



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

For immediate release (Offert en français sur demande)

## Media Release

### Throne Speech Advances the Conversation on Oral Care in Canada

December 6, 2019 (Ottawa, ON) — The Canadian Dental Hygienists Association (CDHA) congratulates the federal government for its commitment to exploring universal dental care, better health care for Canadians, and access to high quality, culturally relevant health care for Indigenous peoples in yesterday's Speech from the Throne.

"We are excited to work with government as they explore a much-needed universal dental care program," says Ondina Love, chief executive officer of CDHA. "Dental care in Canada is currently based on ability to pay rather than need. Universal dental care would improve the quality of life, eliminate pain, and prevent disease for millions of Canadians."

"During the campaign we advanced smart, reasonable, and necessary solutions to improve the oral and overall health of Canadians," adds Love. "Preventive oral care is a key solution." For example, to reduce medical transportation expenditures, enhance health care delivery, and improve health outcomes for all Indigenous peoples, the federal government can allocate resources to expand the Children's Oral Health Initiative (COHI) to other regions and to a wider age range, and increase dental benefit coverage for preventive dental hygiene services in Indigenous communities. When children and adults cannot access oral health care in their communities, taxpayers often foot the bill for expensive trips to urban centres for advanced treatment. "Prevention is the key to efficient health spending and better health outcomes for all," says Love.

CDHA is the collective national voice of more than 29,549 dental hygienists in Canada, directly representing 20,000 individual members, including students. Since 1963, CDHA has worked to advance the profession and promote the importance of oral health. 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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