



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

For immediate release (Offert en français sur demande)

## Media Release

# Expansion of dental services to low-income seniors a strong improvement for oral care in Ontario say Dental hygienists

April 12, 2019 (Ottawa, ON) — The Canadian Dental Hygienists Association (CDHA) is applauding a move by the Ontario government to expand dental care for low-income seniors in the province. The investment of \$90 million will see new services provided as early as summer 2019.

"We have been advocating on this initiative for years and are very pleased that Premier Ford and Minister Fedeli have now made initial steps to improve access to oral care," said Ondina Love, chief executive officer of CDHA. "Preventive oral care is often out of reach for low-income seniors without dental benefits. This funding may take pressure off the acute care system by providing access to dental treatments for oral health concerns before they progress to more serious conditions or diseases."

In 2018, CDHA wrote to Premier Ford recommending that public dental programs for children be expanded to include low-income seniors. As Love explains, "Every 9 minutes in Ontario someone goes to a hospital emergency room, and every 3 minutes to a doctor's office due to dental problems. We are glad to see the Government of Ontario committing to provide oral health care to seniors through mobile services, in public health units, community health centres, and Aboriginal Health Access Centres." Dental hygienists know that bringing oral health care services directly to the people who need support is an important step in improving both oral and overall health. They look forward to the implementation of this new program in the coming months.

Serving the profession since 1963, CDHA is the collective national voice of more than 29,246 registered dental hygienists working in Canada, directly representing 19,000 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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