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

For immediate release (Offert en français sur demande)

Media Release

Auditor General's Findings Echo Dental Hygienists' Experience with the CDCP

November 2, 2026 (Ottawa, ON) — The Canadian Dental Hygienists Association (CDHA) acknowledges the findings of the Office of the Auditor General of Canada on the Canadian Dental Care Plan (CDCP), including its recognition of the program's contribution to improving access to oral health care and the opportunities identified to strengthen its implementation.

The findings are consistent with the experience of dental hygienists, as revealed in CDHA's 2026 national survey of 1,543 dental hygienists. Seventy-nine per cent (79%) of survey respondents reported that participation in the CDCP had increased their patient base, while 70% reported that CDCP-eligible patients were somewhat or very satisfied with the program. At the same time, dental hygienists identified significant challenges related to preauthorization, preventive coverage, and patient understanding of the program.

"Dental hygienists across Canada are seeing the positive impact of the CDCP every day," said Wendy Wells, president of CDHA. "Many patients are returning to care after years without access. As the program evolves, we need to build on that success by making prevention and early intervention central to achieving better oral health outcomes." The association views prevention and early intervention not only as clinical priorities but also as integral to the CDCP's long-term value. Helping Canadians maintain their oral health and addressing oral disease earlier may reduce the need for more complex treatment later.

CDHA's survey also reinforces the need to simplify administration and strengthen preventive care. Nearly half of respondents rated preauthorization requirements as very demanding, and 45.5% reported that requests for additional scaling units were never approved. The leading recommendations

from respondents were to expand scaling and preventive coverage, improve clarity around eligibility, coverage, and patient costs, and reduce the administrative burden associated with claims and preauthorization.

CDHA supports improving the CDCP through a stronger focus on preventive coverage, simpler administration, clearer communication with patients and providers, and better measurement of oral health outcomes. The association looks forward to working with the federal government and oral health partners to build on the plan's progress and ensure that public investment translates into better oral health for Canadians.

About the Canadian Dental Hygienists Association (CDHA):

CDHA is the national voice of dental hygienists in Canada. Representing more than 35,000 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 seventh 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. For more information on the work of CDHA, visit cdha.ca.

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