



THE CANADIAN DENTAL  
HYGIENISTS ASSOCIATION  
L'ASSOCIATION CANADIENNE  
DES HYGIÉNISTES DENTAIRES

For immediate release (Disponible en français sur la demande)

## Media Release

### Dental Hygienists Promote Oral Health for Older Adults

October 4, 2016 (Ottawa, ON) – On October 1, Canadians celebrated the older adults whose mentoring, leadership, and volunteerism have shaped the nation. National Seniors Day was also an occasion for dental hygienists to remind Canada's seniors and their caregivers of the importance of maintaining good oral hygiene habits throughout the lifespan.

"Thanks to healthier lifestyles and advances in oral and medical care, Canadians are now keeping most of their natural teeth," notes Donna Scott, president of the Canadian Dental Hygienists Association (CDHA). "Older adults have unique oral hygiene needs that must not be ignored." For example, seniors tend to develop more cavities on the roots of their teeth than younger adults, and many of their medications may cause dry mouth, a condition that can contribute to a range of oral health problems. As a result, dental hygienists are working with other health care professionals and all levels of government to make daily, professional oral hygiene care a priority for Canada's older adults. In particular, CDHA has endorsed the Canadian Medical Association's "Demand a Plan" initiative calling for a national seniors' health care strategy by 2019, and has produced a series of oral care resources for seniors and their caregivers, available free of charge at [www.dentalhygienecanada.ca](http://www.dentalhygienecanada.ca). "Dental hygienists have the skills, knowledge, and judgement to detect oral issues early on, and they can help you to develop a daily oral care plan that will ensure optimal oral health at any age," Scott explains.

Serving the profession since 1963, CDHA is the collective national voice of more than 28,495 registered dental hygienists working in Canada, directly representing 18,000 individual members including dental hygienists and students. Dental hygiene is the sixth largest registered health profession in Canada with professionals working in a variety of settings, including independent dental hygiene practice, with people of all ages, addressing issues related to oral health. For more information on oral health, visit: [www.dentalhygienecanada.ca](http://www.dentalhygienecanada.ca).

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