



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

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Debra Keays-White  
Regional Director, Atlantic Region  
First Nations and Inuit Health  
Health Canada  
18<sup>th</sup> Floor, Room Suite 1525, Maritime Centre  
1505 Barrington Street  
Halifax, Nova Scotia B3J 3Y6  
debra.keays-white@hc-sc.gc.ca

Dear Ms. Keays-White,

In May 2010, we celebrated the announcement of the new First Nations Inuit Health Branch (FNIHB), Non-Insured Health Benefits 18 month pilot project in Alberta which allows NIHB eligible clients to receive services directly from dental hygienists, and for dental hygienists to be reimbursed for these services. When FNIHB announced this pilot project, they extended an invitation to the Health Canada FNIH regions to consider the potential of starting a similar pilot project.

This letter comes to you as a request to consider developing a similar pilot project in Nova Scotia. A number of CDHA members have contacted us to indicate that they are interested in providing services to First Nations and Inuit communities. A pilot project that enables dental hygienists to work with these communities has the potential to improve access to care and oral health. We believe that the high rates of oral disease in First Nations and Inuit communities warrant taking action on this pilot project as soon as possible.

Marc Plante (Benefits Management) has indicated that it may be easier for the provinces to consider the pilot project after the fall of 2011, once the initial analysis and evaluation of the pilot project has been completed.

We are very pleased with the following preliminary results from the Alberta pilot project:

- 10 dental hygienists have billed the program.
- 89 NIHB clients have accessed services.

We look forward to working collaboratively with you to develop a pilot project in Nova Scotia with the long term goal of improving the oral health of First Nations and Inuit peoples. Please do not hesitate to contact Judy Lux, Health Policy Communications Specialist at [jlux@cdha.ca](mailto:jlux@cdha.ca) , 613 224-5515 x123 (1-800-267-5235, x123) if you would like to discuss the establishment of a pilot project.

Sincerely,



Ondina Love, CAE

Executive Director

Canadian Dental Hygienists Association

cc: Dr. Peter Cooney, Chief Dental Officer, Health Canada, A.L. 1501A, Tunney's Pasture, Ottawa, Ontario K1A 0K9 [peter\\_cooney@hc-sc.gc.ca](mailto:peter_cooney@hc-sc.gc.ca)

cc: Patricia Grant, Registrar, College of Dental Hygienists of Nova Scotia, [pdgrant@eastlink.ca](mailto:pdgrant@eastlink.ca)

cc: Marc Plante, Benefits Management, [marc\\_c\\_plante@hc-sc.gc.ca](mailto:marc_c_plante@hc-sc.gc.ca)