

Denturist Association of British Columbia

Fact Sheet – Scope of Practice

On April 11, 2019, British Columbia's Ministry of Health (MOH) released a 107- page report authored by the former head of the United Kingdoms Professional Standards Authority. Harry Cayton is an internationally recognized expert on professional standard regulation. The report entitled, *An Inquiry into the Performance of the College of Dental Surgeons and the Health Professions Act (HPA)* addresses the performance of the College of Dental Surgeons of BC in relation to certain standards of good regulation. It also provides recommendations about how the HPA, which governs BC's Professional Colleges including the Denturists of British Columbia could be modernized and improved to promote and enhance patient safety.

The MOH has established a Special House Committee (steering committee) that will consult over the next few months on the changes that British Columbians want to see to the existing 26 regulated health care Scopes of Practice which includes doctors, dentists, nurses and denturists. The Denturist Association of BC (DABC) has submitted a letter to the committee which addresses recommended changes to regulations in the Denturists Scope of Practice. Prior to the establishment of the Committee the DABC has been in communication with the MOH regarding long overdue changes to the Scope of Practice. The DABC is dedicated to advancing the public interest in safe, effective and ethical health care in BC.

- Denturist are members of the Denturists Association of BC (DABC), an association of health care professionals trained and skilled in the latest denture technology.
- BC Denturists are an integral part of the dental professional team serving and protecting the public.
- Denturist Regulations (Scope of Practice) has not significantly changed in 20 years.
- The DABC has grown from 194 members to only 240 members over those 20 years.
- In BC the profession is under pressure from an ageing population and a limited number of denturists providing service to the public. New graduates are establishing practices in other provinces due to the limited BC Scope of Practice.

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- The DABC has been advocating for changes to the regulations for over 10 years and has submitted multiple proposals to successive governments of BC.
- Denturists across the county are already delivering expanded services in a proven and safe manner. Alberta denturists have had an expanded Scope of Practice since 2002.
- The current regulations are archaic causing roadblocks that restrict and impeded Denturists in their ability to deliver modern, technologically advanced treatments to clients.
- Denturist should not require permission from dentists, for simple, basic treatments.
- Denturists are self-governed by the College of Denturists of BC and regulated by the *Health Professions Act* (HPA). Denturist are licensed to serve the public directly and as such require changes to the outdated Scope of Practice guiding the profession.

Specific recommendations to the Special House Committee on Scope of Practice for Health Care professionals:

1. Denturist Regulations (1999) must be modernized – current regulations do not allow assistants to perform intra oral procedures such as impressions. Denturists are primary health care providers licensed to perform these procedures and dental assistants are trained to perform procedures under the direction of a primary dental healthcare provider – except denturists.
2. Denturists should be accountable for their own work as they are trained professionals, licensed and qualified to deliver denture services. Under the current regulations, a dentist could be held responsible for services provided by a denturist. This creates public confusion.
3. The dental community has struggled to adapt to the changing needs of patients while new technologies are introduced that would provide superior dental health care to the public. BC denturists regularly receive requests from dentists to deliver services that denturists are unable to provide under the current regulations. Most dentists are unaware that denturists are not able to provide those services. It is important to the public that their healthcare providers are able to work together in a cooperative environment with reasonable barriers.

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4. Dental Assistants must be autonomous under their own Scope of Practice. Currently Dental Assistants must give up their license if they chose to work in a Denturists office.
5. A combined Dental College must consist of denturists having an equal voice and a level playing field on the Board.
6. The Chief Dental Consultant for the Ministry of Health is a dentist. This person is heavily relied upon and the government uses this person (and the BC Dental Association and Canadian Dental Surgeons of BC) for advice on many topics. The government has ignored recommendations from other dental professional associations. Government should widely consult with qualified people from the various dental professions to gain knowledge and foster respect and trust from all dental professionals.

These are the main issues facing the BC consumers of oral health care as they relate to the profession of Denturist. Denturists are primary health care providers with a license to serve the public directly and as such require changes to the current framework if we hope to continue to serve and protect the public properly, efficiently and progressively.

The Denturist Association of BC thank you for your support in signing this petition. Please ask your friends, neighbors and colleagues to sign this petition to help bring positive changes to this important health care issue.