

If you have a certificate that is valid for three years and feel that you have adequate knowledge and skill around CPR, the certificate remains current until the expiry date. If the CPR 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 ext. 8802.