

# The Articulator

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## Communication

The College is now four years old. Since its designation in December of 1995, the College has experienced some growing pains. The Board recognizes that it needs to do a better job communicating with registrants. The College has accomplished a great deal in a short time. It has taken on some contentious issues and will continue to deal with areas of concern in the public interest. What the College has failed to do is provide registrants with a balance of news, updates, and information.

In order to better communicate with registrants the College is embarking on a communication strategy. The strategy includes a consultant who will provide

information statements and an information session for registrants, and assist the Board in formulating an ongoing communication protocol. Ms. S. Adams is a lawyer and management consultant. The first information statement is in this newsletter.

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## **Advertising**

Advertising continues to be an area of concern for the College. Recently, after receiving a complaint, the office reviewed Yellow Pages advertising in Greater Vancouver directories. This resulted in approximately 50 letters being sent to registrants whose advertising does not comply with the Bylaws. The general review of advertising will continue on a province-wide basis. The majority of advertising infractions relate to advertisements which do not include the name of the active registrant.

The Bylaws state that the full name of the active registrant(s) must appear in all advertisements.

Registrants are being asked to confirm that their advertising will be brought into compliance with the bylaws. When you contact Dominion Directory ask them to change the "PL" line to your name. This will eliminate the problem both in the telephone directory and on the Web site.

The Board, at its meeting of December 10, 1999, upheld all of the advertising provisions, including that only the names of active registrants may appear in advertising.

Your written comments are welcomed at the College office. #305 321 Sixth Street, New Westminster BC, V3L 3A7

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## **Denturist Regulation**

Many registrants have called the office to find out about the status of the Denturist Regulation allowing the provision of partial dentures. The process is very much a consultative process between denturists, dentists and dental technicians. A 'final' draft is now being formalized by the Ministry of Health. The stake holders have developed the framework for the Regulation. The Ministry will write the Regulation, in legal language, considering the Health Professions Council's recommendations on denturism, dentistry, and dental

technology; and their position paper on Reserved Acts and Supervised Acts; other non-Health Professions Act Regulations; and input from other Ministries. The Board accepted the draft provided by the ministry at their meetings of December 10, 1999. The Ministry will now submit the Regulation to legislative counsel, and then to the Lieutenant Governor in Council (Cabinet) for final approval.

The Bylaws also require amendment and approval. A schedule of amendments was sent to the Ministry and stake holders in April 1999. These amendments include new classes of registration, educational requirements and examination procedures for advanced licensure. We await final comments from the Ministry.

There are a number of barriers yet to be overcome prior to the process being completed. Cabinet requires two weeks' notice, the election of a new Premier is expected to delay cabinet consideration of the Regulation and finally, a provincial election will result in a long delay in approval.

It remains illegal for a dentist to advertise or to provide partial dentures.

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## **GST to apply to fees**

Up until now the College has operated under the Provincial Government's GST exemption. The College neither charged nor paid the GST. In late September the Provincial Government's Financial Management Branch wrote to advise us that the College's use of the exemption certificate expired with the Board's first election (April 1997). The reason given is that Boards which are comprised of a majority of appointed representatives have less autonomy from government than boards that elect a majority. The criteria for use of the exemption includes that the majority must be appointed by the government.

The Board will consider the implications of the loss of the exemption. The College must now pay the GST. We can absorb the tax or elect to charge it on fees we collect. Absorbing the amount paid in GST will have negative implications for the budget of the College. We have not been able to determine if GST is payable for the period since the exemption expired. Discussions with the GST Interpretation Centre have been initiated. Be advised that registrants will pay GST on administration fees beginning in April 2000.

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# **Election**

The election of professional representatives is under way. Two active registrants are to be elected. Complete election procedures are contained within the Handbook for Registrants. We encourage all registrants to consider running for election to the Board. Members of the Board represent registrants, in the public interest, to government, other health regulators, educational institutes, and in many other forums. We encourage you to find out as much as you can about the nominees and consider whether the nominee best represents the profession, and be sure to vote.

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## **Quality assurance requirements**

### **Continuing education credits**

This is a reminder that all active registrants are required to demonstrate completion of at least five approved hours of continued education per year. Continuing education records are mailed to registrants throughout the year. If you have hours which have not been submitted please send them to the office for consideration by the Quality Assurance Committee. The Committee accepts a wide range of activities. For more information please contact the office. The Inquiry Committee will investigate Active Registrants who do not submit or fail to demonstrate compliance with the QA program. Renewal certificates will not be processed for registrants who fail to comply.

The June 1999 amendments to the Bylaws now require Inactive Registrants to complete Quality Assurance requirements. This is not a retroactive provision but one that starts as of June 1999. This means that inactive registrants who wish to return to active practice must demonstrate completion of continuing education credits equal to those required by an active registrant.

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## **Vancouver Community College**

VCC has indicated that they will be re-initiating the Denturist Program. We are

very excited by the prospect of the program restarting. The advantages to the profession are substantial. A vibrant education system supports the continued development and advancement of the profession. We look forward to working cooperatively with VCC and fully support their initiative.

The anticipated start-up date is September 2000. A new Program Advisory Committee has been formed.

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## **Professional liability insurance**

In the past year some registrants have questioned whether the Denturist Association of British Columbia's malpractice insurance policy meets the requirements of the Bylaws. The Board, at its September meeting, reviewed and approved the policy as meeting the requirements of the Bylaws. This means that, if you are a member of the Denturist Association of British Columbia, you are automatically covered. Verification of coverage is provided by the Association.

The policy, which has remained unchanged for approximately 25 years, offers excellent coverage, including tail insurance. Tail insurance covers a member after retirement from practice. Policies no longer include this coverage. If you have your own professional liability insurance coverage and you are close to retirement, you may wish to consider purchasing tail coverage to protect you against liability after leaving the profession.

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## **Public Appointees**

The Ministry of Health has begun the process of rotating public members appointed to health professional colleges. Mr. K. Douglas Smith will be leaving the College Board when his term expires in March 2000. Ms. Betty White's term expires in March 2001. We welcomed Ms. Andrea Jones to the Board in 1999. We are very fortunate to have the quality public members that have been appointed. They bring knowledge, skills, abilities, and most importantly, the public perspective to our College. We look forward to maintaining relationships with public members whose terms are complete and to developing relationships with public members that we welcome to our Board.

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# Message from the Chairman

**Jim Connolly**

Since December 1995, the Board and its staff have devoted their time and energy towards the formation of a sound structure to effectively manage our profession. As the structure is now in place it is time to raise the level of communication to the same high standard. I wish to dispel the negative perceptions of the College as they are mostly based on hearsay and/or politically motivated agendas. The current challenge of the College is to ensure both the public and registrants have a clear understanding of the differences between the College and the Denturist Association .

The Board has hired a consultant, Ms. S. Adams, a non partisan writer to prepare articles that will appear in with the newsletter and on the College's Web site.

Great things have happened in our profession in the last four years. You now have control of your professional destiny through the election of representatives to the Board. Further, we also benefit from the expertise that the talented and capable public members bring to the Board.

The positive accomplishments of the College outweigh any perceived negatives. For years we complained that the combined Board governing the dental technicians and denturists did not meet the needs of our profession. In four years the following has been achieved:

The College began operating immediately after designation because of the leadership and positive actions of the Denturist Association.

Bylaws were submitted for approval shortly after designation. This provided for the election of professional representatives to take place within one year.

This resulted in a short term for the appointed Board.

Over the next two years committee structure, goals and actions were developed and implemented.

Computer hardware and software was updated so that the management and administration of the College is not complicated yet provides useful, accessible information.

Old outdated theory examinations have been replaced with valid relevant

questions in a computerized database. The format changed from individual exams in each topic to a comprehensive compensatory model.

The practical examination was updated to reflect critical tasks. This eliminated double jeopardy items, increased the fairness of the examination, and is more likely to withstand challenge.

An Objectively Structured Clinical Examination has been added. This allows for the evaluation of "soft skills" which have never been examined. These include skills such as communication, treatment planning, and problem solving. The Web site is on line. It is a valuable resource for both registrants and the public offering quick access to a wide variety of information.

The Handbook for Registrants was completed and delivered to each registrant. The College has operated within budget while accomplishing its work.

Good relationships have been developed and maintained with the Ministry of Health, College of Dental Surgeons, and College of Dental Technicians. This has resulted in the proposed draft regulation for expanded scope of practice.

Yes there have been growing pains. We have stretched personal talents and resources to accomplish tasks. Some things could have been done differently, but not better. We can be proud of the College we now have.

The College is looking forward to completing the registration process for advanced practice. This is an exciting time for our profession, and I hope people will look forward and see a more positive future for denturism.

The direction of the College in the coming years is going to change from growth to maintenance of its operation and mandate. I hope that those who stand for election to the Board will continue to work for the future of our profession like those who have been so instrumental in the first four years of the College's development.

## **Thoughts from a retiring Board member**

### **A note to registrants from Board member and QAC chair Peter Jensen**

Thank you for electing me to the Board of the College of Denturists of British Columbia. Initially, when nominated, my idea was just to "take a turn" in helping out the health professions that has given my family and myself a pleasant life. But as my two year terms nears its end, I realize that this has been an important experience that has turned out to be one that I would not want to have missed. By being elected to the Board, you're one of those fortunate people who get to protect the public, but as luck would have it you also get to experience "working with" a whole group of people, interesting people, with different opinions. These amazing people are capable of amazing things, even

under duress, and after a while you surprise yourself - yes even yourself. I would recommend it to anyone.

## **Anti-snore device update**

The provision of anti-snoring devices has been under consideration by the Board. The Board appointed a panel to fully explore the issue. In the last six months, the Panel obtained and reviewed a great deal of literature on the topic. The panel also considered protocols of other jurisdictions and other health professionals. The Board decided, at its December 10, 1999 meeting, that anti-snore devices are outside of the dentist scope of practice. This decision is based on the harm (death) that may result if a patient suffers from sleep apnea. The Board feels that if dentists wish to have this service included within the scope of practice than they should follow the procedures that are in place. An application should be made to the Health Professions Council. Council, if it accepts the application, will investigate the application and provide recommendations to the government.

At this time it is not within the dentist scope of practice for a dentist to provide anti-snore devices. If your advertising makes reference to this practice please remove it as soon as possible. Continuing education courses are not eligible for credit hours.

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## **Labour Mobility**

The Agreement on Internal Trade labour mobility provisions are due to be fully in place by July 2001. The College was represented at the October Dentist Consortium by John Mayr. Progress is being made by a number of professions including dentists. There are a number of issues yet to be negotiated. It appears that these will be worked out by the consortium prior to the deadline. There is a dispute mechanism built into the agreement to deal with issues not agreed upon.

Once the agreement is in place a dentist who is licensed in one province may move to another province without having to complete licensure exams. This applies to provinces where the scope of practice is substantially equivalent. Dentists from BC who wish to relocate will be required to take approved education and successfully complete examination because we are not licensed

to provide partial dentures. Depending on the requirements of the jurisdiction and the availability of specific educational programs, this could represent as large a barrier as full licensure examinations or residency requirements. Hopefully the Regulation amendments discussed elsewhere in this newsletter will be in place.

The College fully supports the Agreement on Internal Trade and will consider Bylaw amendments to comply with the agreement. If you have any comments that the Board should consider please write to the College. Once draft amendments are considered by the Board they will be posted on the College's Website.

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## **Annual General Meetings**

The Board recently approved a policy regarding registrant motions at annual general meetings. An information statement, that explains the policy and its reasons will be sent to all registrants in the new year . If you would like a copy of the policy please contact the College office.

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## **Election misrepresentation**

The Board approved a policy dealing with election advertising and nominee promotion. There is concern that some nominees run for election based on a platform of statements which are unverifiable, promises that not achievable, or misrepresent facts or activities. The policy is based on provincial elections legislation. It sets forth the procedures that the Board will use to determine whether a nominee has been elected based on misrepresentation. It is the responsibility of any nominee to prove statements attributed to them. The Board strongly believes in fair and honest campaigning for Board positions based on the mandate and objects of the College.

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The Articulator is the Newsletter of the College of Denturists of BC. Comments and letters to the editor are welcome. In the event that clarification of intent is required the Health Professions Act, Denturist Regulation, or Bylaws supersede.

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