

Standards of Practice



RESTRICTED ACTIVITIES

Restricted activities are high risk activities carried out in relation to or as part of providing a health service that require specific competencies and skills to be carried out safely. Restricted activities must be performed in accordance with the College's Standards of Practice.

Restricted activities that dental hygienists may perform are divided into:

- A. Activities that are authorized for all dental hygienists holding a general or courtesy practice permit;*
- B. Activities that require advanced training and authorization from the College

A. Restricted Activities for Dental Hygienists (General or Courtesy Practice Permit)

The Health Professions Restricted Activity Regulation lists the following restricted activities that dental hygienists are authorized to perform, subject to any conditions or restrictions on the individual's practice permit:

- for the purpose of assessing or treating oral health conditions but not for the purpose of performing restoration procedures of a permanent nature, to cut a body tissue, to administer anything by an invasive procedure on body tissue or to perform surgical or other invasive procedures on body tissue below the dermis or the mucous membrane or in or below the surface of teeth, including scaling of teeth;
- to insert or remove instruments, devices, fingers, or hands beyond the pharynx for oral soft tissue examinations;
- to reduce a dislocation of a temporomandibular joint for the purpose of reducing a subluxation of the temporomandibular joint;
- to prescribe the following Schedule 1 drugs for the purpose of treating oral health conditions, providing prophylaxis and treating emergencies:
 - (i) antibiotics;
 - (ii) antifungal agents;
 - (iii) antiinfective agents;
 - (iv) antiviral agents;
 - (v) bronchodilators;

* Refer to specific standards of practice on each restricted activity for additional education and certification requirements.

- (vi) epinephrine;
- vii) fluoride;
- (viii) pilocarpine;
- (ix) topical corticosteroids;
- to compound, provide for selling, or sell, incidentally to the practice of dental hygiene, a Schedule 1 drug or Schedule 2 drug;
- to order or apply any form of ionizing radiation in medical radiography.

B. Restricted Activities Requiring Advanced Training

The following restricted activities may only be performed if the dental hygienist completes **advanced training** according to College policies and obtains authorization from the College:

- to prescribe or administer nitrous oxide for the purposes of conscious sedation;
- in collaboration with a dentist, to fit an orthodontic or periodontal appliance for the purpose of determining the preliminary fit of the appliance;
- in collaboration with a dentist, to perform surgical or other invasive procedures on body tissue below the surface of teeth for the purpose of performing restoration procedures of a permanent nature;
- any other restricted activity within the practice of dental hygiene that is identified by the College as requiring advanced training.

Despite any authorization to perform restricted activities, dental hygienists must restrict themselves in performing restricted activities to those activities that they are competent to perform and to those that are appropriate to the dental hygienist's area of practice and the procedure being performed.

STANDARD STATEMENT

The dental hygienist performs only those restricted activities they are authorized and competent to perform, within the context of their practice of dental hygiene, and when client assessment findings indicate their use. The dental hygienist completes approved advanced training and obtains additional authorization from the College prior to performing restricted activities requiring advanced training.

PERFORMANCE EXPECTATIONS

The dental hygienist must...

1. Perform only those restricted activities for which they have the required authorization in accordance with the Health Professions Act and Standards of Practice.
2. Be responsible and accountable for safely performing the restricted activity.
3. Only perform a restricted activity if:
 - a) they are educated, trained, and competent to perform it;
 - b) an appropriate **client** assessment has been performed; and
 - c) the restricted activity is appropriate to the procedure being performed.
4. Maintain the competence necessary to perform restricted activities relevant to their practice.

5. Be aware of risks associated with performing the restricted activity and ensure that risk mitigation measures are in place to manage any **adverse events** associated with performing it.
6. For restricted activities that require additional authorization from the College, complete an approved advanced training course, apply to the College for authorization, and receive authorization from the College prior to performing the activity.

CLIENT EXPECTATION:

The client can expect that the dental hygienist performs the restricted activities which they are authorized to provide in a safe, effective, and appropriate manner.

GLOSSARY

ADVANCED TRAINING

Theoretical and clinical training in a specific area of practice, which is above and beyond the entry-to-practice competency requirements. Advanced training may or may not be offered as part of an entry-to-practice dental hygiene education program and must be approved by the College.

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.¹

CLIENT

An individual, family, group, community, or organization accessing dental hygiene services. The term client in these standards also includes the client's legal guardian or substitute decision-maker legally authorised to act on behalf of a client when appropriate. An individual client may also be referred to as a patient.

RESTRICTED ACTIVITY

An activity named in the *Health Professions Act* as a restricted activity carried out in relation to or as part of a health service.

¹ Adapted from the Health Quality Council of Alberta (2022). Available from <https://justculture.hqca.ca/glossary-recommended-terms/>