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SDHA EDGE

SPRING ISSUE

APRIL 2021

SDHA President Report - Leanne Huvenaars



Leanne Huvenaars, RDH

Council hopes that you are all doing well and having a great summer. Council met at the end of May for orientation on Policy Governance, followed by one and a half days of meetings. All sub-committees were populated, and the work will now begin. We are sad to inform the membership that Catherine Folkersen, CEO, will not be renewing her contract. We would like to thank Catherine for her time and dedication to our profession. You will be greatly missed and fondly remembered. Council recently posted the CEO position with a closing date of July 31, 2021. If

interested, please look on the [SDHA](#) and [CDHA](#) job board for further information. With the pandemic still active, we encourage you to keep updated on the changes that SDHA issues. The public's safety and our members are our top priority. We know that as things unfold, you will have many questions; please direct them to SDHA. Last but not least, the council would like to welcome the recent graduates to the profession. We look forward to getting to know you, and hope that one day you will be elected to the SDHA council.

In appreciation,

Leanne Huvenaars, RDH

SDHA President

The SDHA acknowledges the 6 treaties of Saskatchewan: Treaty 2, Treaty 4, Treaty 5, Treaty 6, Treaty 8 and Treaty 10. Wherever Register Dental Hygienists gather and practice in this province it is on Treaty land and the Homeland of the Metis. The Association pays respect to the First Nation elders and Metis ancestors and wishes to reaffirm the relationships we have with one another in this province in which we are honoured to live.



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1. Jacks M.J. A laboratory comparison of evacuation devices on aerosol reduction. J Dent Hig 2002;76: 202-206.

CEO Report - Catherine Folkersen



Dear Members,

As we look ahead the next milestone in our year is the renewal of annual licences for the membership. The fees for your licence will be rising to \$600 per member for their SDHA licence and remain at \$216 for the CDHA membership (\$816 total). It is never easy to request higher fees. The SDHA Council is composed of practicing RDH's and they weigh the request of management against the desire to hold fees from rising but ultimately to run an organization as the SDHA is required to do by law, fees must cover operations.

This is the 5th newsletter published during the global pandemic. In April 2020 – The SDHA recommended that “it was no longer safe for the public to receive non-essential dental hygiene care, nor did we see fit to recommend an alternate form of care that could be deemed non-compliant with our ENDS statement.”

By July 2020 a second wave was anticipated and three interim protocols had been developed and provided to RDH's to provide guidance and recommendations on the process of care during the pandemic.

In November 2020 Shelby Hamm was observing “most inquiries (about COVID-19) are related to the resumption of power instrumentation.” She further advised that “The SDHA values best practice and acknowledges the science supporting the benefits of ultrasonics however this should not be perceived as a green light. Ongoing assessment of risk and professional judgement are required. We are confident that SDHA registrants uphold the gold standard for infection and prevention control...”

In the March 2020 issue, SDHA noted the need for vaccination of the oral health care team since the roll-out was not initially inclusive of oral health care workers and, of the emergence of COVID-19 variants in Saskatchewan.

This issue sees the oral health care Registrar's giving guidance as Saskatchewan re-opens due to the vaccination efforts meeting set goals.

The five issues are a historical transcript of the trajectory of the pandemic – from a complete standstill due to a lack of knowledge about the virus, to strict re-open recommendations to a widening of services and finally mass immunity. **The public good provided by everyone who rolled up their sleeve to vaccinate is understood by those who rolled up their sleeves.** I thank each of you that persevered to get a vaccine as soon as you could.

I would be remiss to not thank the Registrar's of the SDAA, SDTA, CDSS and DSS and of course Shelby Hamm, Registrar SDHA for their collaboration on protocols and the current and past members of SDHA Council for their outstanding work to ensure discussions were thorough and recommendations were clear for the membership. It has been a long road back to a life that resembles 2019 and I hope the road remains safe to travel upon. May any journey you undertake this summer be a source of joy and fulfillment for you and your fellow travelers.

I would like to take a moment to acknowledge the search for a new CEO at SDHA. I have enjoyed meeting and talking to so many of you during the time I have been a part of this organization and I wish each of you all the best in any future endeavor in your practice and beyond.

Sincerely, Catherine Folkersen

Registrar Report

Happy Summer everyone, I am writing in the midst of a heatwave and am looking forward to some outdoor time with family and friends. July marks an exciting time for dental



hygiene graduates as they obtain licensure and begin their career. A BIG congratulations to Saskatchewan Polytechnic's Dental Hygiene Program for their tremendous success in the National Dental Hygiene Certification Board Exam in the midst of a global pandemic. Regulators across Canada have been cautiously observing adjustments made by dental hygiene programs in response to the pandemic and the impacts alternative learning settings may have on competence. The success of these students gives evidence that they not only obtained competence but did so in an evolving learning environment. Congratulations!

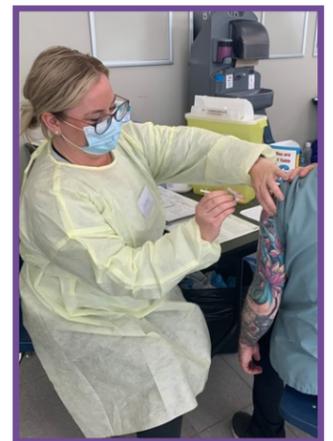
In accordance with *Regulatory Bylaw Section 47*, correspondence will be sent by mail in August related to the upcoming 2021-2022 Renewal, opening early September. This marks the 3rd renewal in the new database system, which undergoes continuous testing and systems building improving the process for members and administration. Members who fall within the 2018-2021 Reporting Period will receive notification of any deficiencies for renewal (ie. Category A, CPR, JEM) in order to have time to meet these requirements prior to the renewal deadline. This information is continuously available to you through the 'My Learning Page' on the member portal.

July 5th, the SDHA Council approved an update of the SDHA Interim IPC Protocols, effective July 11th 2021, due to the Government of Saskatchewan's Phase 3 Re-Open Plan. The updated protocol is aligned with other Canadian jurisdiction's COVID-19 risk mitigation strategies which have been proven to be successful for dental facilities since May 2020. This speaks volumes to the profession's expertise in IPC standards. The takeaways of the pandemic, including the roll out of vaccinations will impact the way in which we move forward in dentistry.

Since June, I have had the opportunity to casually work with Indigenous Services Canada (ISC) as a member of their COVID-19 Surge Support Team. This interprofessional opportunity has been eye opening to the value of the dental hygiene profession within a community setting. While I hope that we never faced with another global pandemic, I am hopeful that dental professionals will become more integrated in the delivery of healthcare in the province of Saskatchewan.

Respectfully submitted,

Shelby Hamm, RDH
Registrar



Saskatchewan Polytechnic Dental Hygiene Awards

Submitted By : Dean Lefebvre, Program Head Saskatchewan Polytechnic

On June 11, 2021, the Dental Hygiene Program held a virtual Pinning and Awards Ceremony for their 2021 graduates. Twenty- five students along with friends, family and faculty celebrated this great achievement. The following students were recognized for awards:



Alyssa Giesbrecht

The **Mary Geddes Award** is provided by Saskatchewan Dental Hygienists' Association and is awarded to a graduating dental hygiene student who demonstrates leadership skills, high professional ideals, and ethics; is respected by fellow students, clients, and instructors; is considerate, helpful and reliable; contributes to class unity and team building; and is compassionate and empathetic - characteristics reflective of the role of the dental hygienist as a health professional. SDHA congratulates 2021 recipient Alyssa Giesbrecht!

Andrea MacDonald

The **Leanne Huvenaars Award** is given to a graduating dental hygiene student who provides evidence of their involvement within the community and demonstrates how they will continue to be involved after completion of the program (50%). Academics is also considered (50%).



Drew McClelland

The **Leanne Huvenaars Indigenous Award** is given to a graduating dental hygiene student of self-declared Indigenous ancestry who provides evidence of their involvement within the community and demonstrates how they will continue to be involved after completion of the program (50%). Academics is also considered (50%).

Saskatchewan Polytechnic Dental Hygiene Awards



Taylor Stenerson

The **Regina Preventative Dental Services Community Oral Health Award** is given to a graduating dental hygiene student who is dedicated, passionate and committed to promoting oral health in the community.

Sydney Sawka

The **Colgate Star Award** recognizes a graduating dental hygiene student who show excellence and commitment to the dental hygiene profession by demonstrating true dedication to the profession, exhibiting extraordinary compassion in patient care, displaying enthusiasm and follow-through for community service, and demonstrating outstanding patient education and motivation skills.



Shilpa Kumari

The **Hu-Friedy Golden Scaler Award** recognizes a graduating dental hygiene student who has shown great improvement and advancement in dental instrumentation skills.

Mr. Dean Lefebvre, Program Head stated that "We are very proud of all of our graduates and wish them all the best as they start their professional careers." The Saskatchewan Dental Hygienists' Association echoes their congratulations and looks forward to seeing each of them in practice in Saskatchewan.

Danielle Goodman, RDH - Life of a Dental Hygienist



My name is Danielle Goodman, and I am almost a full year into my practice as a Dental Hygienist. Joining the workforce during a pandemic was not something that I expected when I started my education. There have been many challenges along the way regarding both working during the pandemic and starting a new career. Some expected challenges that I have faced in my career thus far include the ability to work within the narrow time constraints imposed by private practice (as compared to those imposed in the school's clinical setting), enforcing extra safety precautions due to COVID-19, and learning to work together with different dentists who may have differing expectations regarding the treatment and planning of his or her patients.

Some unexpected challenges I have faced involve simple things such as having to learn the use of different instruments, products, technologies, and equipment, many of which were not used regularly at school. I have embraced these challenges every day which has resulted in me expanding my knowledge base. All challenges have shaped me into a more diverse and well-rounded practitioner.

I have also experienced difficult days in practice so far. However, those days have also proved beneficial and used as learning experiences. The difficult days make me truly appreciate the great ones. Working in a large office means that my coworkers possess a variety of background experiences, so there is always someone to provide me with guidance and assistance when needed.

My most memorable days are those where I felt like I made a difference to the patient. The best day I have had so far was when I was given a card from a young patient, whom I had seen the week prior. The patient was very nervous and had never visited the dentist before. It was my goal to make this visit a good experience all around. Ultimately, the patient left my chair with a smile on their face. They had to come back multiple times for treatment and each time they came into the office I made sure to say 'Hello' to them, which was always happily reciprocated. On their last day of treatment, I was given a card saying 'Thank you.' It made me smile, and I realized that I had done what I hoped to for that young individual. One of my goals when starting as a Dental Hygienist was to make children's experiences at the dentist as positive as I could.

I hope to continue to improve on my entry level competencies in the next year and throughout my career. I have made a point during my days at work to jot down topics that interest me or that I would like to investigate further. This helps me remember what I would like to learn more about when I am seeking out webinars or courses. This learning allows me to better answer the questions that my patients may have in the future. I take great pride in the work I do as a Dental Hygienist, and I have a lifelong passion to learn as much as I can about the profession.

RDH Spotlight - Veronica Hermiston, RDH

This issue of the SDHA Edge spotlight is on dually trained dental hygienist and dental therapist Veronica Hermiston. Veronica started her journey in the dental industry in the 1990's and now



almost 30 years later she is still going strong. Some might call her a pioneer in the dental community, while others think of her more as an inspiration and advocate for oral health. Her favorite thing about her profession is seeing all ages of clients transform from having fear-based appointments to completely relaxed with a trusting behaviour. She LOVES when they fall asleep in the chair because they are so relaxed.

Veronica graduated from Dental Hygiene school in 1995 and spent 15 years working as a dental hygienist in private practice. Veronica then decided to further her education and graduated from Dental Therapy school in 2010. She felt very fortunate to be able to continue her education and be accepted into the second last class of the dental therapy program. This progression in education

just came natural to Veronica due to her love of learning and all aspects of dentistry.

Veronica knew she always wanted to work in an under-served community, and it was in during her third year of pre-dentistry (yes, she went back to school), while working for the summer at a dental clinic, that she began dreaming about opening her own dental practice. She then approached Fishing Lake First Nation to ask them if they would consider allowing her to set up a private dental clinic in the Chamkum Health Centre. They welcomed the idea with open arms and were extremely accommodating. With this new and exciting opportunity, she decided to take a year off from university to give it a try. In July of 2016 Veronica opened her own independent dental clinic, called ABC Dental Hygiene and Therapy in Chamkum Health Centre at Fishing Lake First Nation. Now, 5 years later, she is still absolutely in love with the choice she made and has made a huge impact on the oral health of the community.

Although the road to her dreams wasn't an easy one. As an independent practitioner in a community clinic, it took a lot of time for her to earn the trust of the community and build a client base. She works collaboratively with the Chief of Council, Health Director and her supervising dentist, Dr. Laura Stewart, all of whom have been very supportive. She also has employed (via her supervising dental and college specifications) two people from the Fishing Lake First Nation Community, training them to become dental aides.

RDH Spotlight - Veronica Hermiston, RDH

Up until the pandemic, Veronica ran a very successful independent dental clinic. But like many other dental professionals, the COVID-19 global pandemic has been extremely difficult both emotionally and financially for Veronica. The community where Veronica's practice is located has been in lock down for most of the pandemic, with the Health Centre temporarily closed. Most of her supplies have expired and it has become costly to prepare the clinic with isolation rooms that are now no longer required. To say it's been a rollercoaster for Veronica is an understatement, as Veronica says, "the bills to run a practice need to be paid whether she is open or not". To cover her expenses and cost of living during the pandemic she has taken on work in a private practice and in other northern communities. But if you know Veronica at all, you know that she is resilient and will no doubt persevere.

Veronica has a passion for dentistry and is always willing to learn. She specifically loves "hands on" learning and staying up-to-date and current with the "latest and greatest" in dentistry. Earlier this year, Veronica was one of the first dental clinics in Saskatchewan to purchase an EMS Airflow Prophylaxis Master. This Swiss Made state-of-the-art system is the latest EMS innovation for Guided Biofilm Therapy. Guided Biofilm Therapy (Or GBT) is the systematic, predictable solution for dental biofilm management in professional prophylaxis that consists of treatment protocols based on individual patient diagnosis and risk assessment in order to achieve optimal results. The treatment is given in the least invasive way, with the highest level of comfort, safety and efficiency. Veronica became fully trained and is excited to incorporate this into her clinic and is confident it will make a difference in her clients.

If she could tell her younger self one thing it would be to "treat your client as a person first, listen to them, read between the lines, then treat their mouth. Take the time you need to do a proper job. Stand up for yourself and for what is right for the client even if it means going alone".

Veronica herself is inspired by other colleagues in the dental profession and believes that "there are so many amazing people in our profession". When she is not working, she enjoys volunteering at a local animal sanctuary and loves all types of dance.

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20 Tips & Tricks to Have a Successful Career as a Dental Hygienist - By Carla Ofstie

#1 Become a Life-Long Learner

Do you think of continuing education simply as a requirement for your dental hygiene licence or to keep current and up-to-date within the dental profession? If you answered to stay current and up-to-date – you are absolutely correct and a better dental hygienist for it. Now, more than ever, online access to relevant dental continuing education online is super convenient and affordable. Becoming a life-long learner is crucial in the field of dentistry! Just like the medical field, dentistry is always changing and being open to learning about the latest instrumentation, technology and education strategies will not only benefit you, but also your clients.

#2 Find Yourself a Mentor

Whether its one mentor, or multiple mentors, finding that trusted advisor, specifically in the dental industry can provide motivation, guidance and emotional support. A mentor is someone that can not only share their knowledge and experience, but can also increase your self-worth and provide you with a much-needed confidence boost.

#3 Morning Office Huddles

Having worked in many offices over the years, I have noticed an interesting trend. Offices that have a morning huddle prior to starting their day seem to often run more efficiently. The best time for a morning huddle is prior to starting your work day and should take no



longer than 15 minutes. All team members should be present during the "meeting" which is best lead by a dentist or schedule facilitator. To be most effective, all providers, specifically practitioners should review their daily schedule and client records prior to the meeting Mary Fisher-Day, a 30-year veteran dental assistant and consultant says that "Morning huddles are as important to a dental team as the sidelines huddles are to a football team". She also believes that morning huddles can be the most effective meeting you can have with your team and that daily morning communication in any dental office is key to a productive, more profitable practice and better office morale. She goes on to say that "It is best to close meetings on a positive note, thanking everyone for their participation and wishing everyone a great day".

20 Tips & Tricks to Have a Successful Career as a Dental Hygienist

#4 Excellent Communication Skills is Essential

Effective communication is extremely important in the dental profession and one of the most important skills in communication is the ability to listen carefully and comprehend what is being said. “Hygienists play a vital role in ensuring that patients receive the best dental care available to them. We must ensure that we are actively listening to the patient to understand their individual needs and are communicating any barriers to care to the dentist during the exam. One of the most rewarding benefits of our role is building patient relationships. By effectively communicating, it is through these relationships that we can better understand the individual needs of each patient and can help them reach ideal oral health.”

#5 A Sense of humour

What do you call a bear without teeth??? A Gummy Bear!

Wikipedia defines humour as “the tendency of experiences to provoke laughter and provide amusement”. Tooth be told – a sense of humour is an essential trait to have as a dental hygienist, not only for the patients but for your own well being. Studies show that smiling instantly boosts your mood and laughing can soothe tension and melt stress. People of all ages and cultures respond to humour. Most people are able to experience humour—be amused, smile or laugh at something funny (such as a pun or joke)—and thus are considered to have a sense of humour”.

#6 Confidence

If you don’t have confidence in yourself, how can you expect others too? Confidence is the feeling or belief that one can rely on someone or something. It requires a realistic sense of one’s capabilities and feeling secure in the knowledge. “Projecting confidence helps people gain credibility, make a strong first impression, deal with pressure, and tackle personal and professional challenges. It’s also an attractive trait, as confidence helps put others at ease”.

#7 Create A Positive Work Environment

There are numerous benefits to a positive work environment. If you find yourself working in a more negative work environment, start by being the driving force for change and try and bring out more positivity in yourself and others. Researchers are finding that positive thinkers are healthier, have less stress and have greater overall well-being. Wellness blogger, Ahemed Shamim Ansary states that “Happiness is contagious and, when encouraged, can spread throughout an entire company. Employees who enjoy their work have a wonderful role for their fellow workers and encourage them to enjoy their work”. Time to start seeing the glass as half full!

#8 Always Remain Professional

As a dental hygienist and dental health professional, it is always important to remain professional and ethical both in and out of the workplace. Social media professionalism is no different.

“According to a CareerBuilder.com survey, 37% of companies conduct social media research on job candidates. Of those companies, 65% do it specifically to find out if the candidate practices professional conduct on social networks. So what should you do (and *not* do) to keep it professional?” It is important to remember that what you post online can directly impact you and your reputation.

20 Tips & Tricks to Have a Successful Career as a Dental Hygienist

#9 ADPIE

ADPIE is the acronym used to remember the 5 steps in the dental hygiene process of care; assessment, diagnosis, planning, implementation and evaluation. Following the ADPIE framework allows dental hygienists to improve their work efficiency and promptly develop more accurate decisions and treatment plans using critical thinking skills. Need an ADPIE refresher? Be sure to check out fellow RDH Tracey Poirier’s article in Oral Health Group titled, Keep Calm & ADPIE: Unleashing Hygienists’ Potential.

#10 Pre-Procedural Rinsing

Pre-procedural rinses have been widely used as a standard protocol prior to routine dental treatment for many years now. Dental hygiene procedures, such as the use of ultrasonic scalers, air/water and polishing, have the ability to aerosolize micro-organisms. Using a pre-procedural rinse can significantly reduce the number of micro-organisms, helping to prevent cross-contamination between you, your operator, your clients and the entire dental office. Be sure to find a pre-procedural rinse that is effective in killing micro-organisms and one that has a pleasant taste.

#11 Ultrasonic Scalers

Many dental hygienists will agree with me in saying that ultrasonic scaling is an essential part of the dental hygiene process of care. Whether you prefer magnetostrictive (cavitron) or piezoelectric (piezo), research shows that both methods are equally effective if used properly. At the end of the day (or appointment), which ever style of ultrasonic you choose, the ultimate goal is the same; removal of subgingival and supragingival calculus and the disruption of biofilm bacteria toxins.

#12 Good, SHARP Instruments

Although ultrasonic instrumentation accounts for most of the periodontal therapy, there will always be the need for hand instrumentation and having sharp instruments is critical. A properly sharpened instrument will cause less hand fatigue and strain, improve time management and provide optimal patient care. Fellow RDH, Janet Hagerman says “Considering that much scaling (SRP) occurs hidden from vision beneath gingiva, and becomes entirely dependent upon a very sensitive tactile touch, the quality of instrument maintenance becomes essential. Dull instruments are dangerous — not only to the patient, but for the hygienist as well”.

20 Tips & Tricks to Have a Successful Career as a Dental Hygienist

#13 Offer Optimal Oral Health Care Products

Oral Hygiene Instruction is one thing, but effective oral health care products are JUST as important. If you have walked down the dental health care aisle at any store, you too, are most likely feeling overwhelmed with the amount of product available on the shelves. The best way to get your clients using the correct oral health care products, based on their specific needs, is to have these products available to them in the office for purchase. Clients are more willing to use the products if they are readily available for them. If you or your office is not willing to sell products, companies like Oral Science offer a “prescription pad” that allows you to check off the products best suited for them and where to locate them.

#14 Dental Loupes

Dental loupes will not only help the magnify the intra-oral area you are working on, but can provide you with a more ergonomically correct neutral position decreasing any additional back strain. Orascoptic™, a popular dental loupe manufacturer suggested 5 things to look for when purchasing loupes; magnifications, resolution, dept of field, field of view and light. Dental loupes can be a costly investment and often take time to get used to, but are well worth it in the long run.

#15 An Intra-Oral Camera

Intra-oral cameras are a valuable tool that can enhance the dental hygiene process of care and improve communication between the clinician and the patient. “83% of the population learn and retain more when visual aids are used”. Intra-oral cameras can capture vivid images of one’s oral health including bleeding, inflammation, heavy plaque, calculus or stain and will allow them to take ownership of their oral health. This visual educational tool can be the foundation for change in their oral home-care. An intra-oral camera will heighten client education, enhance diagnosis and treatment and increase case acceptance. Take it to the next level and start using an intra-oral scanner in your dental hygiene chair, not only is this also a great visual educational tool but a great way to impress your clients with technology.

#16 Daily Stretches

Routine intentional stretching can drastically improve the longevity of your dental hygiene career. Back, neck, shoulder, wrist and hand pain are amongst the most common ailments of a dental hygienist. Full body stretching can help dental professionals reduce the risk of musculoskeletal disorders and improve overall wellness. Looking for more guided stretching, try yoga. “Research has demonstrated that 15 minutes of chair-based yoga can elicit the relaxation response through the reduction of several physiological and psychological markers of stress, including respiratory rate.¹ Yoga practice has been shown to reduce the symptoms of osteoarthritis of the hands and carpal tunnel syndrome”.

20 Tips & Tricks to Have a Successful Career as a Dental Hygienist

#17 Find A Good Massage Therapist & Chiropractor

Regular massage therapy is considered part of integrative medicine and can provide multiple benefits such as reducing stress, increasing relaxation, reducing soreness, pain and tension, improving circulation, energy and alertness, lowering heart rate and blood pressure and improving immune function.

Just as dental hygiene therapy is recommended routinely for optimal oral health, visiting the Chiropractor on a regular basis is just as important for your physical well being. Chiropractor adjustments can help manage the health of joints and muscles and reduce inflammation throughout our body. “After approximately 4 weeks, the inflammation and nerve stress associated with subluxation begins to cause irreversible damage and change the nerve, joint and surrounding area”.

#18 Meditate



Meditation, is a type of mind-body medicine that have been practiced for thousands of years. It is defined as the “the habitual process of training your mind to focus and redirect your thoughts”. There are multiple benefits to meditation including concentration, clarity, relaxation, inner peace, stress reduction and fatigue. Meditation requires no fancy equipment or

memberships and can be done in a quiet setting, in a comfortable position with focused attention and an open attitude. Don’t know where to start? There are many free meditation apps available.

#19 Vacation

Yes PLEASE! The 3 R’s are essential for everyone – rest, relaxation and rejuvenation. Taking a vacation will not only help you to improve relationships with family and friends without the distractions from work, but increase productivity both personal and professionally.



20 Tips & Tricks to Have a Successful Career as a Dental Hygienist

#20 A Retirement Plan

Many of us love our profession – but let's be honest, even if our bodies allowed us, we don't want to be doing dental hygiene in our 70's. Although times are changing, many dental professionals do not receive any pension benefits.

Therefore, the responsibility to put money away for retirement is a decision we must make on our own.

To some retirement may not be a high priority, but your older self will thank you. The earlier you start putting money away for retirement, the easier it will become. A financial advisor can help you to decide what works financially for you at your current stage of life and help you to create the right path for retirement.

(Editor's note: SDHA acknowledges that the Register has at least one long serving, practitioner who has been instrumental in education of RDH's in Saskatchewan. While many will choose to leave practice at or before 65 not everyone may choose this option!)



Resources:

[Morning huddles help improve dental team morale, productivity | DentistryIQ](#)

[A Comprehensive Review on Ultrasonic Scaling for Dental Hygienists - Today's RDH \(todaysrdh.com\)](#)

[Instrument Sharpening by the RDH: The How and Why - Today's RDH \(todaysrdh.com\)](#)

[6 Signs You Have A Good Sense Of Humor | HuffPost Life](#)

[Stretching for Musculoskeletal Health - Dimensions of Dental Hygiene](#)

[Massage: Get in touch with its many benefits - Mayo Clinic](#)

[Chiropractic care for dental hygienists | DentistryIQ](#)

<https://dentalpracticesolutions.com/the-dental-hygienists-role-in-patients-treatment-plan/>

[Intraoral Cameras | Registered Dental Hygienist \(RDH\) Magazine \(rdhmag.com\)](#)

Continuing Education Resources

How to Enter CE on Learning Page

1. Log onto Member Portal
2. Click My Learning
3. Click > current reporting year
4. Scroll to bottom, click ADD
5. **Please note if you have more than one submission ADD them all before clicking submit. Once you submit the ADD button will disappear until the SDHA has reviewed your submission. You can make more than one submission at a time but click ADD for as many submissions as you have before submitting!**
6. Fill in appropriate fields. Refer to CCP Guidelines if uncertain of the category for your submission.
7. Upload the supporting document (s). Refer to the CCP guideline on what is appropriate.
8. SUBMIT or SAVE. Submit sends your file to SDHA to review. Save allows you to go back and make changes or additions before submitting.

- [CDHA](#)
- [Oral Heath](#)
- [Casey Hein](#)
- [RDHU](#)
- [Dentsply](#)
- [Crest Oral B / Procter and Gamble](#)
- [Colgate Oral Care](#)
- [Free Interactive & Self Study CE](#)
- [Dimensions of Dental Hygiene](#)
- [Hu-Friedy](#)
- [Dental Academy of CE](#)

Upcoming Continuing Education Sessions

- ◇ [2021 Saskatchewan Oral Health Conference - September 25-26, 2021](#)
- ◇ [2021 CDHA Annual General Meeting & Education Session](#)
- ◇ [2021 CDHA Conference - October 29 - 30, 2021](#)



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TO LEARN MORE OR TO REGISTER



SLEEP APNEA: A NOT-SO-SILENT KILLER

What dental hygienists need to know to save lives!

Obstructive sleep apnea (OSA) is a disorder characterized by upper airway collapse during sleep. OSA is one of the most prevalent sleep disorders and is potentially fatal, affecting approximately 4-9% of the adult population.¹ Like most sleep disorders, OSA is unrecognized, under diagnosed and undertreated with an estimated 70 -90% of cases going undiagnosed.¹ Dental Hygienists are the first line of defense in recognizing and screening for potential OSA. We play a critical role in improving the quality and longevity of life of our clients.

Understanding the sleep disorder, how it affects our clients, how to screen for potential OSA, and recognize when to refer is in our area of influence.

My interest in sleep apnea began because of my own personal journey. Here I am, in the dental profession, president of a professional development company and unbeknownst to me, I suffered from sleep apnea for far too long. Not only sleep apnea, but severe sleep apnea. I was one of the undiagnosed statistics.

It was because of this diagnosis that I decided to dig deeper into this topic and have made it a passion to bring awareness to this disorder.

I had seen many different dental hygienists (as a client) over the years, a cardiologist, my GP and even a couple of different dentists, and not one of these healthcare providers ever asked me about my sleep. Seems so simple to ask, but it never came up during any assessment or medical history questionnaire given. I have been happily married for a long time and my husband, not once, ever mentioned (God bless him) that he noticed something peculiar while I slept. For instance, loud snoring, choking and gasping for air, grinding and bruxism, to name a few.

It wasn't until I was away and sharing a room with my friend, Jennifer Turner (who I was co-presenting with the next day) that she admitted "Kath, I used to hear you gently sleep and it made me happy to know that you were getting sleep, but now, I feel like I am sharing a room with a truck driver." (No offense to truck drivers! But you can understand what she was implying!) I had a physical booked the next week with my GP and during this appointment I mentioned to her that my friend mentioned my snoring. "You snore?" she asked. "I am going to book you in with the sleep clinic." Looking back at how long I was suffering was truly disheartening. I thought perhaps I suffered from anxiety, because I couldn't sleep at night. One night in particular stood out for me. I was away in the States for RDH Under One Roof, where I was a part of the mega session and presenting to 2200 people the next morning. I met with my friend and co-presenter



Kathleen Bokrossy, RDH President of rdhu

Kathleen is the president of rdhu, a Professional Development company, which provides team events, hands- on programs and online learning to help Transform the Dental Hygiene

Experience for the clinician, the client/ patient and the practice.
www.rdhu.ca

SDHA gratefully acknowledges the permission to reprint this article which appeared March 2021 in Oral Hygiene, p/24-26.

SLEEP APNEA: A NOT-SO-SILENT KILLER...continued

Jo-Anne Jones, we had a light dinner and off to bed we went (this time we had separate rooms). After 1.5 hours of sleep, I was up for the day. I took a selfie and sent it to my husband. I was so upset. How was I going to get up there on the stage that morning and present to a large audience? I felt terrible. I was in a fog and couldn't think straight. Luckily, I rallied. Ordered a Coca Cola (which was my secret weapon prior to presentations at the time – that I don't need now, thanks to my CPAP!), did my hair and makeup, and was ready for the day.

I share this story because of how I looked like image 1, to then looking like image 2. And nobody would ever guess I had a problem. No matter how a client looks, you never know what that client is going through or what their concerns are. We can't prejudge or assume something by their outward appearance alone. Questions need to be asked. We need to start the conversation.

For many years I suffered from:

- Brain fog
- Memory issues
- Weight gain
- High cholesterol
- Day-time sleepiness
- TMJ problems
- Bruxism
- Limited opening (due to my TMJ problems)
- Nightmares
- Snoring
- Gasping for air/choking
- Acid reflux
- Tinnitus
- Frequent trips to the washroom at night

Image 1



Image 2



No matter how a client looks, you never know what that client is going through or what their concerns are. We can't prejudge or assume something by their outward appearance alone. Questions need to be asked. We need to start the conversation.

Figure 1: Mallampati Classification



Source: Wikipedia. User: Jmarchn

All of these symptoms are related to sleep apnea.

I waited 6 months to get into the sleep clinic for my initial assessment. In the meantime, I went for a "new patient exam" with my friend Dr. Samson Lee. During the assessment he stated 'Class 3 Tongue' to his assistant. "Class 3 Tongue?", I asked. I had not heard that term since dental hygiene school, to be honest. He refreshed my knowledge on Mallampati Classification. (Figure 1). A simple physical trait that can be indicative of OSA is the client's Mallampati Classification. Clients with a Class 3 or Class 4 Mallampati Classification are most likely to have some

SLEEP APNEA: A NOT-SO-SILENT KILLER...continued

degree of OSA due to the small space in the throat for the passage of air.² Once the results for my test came in, the sleep clinic had me in for my fitting of the CPAP machine that night. There was no waiting as my results indicated that I had severe sleep apnea.

So, what is sleep apnea?

Sleep apnea is characterized by repetitive apneas during sleep. An apnea is the complete interruption of breath for at least 10 seconds.²

Characterized by partial or complete narrowing of the pharyngeal airway during sleep.

It is defined as a condition in which there is a decrease of oxygen intake (hypopnea) or temporary cessation of breathing (apnea).²

This chronic, multifactorial, and potentially life-threatening disorder is associated with a reduction in oxygen levels, increased carbon dioxide in the bloodstream, and numerous medical conditions.³

Results in:

- Disruption in sleep cycle
- Daytime fatigue
- Deprivation of deep and REM sleep
- Interferes with important physiological processes

Obstructive sleep apnea increases the risk of morbidity and mortality. With a diagnosis and appropriate treatment, coexisting health conditions can improve.

This is why I became passionate about this topic and want to share with dental hygienists to help empower you to realize that you can really make a difference in someone's life with one simple screening tool. We are at the first line of defense. There are many dental practices who specialize in sleep and have fully implemented assessing and treating or referring to the appropriate specialist to help clients and patients; however, there are still a number of professionals who don't screen for this disorder.

According to the Institute of Medicine (US) Committee on Sleep Medicine and Research; obstructive sleep apnea is an unmet public health problem.⁴ During my initial research I came across a study that was conducted on a group of dental hygienists. The purpose of this study was to determine the knowledge and attitudes of OSA among this group. The conclusion stated that dental hygienists perceive that assessing patients for OSA is important, however they have moderate knowledge of the disease. Results support incorporating OSA into dental hygiene practice through additions to the dental hygiene education curriculum and ongoing professional development courses with the goal of improving the screening and referral of patients presenting with OSA symptoms.

Sleep apnea can lead to many diseases and conditions; such as, obesity, diabetes, cardiovascular

SLEEP APNEA: A NOT-SO-SILENT KILLER...continued

disease, increased cholesterol levels, it can affect the brain function, mood and behavior, just to name a few.

My suggestion, establish an obstructive sleep apnea assessment protocol for your practice:

1. **Get the team on board.** Educate the entire team on this disorder. Dr. Viviano, from Mississauga, ON has an educational facility where dental teams come from all over the world to participate in Sleep CE classes (sleepdisordersdentistry.com). There are also online courses available through this website and www.rdhu.ca
2. **Determine which assessment tool you are going to implement.** There are many available online: stopbang.ca; Epworth Sleepiness Scale epworthsleepinessscale.com
3. **Establish options for treatment.** (Oral appliance or CPAP)
4. **Who will you collaborate with?** Sleep specialist? Refer first to the GP.
5. **Implement a follow-up protocol.**

Now that your client/patient is aware that they have this disorder, be sure to check that they are wearing their appliance or CPAP every night. Clients need encouragement and reinforcement. We need to make sure that the client understands the severity of their condition so that they work through the initial stages of adapting to their new device at night. Work with them to see what treatment option works best for them.

Obstructive sleep apnea is a huge topic and one that you can do a lot of research on.

My goal in writing this article was to bring awareness that assessing for obstructive sleep apnea, even by adding a few questions to your medical history and update, is essential. You could follow some of the screening tools or simply implement questions like: Do you snore? Do you wake up choking and gasping for air? Are you tired and feel like you are in a fog?

I recorded a 1-hour CE online course on sleep apnea (Sleep apnea...a NOT so silent killer: What dental hygienists need to know to help save lives); which includes many references and extra resources. If you are interested, please go to rdhu.ca/sleepapnea and you will receive instant access to this online presentation.

You can help someone by not only extending their life but also by giving back their quality of life. I know I have been feeling great since starting my treatment!

References

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Tell Us What You Think About The SDHA Edge

Chance to Win

1. Boston Pizza Gift Card
2. Red Lobster Gift Card

Complete the 5 min Survey

[Take Survey](#)

CDHA Renewal

Prizes During Renewal

We will not be offering early bird this year. For members who renew in full before October 31st, they'll be entered to win one of the following prizes.

- 1 of 10 CDHA memberships
- 1 of 25 Philips Sonicare power toothbrushes

CDHA
CORNER

Hello
colleagues and
friends,

CDHA has been actively providing members with current information on issues of concern throughout the COVID-19 pandemic. We hope that you are checking your email inboxes regularly for CDHA's COVID-19 bulletins and following us on Facebook, Instagram, and Twitter. We are sure that you will find the content relevant and helpful. Additional resources to support you during this challenging time are available at cdha.ca/safetyalerts.

CDHA's board of directors recently held elections in two provinces: Saskatchewan and Ontario. The successful candidate from Saskatchewan is Kaylen Anholt. Kaylen will be a fantastic representative for dental hygienists across Canada. She will join the board in October following CDHA's annual general meeting.

Thank you all for your support over the past six years. It has been a pleasure serving as a board director, president-elect, president, and past president on CDHA's board. May we all take a few moments every week to give thanks to all who volunteer their time to advance the dental hygiene profession in Canada.

Thank you and keep well!

Leanne Huvenaars
CDHA past president & board director,
Saskatchewan
pastpres@cdha.ca



WHAT'S NEW AT CDHA?

PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT

NEW webinars recently released:

Vaping, Nicotine & Tobacco: Facts, Stats & Trends, sponsored by Waterpik
Keys to Synergistic Relationships in the Dental Office, sponsored by Crest + Oral-B

Webinars coming soon:

Translating Uncertainty in Evidence-Based Practice, September 15, sponsored by Johnson & Johnson
cdha.ca/webinars

Save the Date

CDHA Virtual Conference: Practice 360, October 29-30
cdha.ca/conference

OTHER NEWS

COVID Impact Timeline

The COVID-19 pandemic has reshaped our lives in dramatic ways. CDHA has developed a historical timeline documenting its impact on the association and the dental hygiene profession as a whole over the past 15 months. The timeline graphically illustrates everyone's efforts to navigate this new pandemic reality and shows how we truly are #CDHAstrong! cdha.ca/covidtimeline

New Membership Benefits

CDHA understands our members need access to employment advice and support, so we are thrilled to introduce our new employment legal line. It's a free, 24/7 bilingual telephone service covering employment and regulatory law as well as real estate referral. Another great member benefit! cdha.ca/employmentlaw

Our CDHA Perks program has expanded to include Endless Savings & More (ESM)! Save on everyday purchases from even more participating merchants such as Staples, The Brick, and Anytime Fitness. More options...more savings! cdha.ca/esm

Healthy and Respectful Workplaces

CDHA is committed to ensuring that every dental hygienist works in a healthy and respectful environment. Over the past year and a half, we have developed numerous resources to help support and empower you, including a vision statement, tip sheets on topics such as bullying and harassment, a video series on collaborative conversations and more. A handbook contains all printable resources in one file. Working with CDA and CDAA, we also recently launched the Healthy Workplace Matters micro website, addressing a variety of legal, mental health, physical health, and workplace safety issues. Find everything related to healthy and respectful workplaces at cdha.ca/healthyworkplace.

New Vaping Resource

It's time for a reality check on vaping! CDHA recently released a new vaping information sheet, which is available to the public, other health care professionals, and to dental hygienists for sharing with clients. The sheet includes a quiz, fast facts, and more. Find this and other useful vaping resources at dentalhygienecanada.ca/vaping.

Membership Renewal

CDHA's membership renewal deadline is October 31. CDHA membership provides access to many great benefits. Check out the advantages in our infographic and video at cdha.ca/6reasons.

An Opportunity to Volunteer with the SDHA

The SDHA is developing a Position Statement for the practice of **Oral Myofunctional Therapy**. The Terms of Reference for this committee was included with the newsletter email. If you wish to be a member of this Committee, please email sdharegis-trar@sasktel.net with your name, SDHA #, and a brief statement of your experience or interest in this topic.



CDHA SK Board of Director - Kaylen Anholt, RDH

Kaylen Anholt, Past President at SDHA has joined the Canadian Dental Hygiene Association as the Saskatchewan Representative. Congratulations Kaylen. You will be a great addition to their board – just like you were at SDHA.



Global Gathering

For many years the Saskatchewan Dental Hygienists' Association has partnered with Global Gathering Place (GGP), a Saskatoon non-profit organization that assists refugees and immigrants as they build their new life in Canada. Twice a year GGP runs a 10-week women's program called "Women Exchanging Life Lessons" (WELL), which



focuses on health education and connecting newcomers with local health resources, and to a network of support. Through the pandemic, the program has continued to run online through Zoom.

For each intake, the SDHA sends a guest speaker to share an Oral Hygiene presentation with the group, explaining the basics of why it is important to care for your mouth and how it can affect the entire body. This topic is particularly relevant for mothers who may not realize how beneficial it is to begin brushing their children's teeth from an early age, or who are looking for support and ideas to encourage their kids to brush more regularly or eat less sugar! Several women have commented that they did not know they could begin taking their child to the dentist as early as 1 or 2 years of age, and that sending juice or milk to bed with their toddler could cause teeth to rot.

This mother was very glad to receive information about oral health, toothbrushes and toothpaste to share with her family.

Without this opportunity to ask questions of a dental hygienist in a comfortable group setting, many newcomer women would not feel empowered or prepared to visit the dentist in Canada. Another new

concept for many newcomers is flossing. Some participants have mentioned the concern that the gaps in their teeth would widen due to flossing, so having an expert who can help correct some of these misconceptions is invaluable. The women also benefit from a reminder of basic brushing mechanics and how to choose a good toothbrush.

The SDHA has also provided educational handouts, and donated toothbrushes and toothpaste as a gift to the women attending this program. Any extras are then shared with refugee families who are brand new to the country. This is an important outreach to create awareness of the importance of oral hygiene, and its impact on overall health.

GGP would like to thank SDHA for your partnership and generosity in teaching newcomer women. This collaboration continues to greatly impact the dental hygiene and overall health of clients and their families!

A graphic with a teal background and a yellow speech bubble icon at the top. The text "Stay Connected" is in a white script font, and "FOLLOW US ON SOCIAL MEDIA" is in large, bold, yellow capital letters. Below this, there are social media icons for Instagram (@thesdha) and Facebook (@SKHygienists). At the bottom, there are icons for Facebook, Twitter, Instagram, and YouTube.



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