



TREATMENT AND COUNSELLING FOR SEXUAL ABUSE AND SEXUAL MISCONDUCT COMPLAINANTS

Under the *Health Professions Act (HPA)*, the College of Registered Dental Hygienists of Alberta (CRDHA) is mandated to develop a program for preventing and addressing sexual abuse of and sexual misconduct towards clients by dental hygienists. Provisions under the *HPA* require that the College provide funding for treatment and counselling for a client who alleges sexual abuse or sexual misconduct by a CRDHA registrant. The maximum funding amount a client may access is equivalent to the cost of 100 hours of psychiatric counselling.

The CRDHA has a policy of zero tolerance for sexual abuse of or sexual misconduct towards clients. Throughout the process, the College is committed to treating clients alleging sexual abuse or sexual misconduct in a sensitive and respectful manner.

Specific information about the CRDHA's funding for treatment and counselling for sexual abuse and sexual misconduct will be made available to complainants by the CRDHA Complaints Director.

Details of the government funding guidelines for treatment and counselling include:

- A client will have access for funding for up to five years or until the maximum amount of funding has been provided (whichever comes first).
- Funding ceases if a complaint is dismissed by the CRDHA Complaints Director or the CRDHA Hearing Tribunal.
- A client will not be required to undergo any assessment prior to being eligible to receive funding.
- A client will be eligible to choose any regulated health professional to provide treatment or counselling, subject to the following restrictions:
 - The regulated member must not treat the client if there is a conflict of interest (e.g. family member); and,
 - The regulated member must be in good standing with the regulatory college they are registered with.
- Funding can only be used to cover cost of treatment and counselling.
- Current government guidelines require the CRDHA to allot an amount equivalent to the cost of 100 hours of psychiatric counselling as per the rates listed in the Schedule of Medical Benefits; in 2019, this amount is approximately \$22,000.
- The CRDHA will not be entitled to recover costs from a client where a complaint is dismissed or deemed frivolous or vexatious.
- The CRDHA will be entitled to recover the costs associated with providing treatment or counselling from a regulated member who is found to have committed unprofessional conduct involving sexual abuse or sexual misconduct.