

# Standards of Practice



## SAFETY AND RISK MANAGEMENT

### STANDARD STATEMENT

The dental hygienist protects themselves, their clients, and others from illness and injury by ensuring a safe practice environment and complying with occupational health, safety and risk management **legislation**.

### PERFORMANCE EXPECTATIONS

The dental hygienist must...

1. Comply with Occupational Health and Safety legislation.
2. Comply with applicable federal and provincial radiation protection legislation and codes, including [Safety Code 30](#).
3. Only use medical equipment and devices:
  - a) that are compliant with legislation;
  - b) that are approved for use by Health Canada; and
  - c) according to manufacturer's instructions for use (MIFU).
4. Apply infection prevention and control measures to prevent the transmission of infectious agents in compliance with legislation, standards, ethical principles, and guidelines including:
  - a) Alberta [Reusable & Single-Use Medical Devices Standards](#);
  - b) Council-approved infection prevention and control [guidelines](#).
5. Participate in a safe practice environment by:
  - a) Determining and taking reasonable steps to ensure **workplace** policies and procedures reflect applicable legislation, standards, ethical principles and guidelines;
  - b) Following workplace policies and procedures to protect clients, themselves, and others from illness and injury. These policies and protocols include but are not limited to:
    - i. Following manufacturer's recommended service schedules and maintaining detailed service records;
    - ii. Handling and storing drugs and hazardous products safely;
    - iii. Disposing of drugs, biomedical and other hazardous wastes safely;
    - iv. Safe disposal of equipment and supplies;
    - v. Ensuring that emergency medical equipment, supplies, and drugs are appropriate to the practice setting, readily accessible and appropriately stored and/or maintained in accordance with manufacturer instructions;
    - vi. Following appropriate emergency protocols.
6. Recognize, respond to, document, and disclose **adverse events** and **close calls**, and participate in processes to prevent future occurrences.
7. Acquire the necessary education and training to competently apply appropriate emergency response skills that meet or exceed any minimum requirements (e.g., [CPR](#), oxygen administration, first aid).
8. Identify and mitigate potential risks that may impact safety in the workplace (e.g., working alone, environmental hazards, biological hazards, safety and function of equipment).
9. Be aware of their personal immunization status and how it could impact risk related to the transmission of infection.

continued >>

## CLIENT EXPECTATION

The **client** can expect the dental hygienist to deliver services safely, follow appropriate infection prevention and control measures, and respond appropriately to any event that could result in **harm** or has caused harm.

## GLOSSARY

---

### ADVERSE EVENT

An unexpected event related to healthcare management or delivery that a client directly experiences and that results in no harm, harm or death. (Health Quality Council of Alberta [HQCA](#))

---

### CLOSE CALL

An event or series of events that nearly resulted in a client being harmed but harm was avoided. ([HQCA](#))

---

### HARM

An unexpected outcome related to the care and/or services provided to the patient that negatively affects a patient's health and/or quality of life. ([HQCA](#))

---

### LEGISLATION

Statutes, acts, regulations or codes.

---

### WORKPLACE

The location where a dental hygienist provides dental hygiene services, whether self-employed, an employee, contractor, consultant or volunteer.