

# Standards of Practice



## ADVERTISING AND REPRESENTATION OF SERVICES

This standard applies to all dental hygienists, whether they directly engage in advertising and promotional activities or others do so on their behalf.

### STANDARD STATEMENT

The dental hygienist ensures all **advertising** is clear, truthful, accurate, and verifiable and does not mislead or misinform the public.

### PERFORMANCE EXPECTATIONS

The dental hygienist must...

1. Ensure that **advertising**:
  - a) Is verifiable and accurately reflects current, best-available evidence from **reliable sources**;
  - b) Contains complete information, is truthful, and does not mislead or deceive the public;
  - c) Refrains from methods that may create unreasonable expectations for the public (e.g., guarantees, warranties, or unsubstantiated claims about results);
  - d) Does not contain comparative, discrediting, or disparaging statements about other health care professionals or their services, fees, clinics, or products;
  - e) Informs the public without creating **unnecessary demand for dental hygiene services**;
  - f) Does not include endorsements or testimonials regarding the dental hygienist or their services;
  - g) Does not take advantage of client insecurities;
  - h) Does not harm the integrity of the dental hygiene profession.
2. Represent their professional title, authorized restricted activities, academic credentials, certifications, experience, knowledge, and skills:
  - a) Truthfully;
  - b) Without using the term “specialist;”
  - c) Only within the scope of dental hygiene practice;
  - d) In accordance with legislation, standards, ethical principles, and guidelines.
3. Decline to participate in advertising that offers any inducement to a client to receive a dental hygiene service, including but not limited to:
  - a) Time-limited prices;
  - b) Discount coupons, gift certificates, or prizes for a service.
4. Refrain from:
  - a) Advertising for products or services outside the practice of dental hygiene while:
    - i. Referencing their dental hygiene education or training; or
    - ii. representing themselves as a dental hygienist or a regulated member of the College.
  - b) Using their professional title to endorse any product or service for financial gain unless the dental hygienist:
    - i. Discloses any benefit received from the endorsement; and
    - ii. takes an **evidence-informed** approach in the decision to endorse the product or service.

5. Ensure that advertisements of the dental hygienist's fees:
  - a) sufficiently describe the fees and services to meet the expectations of truth, accuracy, and clarity to the intended audience; and
  - b) reference a consistent fee schedule regardless of the client's insurance coverage.
6. Ensure that all advertising is in compliance with legislation, standards, and ethical principles, and is consistent with the College's advertising guidelines.\*

*\*Note: advertising guidelines are still in development at this time.*

## CLIENT EXPECTATION

The **client** can expect that advertising by or about the dental hygienist is accurate, assists them in making informed choices, and does not pressure them in their dental hygiene care decisions.

## GLOSSARY

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### ADVERTISEMENT/ADVERTISING

Any communication made orally, in print, through electronic media or via the internet (including websites and social media), by, about or on behalf of a dental hygienist, to the public where its substantial purpose is to promote the dental hygienist, the dental hygienist's services, or the dental hygiene clinic with which the dental hygienist is associated. (CPSBC)

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### DENTAL HYGIENE SERVICES

Dental hygiene services include the assessment, diagnosis, and treatment of oral health conditions through therapeutic, educational, and preventive dental hygiene procedures and strategies that promote wellness. These procedures and strategies include restricted activities authorized by the Alberta Dental Hygienists Profession Regulation. Dental hygiene services are provided to individual clients or communities by dental hygienists in their roles as clinicians, educators, researchers, administrators, health promoters, and consultants.

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### EVIDENCE-INFORMED

A formalized process that involves identifying, searching for, and interpreting the results of the best available evidence to inform decision-making processes.

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### RELIABLE SOURCES

For example, scholarly peer-reviewed journals, systematic reviews, clinical and best practice guidelines.

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### UNNECESSARY DEMAND

Encouraging the client or potential client to access care at an inappropriate time that is inconsistent with the client's needs, interests, or goals.