



# Impact of COVID-19 Pandemic on Dental Hygienists in Canada

## Economic Hardships

**87%** of registered dental hygienists (RDHs) were temporarily laid off due to the pandemic and 2% lost their job<sup>1</sup>

**91%** received the Canada Emergency Response Benefit (CERB) or Employment Insurance (EI) during layoffs<sup>1</sup>

**91%** have since returned to work but 34% have seen a reduction in hours<sup>1</sup>



*"This pandemic has had an enormous impact on our day to day lives and our career as dental hygienists."*

—Member response

**31%** work in practices that took advantage of the Canada Emergency Wage Subsidy (CEWS); 28% weren't aware of the subsidy<sup>1</sup>

**44%** of dental hygienists who own their own practices say that costs have more than tripled because of necessary pandemic protocols<sup>2</sup>

Dental hygienists are essential health care professionals whose work requires their patients/clients to take off a mask during treatment.

## Key Concern

### Personal Health and Safety



Treating clients who may be infectious yet asymptomatic



Shortage of protective personal equipment (PPE), especially N95 masks and gloves



Need for priority access to COVID-19 vaccines

### Oral Health of Canadians



Financial hardship or loss of dental insurance benefits (patients/clients cannot afford oral health care)



Restrictions on aerosol-generating procedures (preventing the provision of comprehensive dental hygiene care)

<sup>1</sup> CDHA COVID-19 Member Impact Survey, October 2020

<sup>2</sup> CDHA Survey of Independent Dental Hygienists, November 2020