



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

For immediate release (Offert en français sur demande)

## Media Release

### **Canadian Dental Hygienists Association (CDHA) responds to misinformation, saying challenging work environments must be addressed**

June 17, 2025 (OTTAWA) — Thousands of dental hygienists across Canada are delivering essential care through the Canadian Dental Care Plan (CDCP), ensuring millions of Canadians receive the oral health services they need. While many dental practices offer supportive, respectful, and professional environments, others are struggling because of challenging workplace cultures fueled by poor and unethical management practices — putting employee's health and well-being at risk.

The Canadian Dental Hygienists Association (CDHA) is calling on governments and employers to recognize both the successes and the challenges in the sector. The association urges investment in workplace improvements, retention strategies, and evidence-based workforce planning.

"A supportive, healthy workplace is a productive and successful workplace," said Ondina Love, Chief Executive Officer of the CDHA. "We know that many dental practices are getting it right — offering fair compensation and benefits, respectful environments, and opportunities for growth, but many are not. Ensuring that positive workplaces become the norm across the country requires a commitment to improving conditions at the employer level. To ensure a strong oral health workforce we need a national planning model built on accurate data developed in collaboration with the Canadian Dental Association and the Canadian Dental Assistants Association."

According to CDHA's 2023 Healthy and Respectful Workplace survey:

- 6 in 10 respondents reported experiencing and/or witnessing mistreatment at work
- Nearly 40% considered leaving their jobs
- 14% actually left their position
- 7% took a leave of absence
- 87% experienced one or more medical issues

Despite these concerning figures, national data shows a stable dental hygiene workforce. Claims of a widespread shortage are misleading. Staffing challenges are often the result of regional imbalances and substandard working conditions.

“Dental hygienists are not leaving the profession — they’re leaving unhealthy workplaces,” Love emphasized. “Burnout, inadequate compensation and benefits, workplace injuries, and lack of respect are the real issues. But we also want to highlight that many clinics are setting a positive example. These practices prove that it’s possible to create environments where dental hygienists thrive.”

Dental hygienists are vital to Canada’s oral health\_care system. Ensuring their safety, professional development, and well-being is essential to maintaining high standards of care. This includes:

- Protecting workers from abuse and mistreatment.
- Ensuring all dental professionals, including internationally trained ones, meet Canadian standards.
- Investing in research, education, and retention.

CDHA remains committed to working with federal and provincial governments, as well as allied stakeholders, to support dental hygienists and the patients they serve.

#### **About the Canadian Dental Hygienists Association (CDHA):**

CDHA is the national voice of dental hygienists in Canada. Representing nearly 34,000 dental hygienists across the country, CDHA advocates for the advancement and promotion 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 as practitioners, practice owners, educators, researchers, administrators, and more. Dental hygienists are a pivotal component of Canada’s health care landscape, dedicated to improving oral health and overall well-being. For more information on oral health, visit [dentalhygienecanada.ca](https://dentalhygienecanada.ca). For more information on the work of CDHA, visit [cdha.ca](https://cdha.ca).

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