



August 1, 2017

The Right Honourable Justin Trudeau, P.C., M.P.
Prime Minister of Canada
House of Commons
Ottawa, ON
K1A 0A6

Dear Prime Minister,

RE: Canadian Research: Investing in Canada's Future

On behalf of the Research Advisory Committee of the Canadian Dental Hygienists Association (CDHA), the collective national voice of more than 28,000 dental hygienists, I am writing this letter to applaud the federal government for investing in Canada's future by recognizing the critical role of research and innovation in Canada. We strongly support key aspects from the final report of the [Advisory Panel on Federal Support for Fundamental Science](#), including the additional \$1.3B investment over the next four years in research-related activities, and encourage government to support research initiatives outlined in the report.

Oral health is an integral part of physical, social, and mental wellbeing. Poor oral health can cause pain, diminish quality of life and is associated with systemic conditions such as diabetes and respiratory disease. The amount of time and financial resources required to treat a preventable oral disease after this disease occurs can be substantial. Each year, 4.15 million working-days are lost due to dental visits or dental sick-days in Canada. In addition, 19,000 day surgeries across Canada are performed to treat cavities among children under the age of six, costing government \$21.2 million. Most concerning to dental hygienists, is that underserved populations, such as Indigenous peoples, are over-represented in these numbers.

Dental hygienists are primary oral health care professionals guided by principles of social justice specializing in oral health education, health promotion, and clinical therapy. They continue to blaze new trails by building knowledge in innovative, clinical, psychosocial and health services research in order to improve the health of Canadians. The profession's [research agenda](#) identifies the priority areas in which knowledge generation is needed, and dental hygiene researchers across the country are playing a leadership role in filling this knowledge gap. These contributions are critical for evidence informed policy making, improving efficiency and innovation, and enhancing Canada's research competitiveness on a global scale.

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

1122 Wellington St W, Ottawa, ON K1Y 2Y7 Tel. 613-224-5515 Fax 613-224-7283
info@cdha.ca Toll Free 1-800-267-5235 www.cdha.ca

Dental hygienists have already made significant advancements in research, innovation, and health services, and with more comprehensive investment in research-related activities, we can continue to benefit from evidence-informed policy making. CDHA strongly believes that under your leadership and investment in research initiatives, we can look forward to even greater success at improving the overall health and well-being of Canadians.

Yours Sincerely,



Leeann Donnelly, PhD, RDH
Chair
CDHA Research Advisory Committee



Ondina Love, CAE
Chief Executive Officer
Canadian Dental Hygienists Association

cc:

The Honourable Kirsty Duncan, Minister of Science Government of Canada
The Honourable William Francis Morneau, Minister of Finance of Canada
The Honourable Jane Philpott, Minister of Health of Canada
The Honourable Navdeep Singh Bains, Minister of Innovation, Science and Economic
Development Chair of the Advisory Panel on Federal Support for Fundamental Science
C. David Naylor, Professor of Medicine, University of Toronto
Dr. Hani El-Gabalawy, Scientific Director, Institute of Musculoskeletal Health & Arthritis, CIHR