

Standards of Practice



SAFETY AND RISK MANAGEMENT

STANDARD STATEMENT

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

PERFORMANCE EXPECTATIONS

The dental hygienist must...

1. Comply with applicable provincial 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 devices** and equipment:
 - a) That are compliant with legislation;
 - b) That are approved for use by Health Canada; and
 - c) According to manufacturer's instructions for use.
4. Apply appropriate infection prevention and control measures to prevent the transmission of infectious agents in compliance with legislation, standards, ethical principles, and guidelines including:
 - a) Alberta Health [Reusable & Single-Use Medical Devices Standards](#); and
 - b) Council-approved infection prevention and control [requirements and guidelines](#).
5. Determine and take reasonable steps to ensure **workplace** policies and procedures reflect applicable legislation, standards, ethical principles, and guidelines. These policies and procedures include but are not limited to:
 - a) Following manufacturer's recommended service schedules and maintaining detailed service records;
 - b) Handling and storing drugs and hazardous products safely;
 - c) Disposing drugs, biomedical, and other hazardous wastes safely;
 - d) Disposing equipment and supplies safely;

- e) 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; and
 - f) Following appropriate emergency protocols.
6. Follow workplace policies and procedures to protect patients, themselves, and others from illness and injury.
 7. Recognize, respond to, and document **adverse events** and **close calls**, and participate in processes to prevent future occurrences.
 8. Disclose to the patient if there is a risk of harm or if harm has occurred.
 9. 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).
 10. Identify, report, and mitigate potential risks that may impact safety in the workplace (e.g., working alone, environmental hazards, biological hazards, safety and function of equipment).
 11. Be aware of their personal immunization status and how it could impact risk related to the transmission of infection.

PATIENT EXPECTATION

The patient 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 patient directly experiences and that results in no harm, harm or death.¹

CLOSE CALL: An event or series of events that nearly resulted in a patient being harmed but harm was avoided.¹

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.¹

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

MEDICAL DEVICE: Any instrument or component used to treat, diagnose, or prevent a disease or abnormal physical condition.²

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

¹ Health Quality Council of Alberta.(2022). JustCulture Glossary: Recommended Terms. Accessed from: justculture.hqca.ca/glossary-recommended-terms/

² Government of Canada. (2020) About Medical Devices. Accessed from: www.canada.ca/en/health-canada/services/drugs-health-products/medical-devices/about-medical-devices.html