



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

For immediate release (Offert en français sur demande)

Media Release

Budget 2024: Improving Access to Oral Health Care in Rural and Remote Communities

April 16, 2024 (OTTAWA) — The Minister of Finance and Deputy Prime Minister, the Hon. Chrystia Freeland, tabled the federal government’s Budget 2024 today. The Canadian Dental Hygienists Association (CDHA) commends the federal government’s commitment to expanding the Canada Student Loan Forgiveness Program to dental hygienists working in rural and remote communities, among other health care and social services professionals.

“The expansion of the Canada Student Loan Forgiveness Program will support dental hygienists in delivering critical oral health care to historically underserved rural and remote communities across Canada,” says Francine Trudeau, president of CDHA. “As experts in oral health education and prevention, dental hygienists are keenly aware of the necessity of ensuring Canadians have timely, unencumbered access to preventive oral health care, no matter where they live.”

Dental hygienists, who are eligible health care providers under the Canadian Dental Care Plan (CDCP), work alongside other oral health professionals to provide timely, high-quality care to patients every day. Budget 2024 repeats previously announced funding for the CDCP and emphasizes the importance of this program in connecting uninsured Canadians with oral health care services. The expansion of the Canada Student Loan Forgiveness Program to include dental hygienists in rural and remote communities complements the CDCP by helping more Canadians receive the oral health care they deserve.

“Early access to preventive care is incredibly important to protect Canadians from developing harmful diseases and illnesses linked to oral health neglect,” adds Trudeau. “When we invest in oral health care, we invest in the health and well-being of Canadians.”

CDHA remains committed to working with Health Canada, the Minister of Health, and his federal

colleagues on innovative strategies to support oral health care delivery in Canada, as well as enhancing the CDCP to fill gaps in coverage and complement existing provincial and territorial dental programs. Dental hygienists encourage all eligible Canadians to enroll in the CDCP.

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About the Canadian Dental Hygienists Association (CDHA):

CDHA is the national voice of dental hygienists in Canada. Representing over 31,000 dental hygienists across the country, CDHA advocates for the advancement of the dental hygiene profession while maintaining a commitment to the public's oral health. Dental hygiene is the sixth largest regulated 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 dentalhygienecanada.ca. For more information on the work of CDHA, visit cdha.ca.

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