



COLLEGE OF
DENTAL HYGIENISTS
OF MANITOBA

PRACTICE DIRECTION: ADVERTISING

August 2023

The College of Dental Hygienists of Manitoba, Professional Practice Committee is responsible for developing professional resource documents for dental hygienists. Council approves these documents, of which, the purpose is to explain, enhance, add, or guide dental hygiene practice in accordance with The Dental Hygienists Act and Regulations. It is the responsibility of the dental hygienist to understand and comply with these documents.

The College of Dental Hygienists of Manitoba's Practice Direction for Advertising

Purpose

This practice direction has been developed to provide guidance to registrants of the College of Dental Hygienists of Manitoba (CDHM) with guidelines for appropriate advertising.

Background

Advertising is the use of space or time in a public medium, or the use of commercial publication, such as a brochure or social media, to communicate with the general public or a segment thereof, for the purpose of promoting public services.

This includes but is not limited to signs, announcements, media appearances, brochures, cards, or any ads that appear in print, online or through social media.

Newsletters, blogs, and other social media postings are considered promotional material and their purpose must be to further the public's education and information on issues relevant to dental hygiene, the public's health, and services provided by the practitioner.

Advertising by dental hygienists, or on behalf of dental hygienists, must comply with all professional, legal, and ethical obligations.

Requirements

- The nature of advertising by a dental hygienist must:
 - be in good taste, accurate, and not capable of misleading the public;
 - observe the dignity and ethics of the profession;
 - information must be truthful, factual and not promote unnecessary demand for services, or provide guarantees of success/results;
 - be non-competitive and does not compare, either directly or indirectly by innuendo, any services, fees, or ability with any other practitioner, or promises or offers more effective service or better results, than those available elsewhere.
- A dental hygienist must not refer to the quality of the services provided in any advertisement, e.g., words like 'gentle' in advertising are subjective and as such have a connotation of comparing one's services to another practitioner.
- A dental hygienist will not use testimonials or endorsements, as they imply superiority and are, therefore, disallowed. This includes social media commentary that can be perceived as testimonials.
- A dental hygienist will not use incentives, offers or free giveaways, as they are considered unethical, e.g., group coupons are not allowed as a third party is being paid by the dental hygienist to promote the practice, which is considered a conflict of interest.

- A dental hygienist will not endorse products and/or reference drugs within an advertisement.
- A dental hygienist will refrain from advertising for products or services outside the practice of dental hygiene while:
 - referencing their dental hygiene education or training; or
 - representing themselves as a dental hygienist or a regulated member of the College.
- A dental hygienist will not disclose the names of clients in any advertisement.
- A dental hygienist must ensure advertising content aligns with the dental hygiene scope of practice, takes an evidence-informed approach, and is professionally appropriate.
- A dental hygienist is required to represent their professional designations, academic credentials (diploma, baccalaureate, masters, PhD), and Advanced Practice skills truthfully and accurately.
 - The titles ‘specialist,’ ‘certified,’ ‘expert’ or any similar term that suggests special status may not be used by a dental hygienist. Using such terms is misleading to the public and would suggest that there are specialties within the practice of dental hygiene. All registrants on the Practicing Register are permitted to practice to the full scope of practice, providing they have the appropriate education and training.
 - Special attention should be paid to the use of language, e.g., Avoid the use of the term ‘dental examination’ or ‘oral health exam’. This could be confusing as a patient may think they were going to pay for and receive the same comprehensive dental exam that would be provided by a dentist, which includes aspects such as caries diagnosis. A caries diagnosis is not in the dental hygiene scope of practice in Manitoba.

As a service to its registrants, the College of Dental Hygienists of Manitoba will review any advertising to ensure adherence to guidelines and regulations as well as investigate any complaints or concerns relating to advertising.

*This practice direction reflects current knowledge and is subject to periodic review and revisions with on-going research.

Applicable Legislation

Dental Hygienists Act, Part 7, Regulations; 53(1) the council may make regulations; (e) controlling the manner in which a member may describe his or her qualifications or occupation and prohibiting the use of any term, title or designation that in the opinion of the council is calculated to mislead the public.

CDHM Practice Competencies (Planning), 24; A dental hygienist markets the practice and/or own services in accordance with applicable legislation and guidelines (e.g., marketing plans, business cards, referral programs, etc.).

Resources

1. Alberta College of Dental Hygienists. Standards of Practice: Advertising [Internet]. 2023 Jun. Available from: <https://www.acdh.ca/public/download/files/232717>
2. Alberta College of Dental Hygienists. Guidelines for Advertising. [Internet]. 2023 Aug. Available from: <https://www.acdh.ca/public/download/files/233317>
3. British Columbia College of Oral Health Professionals. Practice Resources for Dental Hygienists. Interpretation Guidelines: Marketing [Internet]. 2020 May. Available from: <https://oralhealthbc.ca/practice-resources/practice-standards-guidance/dh-interpretation-guidelines/>
4. College of Dental Hygienists of Ontario, Guideline. Advertising. [Internet]. 2014 Jan. Available from: https://www.cdho.org/docs/default-source/pdfs/reference/guidelines/gui_advertising.pdf?sfvrsn=d07082a0_14
5. College of Dietitians of Alberta. Guidelines for Promotion and Advertising [Internet]. 2018 Oct. Available from: <https://collegeofdietitians.ab.ca/wp-content/uploads/2018/11/Guidelines-for-Promotion-and-Advertising-October-2018.pdf>
6. College of Physiotherapists of Manitoba. Practice Direction. Advertising. [Internet]. 2023 May. Available from: <https://manitobaphysio.com/wp-content/uploads/2023/05/4.14-Advertising.pdf>
7. College of Registered Nurses of Manitoba. Guidelines for Advertising [Internet]. 2022 Oct. Available from: <https://www.crnmb.ca/wp-content/uploads/2022/01/Guidelines-for-Advertising.pdf>
8. New Brunswick College of Dental Hygienists. NBCDH Independent Practitioner Requirements [Internet]. 2013 Sep. Available from: <https://www.nbcdh.ca/wp-content/uploads/2017/10/NBCDH-INDEPENDENT-PRACTITIONER-REQUIREMENT1.pdf>
9. Saskatchewan Dental Hygienists Association. Regulatory By Laws, section 53 [Internet]. 2020 Jul. Available from: <https://sdha.ca/wp-content/uploads/2020/09/SDHA-Regulatory-Bylaws-Effective-July-2020.pdf>