

Standards of Practice



ADVERTISING

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, 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 an individual's insecurities;
 - h) Does not harm the integrity of the dental hygiene profession; and
 - i) Protects the privacy and confidentiality of patient information.
2. Obtain and document consent prior to using patient information for advertising purposes.
3. Decline to participate in advertising that offers any inducement to a patient to receive a dental hygiene service, including but not limited to:
 - a) Time-limited prices; and/or
 - 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; and/or
 - ii. Representing themselves as a dental hygienist or a registrant of the College.
 - b) Using their **professional title** to endorse any product or service for personal gain unless the dental hygienist:
 - i. Discloses any benefit received from the endorsement;
 - ii. Takes an evidence-informed approach in the decision to endorse the product or service; and
 - iii. Discloses relevant information about the product or service.
5. Only advertise health products that Health Canada authorizes for sale in Canada.
 6. Ensure that advertisements of the dental hygienist's fees sufficiently describe the fees and services to meet the expectations of truth, accuracy, and clarity to the intended audience.
 7. Ensure that all advertising complies with legislation, standards, and ethical principles, and is consistent with the College's advertising guidelines.

PATIENT EXPECTATION

The patient 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

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, and/or a dental hygiene clinic with which the dental hygienist may be associated.¹

DENTAL HYGIENE SERVICES: Any service that falls within the practice of the profession of dental hygienists as outlined in the [Health Professions Act](#) (Schedule 5, section 3).

ETHICAL PRINCIPLES: The five fundamental principles that form the foundation of the College's Code of Ethics: Beneficence and Non-maleficence, Veracity and Integrity, Patient's Autonomy and Informed Choice, Confidentiality and Patient's Privacy, and Accountability.

¹ College of Physicians and Surgeons of British Columbia. (2022). Practice Standard Advertising and Communication with the Public. Accessed from: www.cpsbc.ca/files/pdf/PSG-Advertising.pdf

EVIDENCE-INFORMED: The integration of best available evidence with clinical expertise and patient values.² This approach involves identifying, searching for, and interpreting the result of the best available evidence to inform decision-making processes.³

LEGISLATION: Federal or provincial acts, regulations, or codes.

PROFESSIONAL TITLE: Includes any words or titles listed in section 30 of the [Dental Hygienists Profession Regulation](#).

RELIABLE SOURCES: Research findings that are methodologically appropriate and clinically relevant for the situation. Both the ranking of the source on an evidence hierarchy and the quality of the evidence are considered (e.g., scholarly peer-reviewed journals, systematic reviews, clinical and best practice guidelines, government data).⁴

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

²Straus, S. E., Glasziou, P., Richardson, W. S., & Haynes, R. B. (2019). Evidence-based medicine: How to practice and teach EBM (5th ed). Elsevier.

³ Federation of Dental Hygiene Regulators of Canada. (2021). Entry-to-Practice Canadian Competencies for Dental Hygienists. Accessed from: www.fdhrc.ca/wp/wp-content/uploads/2021/12/EPCCoDH_FDHR_Canada_November_2021.pdf

⁴ Woo, K. (2017). Polit & Beck Canadian Essentials of Nursing Research (4th ed). Wolters Kluwer Health.