Vision of a Healthy and Respectful Workplace for Dental Hygienists

A healthy and respectful workplace is one that...

- is free from harassment, bullying, and violence (physical or psychological)
- exemplifies strong leadership and models respectful behaviour
- recognizes the professional expertise of dental hygienists and empowers them to practise to their full scope of practice
- allows adequate time for individualized client care
- offers the opportunity to negotiate a fair compensation package
- is open, collaborative, and transparent in all interactions and decision making
- has policies and systems in place to address concerns courteously, promptly, and fairly
- supports and promotes both the physical and psychological well-being of each member of the team

CDHA believes that every dental hygienist is entitled to work in a healthy and respectful environment.

www.cdha.ca/healthyWorkplace
Video Series: Conversations to Build Collaborative Workplaces

When teams have collaborative conversations to solve workplace issues, they can produce new ideas and innovative solutions.

Our series includes:

- Introductory Video: Developing Your Mindset
- What is a Care Call?
- A Scenario of a Care Call
- How to Have a Care Call
- Returning to Work: A Positive Mindset
- Addressing Bullying and Harassment in the Workplace
- Discussing Infection Control Concerns

Featuring:

- Katherine Eitel Belt, LionSpeak
- Donna Wells, CDHA

Watch today!
www.cdha.ca/collabworkplacevideos
The dental team comprises a variety of dental professionals. When teams have collaborative conversations to solve workplace issues, they can produce new ideas and innovative solutions that meet or even surpass business objectives, improve workplace satisfaction and staff relationships, and ultimately benefit client care.

CDHA has developed a video series titled Conversations to Build Collaborative Workplaces. The AARCH conversation framework outlined in the videos will guide dental hygienists who are seeking to bridge a divide with a member on their dental team, both in the short term when the COVID-19 pandemic subsides and in the future. Please watch the Introductory Video: Developing Your Mindset for more detailed information.

Here are some key elements to consider prior to having a collaborative conversation.

The Best Time to Have a Conversation
The timing of your conversation is important. The morning is ideal as we are rested, we think more clearly, and we have more control over our emotions. If the conversation happens in the afternoon or at the end of a workday, pause for 5 or 10 minutes to refocus, to grab a cup of tea or to take a quick walk around the block. Do ask the other person when they are able to have a conversation. Be mindful of the other person’s needs as well.

Non-Verbal Communication
Your body language must be aligned with your words. If your body language does not reflect your message, people will notice. Unfold your arms, put weight on both feet, assume a natural stance, soften your facial expression, and smile. Nod occasionally to acknowledge you are engaged in the conversation.

Pace of Conversation
Speaking at a normal pace in a calm, reassuring tone shows confidence. If necessary, take a deep breath to slow down the pace of your words.

Word Choice
Try not to overly script your conversation. Scripts take away authenticity and opportunities for connection. Apply the AARCH framework and be yourself while having the conversation. Focus on communicating the right message and hearing what the other person is saying.
Tips for Conversations to Build Collaborative Workplaces

Mindset
You want to approach the conversation with a strong, confident, non-judgmental, and respectful mindset. The following three factors contribute to a strong and positive mindset:

1. **Knowing that you have choices.** When you recognize that there may be more than one option or solution, you can have some control over the outcome and feel more confident in your shared decision making.

2. **Acknowledging your beliefs and those of others.** Even though you may not agree with someone else’s beliefs or perspectives, being aware that such differences exist will allow you to approach a conversation more openly.

3. **Being in the “Flow” rather than the “Muddy Bank.”** Ask yourself if you are in the Flow (experiencing positive emotions) or in the Mud (experiencing negative emotions). You are responsible for your happiness. Approach a conversation when you are in the Flow.

How can you move from the Mud to the Flow? Try some of these activities:

- meditating (with a guide)
- exercising
- listening to music
- reading inspirational quotes
- keeping a gratitude journal
- speaking with family and friends (the inner circle)

The Conversation
Before applying the AARCH framework, remember to explore the team member’s perspective first. Let your team member know the subject of the conversation and ask them how they feel about it. Listen non-defensively, be aware of your body language, and remember you are listening to gather information, not to formulate your answer. This step will provide you with an understanding of your team member’s position on the subject.

The **AARCH** framework will guide you through the conversation:

- **Affirm and Acknowledge:** Affirm the person’s position on the subject. Acknowledge something positive about them either as individuals or their work.

- **Agreement:** Find areas of agreement on the topic. Remember to connect the agreement piece and the resolution piece with “and” not “but.”

- **Resolution:** Present your ideas on how to solve the problem and ask for their ideas. This is the negotiation piece, which should lead to a resolution.

- **Confirmation:** Confirm who is going to do what and when specifically.

- **Hope:** Wrap up the conversation expressing gratitude and optimism.

Collaborative conversations in the workplace can be challenging and take practice. Planning a time to have the conversation (when possible), being aware of your non-verbal communication, having a positive mindset before the conversation, and using the AARCH framework during the conversation will help you feel confident in achieving the desired outcome.
Tips to Address Bullying and Harassment in the Workplace

Every dental hygienist is entitled to work in a healthy and respectful environment, free from bullying and harassment. Thirty-five percent of respondents to CDHA’s 2018 Healthy and Respectful Workplace Survey reported they had experienced bullying and/or harassment within the last year at their place of employment. CDHA is committed to supporting and empowering all dental hygienists in their efforts to address these issues and improve their work environment.

What are bullying and harassment?
Bullying and harassment take many different forms. Some examples may be overt, such as undue criticism, incivility, verbal humiliation or teasing that degrades a particular group or individual. Others may be more subtle. We call it “microbullying” when an individual dismisses your words or actions by rolling their eyes, crossing their arms, smirking or sighing while you’re speaking.

How does it make you feel?
Whether an isolated incident or occurring repeatedly, bullying or harassment can leave you feeling anxious, stressed, and even physically ill. You may feel disrespected, powerless or insecure, making it difficult to focus and function effectively. These feelings can detract from your work experience and, in turn, the experience of your clients.

When mistreatment is so severe that it makes you feel physically, sexually or emotionally unsafe, remove yourself from the situation immediately and report the abuse.

What can you do if you’re feeling bullied or harassed?

• Reach out to a colleague (your office manager, a health and safety committee or union representative, or someone in the human resources department) or to anyone you trust for support.

• Address the incident at the earliest opportunity. Don’t let the situation fester.

• In your interactions with the person whose behaviour was hurtful:
  ◊ Control your emotions, tone of voice, and reaction. Respond in a professional manner.
  ◊ Ask what their understanding of the incident is. They may not view the encounter in the way that you do.
  ◊ Explain how the incident made you feel: embarrassed, dismissed, humiliated, angry?

• After the first incident, ask the person to work with you on a solution to avoid the incident happening again, and agree to that solution.
Tips to Address Bullying and Harassment in the Workplace

• After the second incident, **insist** that the person comply with the agreed-upon solution.
  Ask why they aren’t complying.

• After the third incident, **demand** that they comply with the agreed-upon solution.

• If the bullying or harassment has been happening for a long time, ask if the person would be open to
discussing your working relationship and to working towards a healthier way to collaborate and communicate.

**When should you involve your employer?**

• If the situation does not improve or if it worsens

• If the interactions begin to affect your mental health or enjoyment of your work

• If mediation between the two parties is required to reach a solution

**What else should you consider?**

• Ask yourself why the other person is acting this way? Put yourself in their shoes.

• Reflect on your role in the conflict and your response. Did you respond in a way that further
inflamed the situation?

• Remember that you can’t control other people’s decisions, reactions, and behaviours.

• Recognize that people have varying degrees of emotional intelligence.

• If you choose to stay in the work environment, own that choice and don’t hold others responsible.
  Let go of anger or bitterness so it doesn’t affect your working relationships.

• Stay positive. If the bullying is isolated, the behaviour can be more easily corrected.

• Don’t be a bystander. If you see others at work being bullied or harassed, offer assistance.

• Seek additional support from CDHA’s [Homewood Health Member and Family Assistance Program](https://www.cdha.ca).  

**Are you the bully?**

• Reflect on how you interact with your coworkers. Do you wait for them to make a mistake and then criticize,
or do you provide proactive guidance?

• Listen to your tone when speaking to colleagues. Are you curt or sarcastic? Sometimes it’s not what we say,
it’s how we say it.

• How often do you say, “I’m just joking”? Is it really a joke or could it be perceived as mean spirited?

Addressing bullying and harassment can be a positive experience with positive outcomes. It can improve your work
environment and working relationships. Remember to treat and speak to others as you would want to be treated…
with empathy, kindness, generosity, and respect.
Recommended Resources

- Video Series: Conversations to Build Collaborative Workplaces
- Tips for Conversations to Build Collaborative Workplaces
- CDHA’s 2018 Healthy and Respectful Workplace Survey

Visit [www.cdha.ca/healthyworkplace](http://www.cdha.ca/healthyworkplace) to access these resources and more.
Tips for Discussing Infection Control Concerns

Provincial regulatory bodies establish infection prevention and control (IPAC) protocols to keep you, your co-workers, and your clients safe. What should you do if you feel your workplace is not following the IPAC standards set by your regulatory body? This tip sheet offers guidance on how to have that conversation with an employer or a co-worker.

Before moving forward, please watch Discussing Infection Control Concerns in the Conversations to Build Collaborative Workplaces video series and read the Tips for Conversations to Build Collaborative Workplaces. These resources will help you prepare for a potentially challenging conversation, as they describe both the AARCH conversation framework and the importance of body language, facial expression, and tone of voice.

Talking with Your Employer

• Thank them for taking the time to meet with you.
• Begin the conversation in a positive, non-judgemental manner.
• Offer empathy for the challenges they face as a business owner.
• Ask them for their perspective on the office's current IPAC protocols. Their answer may surprise you.
• If they are aware that adherence to IPAC protocols could improve, but are not sure how to make it happen, offer solutions.
  ◊ Offer to source appropriate PPE or supplies for the office.
  ◊ Offer to locate and share current evidence and best practices for IPAC in the dental setting.
  ◊ Offer to work with office staff on implementing new protocols.
• If the employer believes that the current IPAC protocols are sufficient and additional protocols are unnecessary, again offer solutions.
  ◊ Provide research data that support improved IPAC protocols.
  ◊ Share your provincial regulatory body IPAC guidelines.
• No matter what their response, tell your employer that you understand their position. You can understand without agreeing.
• Remember: you are mandated to follow your provincial regulatory body IPAC guidelines and may face professional consequences for failure to do so. Just as importantly, you may be putting your own health at risk by not raising IPAC concerns with your employer.
Talking with Your Co-worker

• Prior to the conversation, make sure you understand your office IPAC protocols as well as your current provincial regulatory body and public health IPAC guidelines.

• Bring a copy of the office IPAC protocols with you to the meeting.

• Begin the conversation in a positive, non-judgemental manner.

• Initiate the conversation with “I have some thoughts I wanted to share with you about our infection control protocols. Are you open to having a conversation about our current IPAC protocols?”

• Affirm the positive aspects of your co-worker’s compliance with IPAC protocols: “I appreciate this…” and “I’ve noticed…”

• Ask for their perspective on the current IPAC office protocols. Reserve judgement.

• If they are aware that they are not adhering to protocols, find out why. Are they overwhelmed? Are the protocols unclear? Are there internal pressures to work more quickly than IPAC protocols allow?

• Offer solutions. Ask them for solutions. Work together.
  ◊ Review office protocols in a staff meeting.
  ◊ Create an IPAC flow chart that can be housed in the sterilization centre to provide quick reminders.

• If they believe they are adhering to protocols or that the protocols are unnecessary, a different approach will be required. Your office manager, team lead, or employer may need to be involved to ensure compliance with the proper IPAC protocols.

As a dental hygienist, you have a professional responsibility to ensure a safe environment for yourself, your co-workers, and your clients. You can empower your team to make decisions, take responsibility for actions, and effect change in the workplace. Be the change you want to see!
Coaching  
Counselling  
Support

Achieving your health and wellness goals just got easier

Your Member and Family Assistance Program (MFAP)

Professional

We guarantee your confidentiality.
We are Homewood Health™, a trusted Canadian company with years of experience delivering the best possible support for clients like you. Everyone is guaranteed confidentiality within the limits of the law. You won’t be identified to anybody—including your employer.

Choices

Counselling that’s convenient for you.
Counselling is available in person, by phone, by video, or online. There is no cost to you. Offices are local and appointments are made quickly, with your convenience in mind. Have a preference for location or appointment time? We’ll do our best to accommodate your preferences.

Life Smart Coaching

You can receive coaching support for a variety of life balance and health issues, or get expert support to better manage your career. Life Smart Coaching services are available by phone.

Health

• Nutrition
• Lifestyle Changes
• Jumpstart your Wellness
• Smoking Cessation

Life Balance

• Childcare and Parenting
• Elder and Family Care
• Relationships
• Financial
• Legal
• Grief and Loss

Career

• Career Planning
• Workplace Issues
• Pre-Retirement
• Shift Work

Counselling

For all of life’s challenges
Your Member and Family Assistance Program helps you take practical and effective steps to improve your well-being and be the best you can be. We offer a supportive, confidential, and caring environment and will provide you with counselling for any challenge:

• Family
• Depression
• Marital
• Life transitions/change
• Relationships
• Grief/Bereavement
• Addictions
• Stress
• Anxiety
• Other personal issues

Online Resources

The right information at the right time
Access Homeweb anytime for e-Learning, interactive tools, health and wellness assessments, and a library of health, life balance, and workplace articles.

i-Volve: Online CBT

i-Volve is an online, self-paced treatment program for depression and anxiety using the best practice treatment approach, cognitive behavioural therapy (CBT).

This innovative treatment program will guide you through exercises that examine and test how you interpret and perceive external stimulation. These insights will help you change and adapt the ways in which you think, feel, and react in various situations. i-Volve will help you to identify, challenge and overcome your anxious and/or depressive thoughts, behaviours and emotions.

Self-Guided: Work at Your Own Pace

Unlike traditional CBT programs, i-Volve is available 24 hours a day, seven days a week, and we designed it to allow you to work at your own pace.

Contact Information

Contact us 24 hours a day, 7 days a week
1-833-375-0629 | TTY: 1-888-384-1152
International (Call collect): 604-689-1717
HomeWeb.ca

A tear-out wallet card is provided below.

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Negotiating a Compensation Package as an Employee

You’ve been offered a new position. Congratulations! The next step is negotiating your contract in order to clarify and secure your terms of employment. When starting at a new place of employment, you want to begin on the best possible terms…for you! Only 51% of dental hygienists report having a contract. If you don’t have a contract you risk leaving money and benefits on the table.

Here are some guidelines for negotiating the best contract:

1. **Do your homework.** Know what the hourly, salary or commission rate is in your area. Use CDHA’s [Job Market and Employment Survey Report](https://www.cdha.ca) as a guideline. Know what your average billing was at your last place of employment. Review the provincial dental fee guide if moving from another province so you can calculate your potential average daily billing.

2. **Be prepared to negotiate.** Be confident in your specific expectations to maximize your wage and benefits package.

3. **Know your value.** Be able to confidently articulate how you will add value to the office. Illustrate your experience, education, and areas of specialty. Highlight your work ethic, your wonderful way of connecting with clients, your positive energy, your previous roles in ordering supplies or implementing new infection control protocols.

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*See CDHA’s Job Market and Employment Survey Full Report, page 6*
4. **Negotiate a comprehensive package that includes:**

- Autonomy to determine client appointment times
- Opportunity to order preferred dental hygiene instruments and supplies
- Annual uniform allowance
- Annual professional development allowance
- Sick days (if the office does not have a benefits package)
- Professional association or regulatory body dues paid by the office
- Vacation weeks and pay, based on experience (e.g., 6% vacation pay versus 4%)
- Health and wellness benefits (e.g., gym membership, yoga classes)
- Retirement plan
- Purchase of loupes
- Compensation for parking or transit costs
- Ergonomic workstation/chair

5. **Set the specific working hours** for which you will be compensated (e.g., Monday: 8 am–4 pm, Tuesday: 10 am–6 pm, Wednesday: 2 pm–8 pm). This is to avoid schedule compression (shortening of workdays), moving a client from one dental hygiene provider to another, or lack of compensation for openings in the schedule.

6. **Before signing, review all details in the contract and items such as:**

- Non-competition or solicitation clauses
- The amount of notice required when leaving your place of employment (normally 2 to 4 weeks)
- Whether severance/termination pay is in line with provincial guidelines and legislation

CDHA recommends that its members obtain legal advice from a specialist in employment law before signing a contract.

Always follow-up with a thank you letter even if you are unable to negotiate everything on your wish list. Professionalism throughout the process is key!
Negotiating an Agreement for Services as an Independent Contractor

You’ve been offered work as an independent contractor. Congratulations! The next step is negotiating your agreement for services to clarify and secure the terms under which you will be working. When starting at a new place of employment, you want to begin on the best possible terms...for you! Only 51% of dental hygienists report having a contract or agreement for services.1 As an independent contractor, your agreement will be different from those of an employee.

Before you enter into negotiations, you must ensure you classify as an independent contractor according to the Canada Revenue Agency’s Employee or Self-employed? guide. Do the terms of your employment pass the four tests below? This will determine whether you are an independent contractor or an employee.

1. **A Control Test**
   If you have ultimate control over work hours, length of appointment time, and vacation days, then you will likely be considered an independent contractor.

2. **An Economic Reality Test**
   If you stand to gain or lose financially from a client’s cancellation of appointments or openings in your schedule, you are an independent contractor. Your rate of pay should be based on productivity (number of clients seen) rather than the number of hours you work.

3. **A Test of Ownership**
   If you supply your own equipment and instruments, then you are considered to be self-employed.

4. **A Test of Integration**
   If your work is more of an add-on to the practice, you will be viewed as self-employed.

If you’ve passed the four tests and are indeed an independent contractor, here are some guidelines for negotiating the best agreement:

1. **Do your homework.** Know what the commission rate is in your area. Use CDHA’s Job Market and Employment Survey Report, found at www.cdha.ca/jobsurvey. Know what your average billing was at your last place of employment. Review the provincial dental fee guide if moving from another province. Also keep in mind your monthly business expenses to ensure that your income will be sufficient.

2. **Be prepared to negotiate.** Be confident in your specific expectations to maximize your wage.

3. **Know your value.** Articulate with confidence how you will add value to the office. Illustrate your experience, education, and areas of specialty. Highlight your work ethic, your wonderful way of connecting with clients, your positive energy.

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1 See CDHA’s Job Market and Employment Survey Full Report, page 6
Your agreement as an independent contractor should include:

- **Your rate of pay.** Your earnings should compensate for the fact that you are not entitled to vacation or statutory holiday pay, bonuses or employee benefits. Calculate your monthly business expenses to ensure the rate you are asking for takes into account additional expenses you incur as an independent contractor, even those for which there may be a tax deduction. You should be earning more on average than an employee.

- A clause detailing the procedures on which your rate of commission will be based.

- A clause that a portion of your billings should be used to cover the cost of specific office expenses. As an independent contractor, you will have to pay for office dental supplies that you use while working with the clients, front desk staff time for schedule management, and office equipment maintenance.

- Details of any required training for workplace health and safety, and infection prevention and control practices specific to that office. As an independent contractor, you should be compensated for the time you spend at office training sessions.

- A detailed outline of what the office will supply and what you will supply. Independent contractors supply their own uniforms, instruments, and some personal protective equipment.

- An outline of mandatory team meetings and outings and your rate of compensation to attend such meetings and outings.

Before signing, review all details in the agreement and items such as:

- Non-competition or solicitation clauses

- The amount of notice required when terminating the agreement (normally 2 to 4 weeks)

A sample independent contractor agreement can be found at [www.cdha.ca/careers](http://www.cdha.ca/careers).

CDHA recommends that its members obtain legal advice from a specialist in employment law before signing an agreement for services.

Always follow-up with a thank you letter even if you are unable to negotiate everything on your wish list. Professionalism throughout the process is key!
YOUR JOB SHOULDN’T BE A PAIN IN THE NECK

Chair-side warm up and stretching exercises for dental hygienists

WARM-UP

- Is important to minimize risk of injury
- Is best done at the beginning of the work day
- Is a dynamic mid range movement
- Is performed 4-5 times per movement
- Should always be done on both sides.

Don’t forget! Visit www.cdha.ca/NMSK to learn about our webinar series on this topic
STRETCHES

- Are important to minimize the risk of injury
- Should always start in neutral position and ensure proper alignment throughout the stretch
- Are slow and controlled movements to end range
- Are held for 30 seconds at end range
- Should feel like a gentle stretch, not extreme or painful – don’t overdo it
- Should always be done on both sides
- Can be done during scheduled breaks, micro-rest breaks and unplanned breaks
- Start every stretch in neutral position.

Consult with your primary healthcare provider prior to beginning any new exercise. Use these exercises at your own risk. Neither the CDHA or CMCC have any liability for injury that may occur as a result of practicing these warm ups and stretches.

Legend

B Beginner  I Intermediate  A Advanced

Produced by Canadian Memorial Chiropractic College and the Canadian Dental Hygienists Association

Don’t forget! Visit www.cdha.ca/NMSK to learn about our webinar series on this topic