



## **College of Dental Hygienists of Manitoba's Interpretation Guideline: Interim Stabilization Therapy (IST)**

### **Purpose**

This practice guideline is to inform registrants of the College of Dental Hygienists of Manitoba (CDHM) of the provision for interim stabilization therapy (IST).

### **Background**

- Interim Stabilization Therapy (IST) is a non-invasive, temporary restorative procedure which arrests or stabilizes dental caries/decay through a therapeutic release of fluoride from a glass ionomer cement (GIC). It is ideal for single surface temporary restorations for both primary and permanent teeth.<sup>1,2</sup>
- IST was first adopted in Canada by the Ontario Region First Nations Inuit Health Branch.<sup>1,3</sup> It is a variation of the atraumatic restorative treatment that does not involve the removal of any tooth structure.<sup>4,5</sup> However, IST does require that any soft foreign material or debris be removed from the tooth prior to placing the temporary GIC in order to facilitate the bonding of the material to tooth structure.<sup>1,2</sup>
- IST is intended to provide the client with temporary relief and improved tooth integrity until a permanent restoration can be placed by a dentist.<sup>1,2</sup>
- IST is beneficial to vulnerable populations with limited access to dental care, including remote locations as well as the frail and elderly.<sup>1</sup>

### **Requirement**

- In Manitoba, registered dental hygienists cannot diagnose dental decay; however, they can identify a client's unmet needs according to the Human Needs Conceptual Model of Care. An unmet need of biologically sound dentition would be addressed by temporarily stabilizing the tooth with an IST.<sup>7</sup>
- In Manitoba, registered dental hygienists can place temporary restorations, however, the removal of sound tooth structure is not within the scope of practice.<sup>6</sup> Dental hygienists may remove soft debris, plaque, and/or food debris prior to the placement of IST materials.
- Providing IST is in the scope of practice<sup>6</sup> for registered dental hygienists in Manitoba, and it is incumbent upon the dental hygienist to determine, as a professional, whether they are competent and adequately educated to provide IST safely and effectively in their dental hygiene practice. If a registered dental hygienist has not acquired the skills



- necessary for the competent provision of IST, further continuing education courses may be needed prior to performing this procedure..
- Prior to providing IST, the dental hygienist must obtain informed consent, ensuring that the client (or representative) understands the temporary nature of the therapeutic intervention. The client (or representative) must agree to a written referral made to a dentist for follow-up.<sup>1</sup>

### **Applicable Legislation**

According to The Dental Hygienists Act<sup>8</sup>, the placement of temporary restorations is within the current scope of practice for registered dental hygienists in Manitoba.

According to the Dental Hygienists Regulation section 2(3)(a): A dental hygienist may use an oral therapeutic agent, such as an anticariogenic agent, in any setting.<sup>9</sup>

According to the CDHM Competencies<sup>6</sup>, registrants of the CDHM have the ability to;

- assess intraoral hard tissues (e.g. discolouration of teeth, possible caries, tori, etc.) (Assessment #31)
- assess the need for consultation and referrals within the health care delivery system (Assessment #54)
- select evidence-based clinical intervention options based on the assessment data (Planning #6)
- obtain informed consent for the dental hygiene care plan from the client and/or agent (e.g. therapy, pharmacotherapeutic agents, anaesthetics, etc.) (Planning #16)
- place temporary restorations (Implementation #46)
- act as a client advocate (e.g. assisting the client to find treatment, communicating the client's needs to other health professionals, etc.) (Implementation #54)
- use materials and equipment according to manufacturer's specifications (Implementation #64)

The CDHM encourages dental hygienists to exercise professional discretion in determining their competence and capability in applying a new skill to their dental hygiene practice.

\*This interpretation guideline reflects current knowledge and is subject to periodic review and revisions with on-going research.



## References

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