



College of Dental Hygienists
of British Columbia



Single oral health professions regulator included in proposed regulatory reform announcement by Health Minister

August 31, 2020

Below is an important message from B.C.'s four dental colleges in response to proposed changes to the regulation of oral health care in B.C. announced by the Minister of Health on August 27, 2020.

Last week, Minister of Health Adrian Dix [announced the government's plan](#) for modernizing the health regulatory system to better serve patients and the public.

Among the regulatory reform measures proposed, he confirmed the government's intent that the four colleges that regulate dental professionals come together to form a new College of Oral Health Professionals.

The new regulator would oversee all six oral health professions: certified dental assistants, dental hygienists, dental technicians, dental therapists, dentists, and denturists.

Regulatory changes to benefit patients and the public

The proposed changes to the regulatory framework are designed to improve patient safety and public protection, improve efficiency and effectiveness of the regulatory framework, and improve transparency and accountability to the public.

A public consultation about the modernization of the provincial regulatory framework was first [announced last fall](#), and arose from an external review of the *Health Professions Act*. In the intervening months, our four colleges have had collaborative discussions about how we can work together to promote team-based dental care and more consistent standards of practice across the professions we regulate.

Moving towards a single oral health regulator

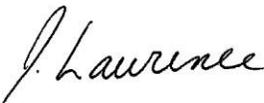
The four oral health regulators are in agreement that having a single regulator for all oral health professions will benefit the public. It will promote team-based dental care, and provide a single point of contact for patients, the public and registrants alike. At the request of our respective boards, representatives of the four oral health colleges are meeting on a regular basis to articulate a vision and to facilitate the drafting of a plan for the implementation of a single oral health regulator.

Over the past number of months, the four oral health colleges have demonstrated a collaborative approach – from our joint response to the public consultation on modernization of regulation to the development of a single guidance document for patient care during the COVID-19 pandemic.

Next Steps

Recognizing that the regulatory reform proposals announced last week will take time to implement, and will require further legislative approval, we are optimistic about the opportunity to create a truly new regulatory body for oral health professions. We also recognize that the amalgamation process is complex; it requires amendments to regulations, the appointment of a board for the new regulator, and alignment of bylaws, standards of practice and ethics.

On behalf of our four colleges, we welcome the clarity that was provided, and support the Minister's intent to modernize health regulation in the interest of the public. As the process moves forward, the four oral health regulators are committed to ongoing timely and transparent communication.



Jennifer Lawrence, Registrar
College of Dental Hygienists of BC



Jennifer Roff, Registrar
College of Denturists of BC



Ron Revell, Registrar/CEO
College of Dental Technicians of BC



Dr. Chris Hacker, Registrar and CEO
College of Dental Surgeons of BC

Background and reference documents

The plans to modernize regulation and the legislation that governs all of BC's health college followed the review and report by international regulatory expert Harry Cayton. Mr. Cayton's report included reviews of both the College of Dental Surgeons of BC, and the Health Professions Act that governs all of B.C.'s health colleges. In 2019, an all-party Steering Committee, chaired by Minister Dix, published a proposal about the proposed changes, and invited public comment. The Steering Committee announced its final recommendations on August 27, 2020.

- Press release: ["Putting patients first: Parties take next step to modernize health professions regulation"](#) (Aug. 27, 2020)
- [Steering Committee's recommendations to modernize regulatory framework](#) (August 2020)
- Regulating Health Professions / [What we heard: Engagement summary report](#)
- A diagram of the proposed [modernized regulatory framework](#)

- Cayton report: [*An Inquiry into the performance of the College of Dental Surgeons of British Columbia and the Health Professions Act*](#) (PDF)