

MINISTRY OF TRAINING, COLLEGES AND UNIVERSITIES



*Private Career Colleges Act, 2005*

## **Superintendent's Policy Directive #7**

### **Requirements for Dental Hygiene Programs**

February 18, 2011

## Directive

\* This policy directive replaces the previous version shared with private career colleges on August 10, 2010 and contains new information regarding implementation of the National Entry-to-Practice Competencies and Standards for Canadian Dental Hygienists.

Pursuant to subsection 23(1) of the *Private Career Colleges Act, 2005* (“PCCA”) private career colleges (PCC) that offer dental hygiene programs must have their programs approved by the Superintendent of Private Career Colleges and pursuant to subsection 23(4) of the PCCA are required to comply with the conditions specified by the Superintendent in this directive.

### Accreditation

Dental hygiene programs approved by the Superintendent that are currently not accredited by the Commission on Dental Accreditation of Canada (CDAC) are required to achieve accreditation by **December 31, 2013**. Programs which are accredited must maintain CDAC accreditation in order to retain program approval. If an accredited program loses accreditation, the PCC is required to follow the process and adhere to the timelines set out in this directive.

### National Competencies

**All** PCCs delivering dental hygiene programs are required to adopt the National Entry-to-Practice Competencies and Standards for Canadian Dental Hygienists by the deadline determined by the College of Dental Hygienists of Ontario (CDHO).

As the regulator of this health profession, CDHO will determine the appropriate timeline for adoption of the National Competencies. It is the responsibility of every PCC to ensure that it is aware of CDHO’s

timelines and to complete the following by the deadline established by CDHO for adoption of the National Competencies:

- submit an Application for Program Changes incorporating the National Competencies to the Superintendent, and
- obtain approval of these changes by the Superintendent.

Failure to adopt and implement the National Competencies by the CDHO's deadline is a violation of this binding policy directive.

## Authority

Clause 53(1)(a) of the PCCA enables the Superintendent to issue policy directives setting out standards for vocational programs or classes of vocational programs.

Pursuant to subsection 53(2) of the PCCA, policy directives issued by the Superintendent are legal requirements that are binding on all PCCs and every PCC must comply with and operate in accordance with the policy directive.

## Enforcement

Pursuant to subsection 53(1.1) of the PCCA, a policy directive issued by the Superintendent may revoke approval for a vocational program or a class of vocational programs. The Superintendent is required to provide a PCC with a minimum period of **six months** following the date the policy directive is issued to comply with the directive prior to revoking a program approval.

**However**, in certain instances a policy directive may become effective on the date specified in the policy directive or calculated in accordance with the policy directive, **if** one of the following applies:

1. The policy directive introduces a new standard related to public health or public safety.



2. The policy directive revoking the approval relates to a vocational program that is regulated by a third party and,
  - i. the third party changes the entry requirements necessary to practise the vocation, and
  - ii. the changes are such that unless the private career college adopts the requirements prescribed by the third party, graduates from the program would not meet the entry requirements to practise the vocation.

This policy directive formalizes a new standard related to public health and safety. Evidence suggests that the process of accreditation and implementation of the National Competencies may significantly improve the quality and consistency of dental hygiene programs in Ontario and in turn improve the level of safe care provided to the public.

Under subsection 24(1) of the PCCA, the Superintendent may revoke a PCC's approval to provide a specified vocational program if the Superintendent believes that the program fails to meet the conditions of the approval or the applicable standards or performance objectives set out in the Superintendent's policy directives or no longer offers the skills and knowledge that would enable graduates to obtain employment in the vocation that is the subject of the program.

## Compliance

### Accreditation

PCCs that are approved by the Superintendent to offer dental hygiene programs but that do not have CDAC accreditation are required to obtain accreditation by **December 31, 2013** in order to maintain the Superintendent's program approval.

CDAC communicated results of the Application for Program Survey to PCCs in December 2010. CDAC Site Surveys would have taken place between January and August 2011. Some PCCs will be able to attempt accreditation for a second time in August 1, 2011, if the Superintendent

has decided not to revoke the approval of the PCC's dental hygiene program. CDAC will communicate results of the Application for Program Survey to PCCs in December 2011 and Site Surveys are expected to take place between January and August 2012. CDAC is expected to communicate results of Site Surveys in **December 2012**. Accreditation results will be made public on CDAC's website in December of each year.

Some PCCs will be able to attempt accreditation for a third and final time in August 1, 2012, if the Superintendent has decided not to revoke the approval of the PCC's dental hygiene program. CDAC will communicate results of the Application for Program Survey to PCCs in December 2012 and Site Surveys are expected to take place between January and August 2013. CDAC is expected to communicate results of Site Surveys in **December 2013**.

**At each phase of the accreditation process and in order to confirm that it is actively pursuing accreditation, an unaccredited PCC must provide documentation to the Manager of the Registration Unit in the Private Career Colleges Branch** demonstrating that it has submitted an Application for Program Survey, the date of CDAC Site Survey and the results of the Site Survey.

Until accreditation is obtained, PCCs offering non-accredited dental hygiene programs must continue to use the Ministry-provided disclaimer in student contracts stating that students enrolled in a non-accredited program are not guaranteed eligibility to write the National Dental Hygiene Certification Board (NDHCB) Exam – the sector's entry-to-practice exam – and that they must first have their credentials and/or qualifications individually assessed by NDHCB to determine eligibility to write the exam. This Ministry-approved disclaimer is attached and forms part of this policy directive. It **must** be used by all PCCs offering non-accredited dental hygiene programs.

PCCs with CDAC accreditation must maintain CDAC accreditation in order to continue to deliver the dental hygiene program.



### **Additional Chances at Accreditation If Unsuccessful**

If a PCC is denied an Application for Program Survey or Site Survey by CDAC, another Application for a Program Survey may, if the Superintendent has decided not to revoke the approval of the PCC's dental hygiene program, be submitted to CDAC by August 1, 2011 and a final time in 2012. Should the PCC receive "accreditation denied" status in December 2012, the Superintendent may revoke the approved status of the dental hygiene program.

In determining whether or not to revoke the approved status of a program, the Superintendent may take into account a variety of factors, such as the PCC's recent compliance history and the nature and extent of the deficiencies that resulted in its unsuccessful application for accreditation and whether these deficiencies involved breaches under the PCCA.

**Please note, that in order to maintain the approved status of the PCC's program and before a final attempt at accreditation, the PCC must submit in writing to the Superintendent an explanation of the reasons and circumstances that resulted in its prior unsuccessful application and the measures it proposes to undertake in preparing its new application.**

### **College of Dental Hygienists of Ontario Competencies**

The College of Dental Hygienists of Ontario (CDHO) introduced new Entry-to-Practice National Competencies and Standards for Canadian Dental Hygienists in January 2010.

Dental hygiene educators are required to teach to the basic level of the National Competencies as outlined in the document. In addition, the National Competencies also include the standards adopted by the Federation of Dental Hygiene Regulatory Authorities to which entry level dental hygienists must adhere in their practices.

CDAC will use the National Competencies to evaluate dental hygiene programs at all institutions. NDHCB will use the National Competencies



to evaluate individual knowledge demonstrated on the entry-to-practice examination.

**All** PCCs delivering dental hygiene programs are required to adopt the National Entry-to-Practice Competencies and Standards for Canadian Dental Hygienists by the deadline determined by the CDHO.

As the regulator of this health profession, CDHO will determine the appropriate timeline for adoption of the National Competencies. It is the responsibility of every PCC to ensure that it is aware of the CDHO's timeline, and to:

- submit an Application for Program Changes incorporating the National Competencies to the Superintendent; and
- obtain approval of these changes by the Superintendent.

Failure to adopt and implement the National Competencies by the CDHO's deadline is a violation of this binding policy directive.

PCCs must ensure that their **entire programs** are entered into the Registration Information for Career Colleges (RICC) system in order to gain approval by the CDHO-determined timeline. This requirement may affect schools in one of two ways:

1. For PCCs who have all of the data for their dental hygiene program already entered in RICC, they need only submit the changes needed to achieve compliance with the National Competencies using an Application for Program Change. However, if the curriculum hours must increase by more than **10%** or **new modules** are introduced in order to adopt the National Competencies, the complete program must be resubmitted as a new program.

2. For PCCs whose programs were approved prior to the requirement to have the complete program submitted in RICC, they must enter the entire curriculum in RICC as a completely new program.



If a PCC fails to become accredited by December 2013 or fails to adopt the National Competencies by CDHO's deadline and the PCC only offers a dental hygiene program, the Superintendent will provide notice of the revocation of the PCC's approval to deliver the program which may take effect at a later date. Approval of the program will not be immediately revoked subject to the condition that a PCC not enrol any further students, to allow the PCC time to train out or provide refunds to its current students, or to make arrangements for training completions for its students at other accredited institutions.

Any costs related to train outs or refunds are the responsibility of the PCC. It is the responsibility of **each** PCC to ensure that it maintains at all times an **up-to-date Training Completion Plan** on file with the Ministry.

### **Effective Date**

All approved dental hygiene programs are required to comply with this directive. The accreditation requirements contained in this binding policy directive were communicated to PCCs by CDAC on October 29, 2009, and reflect previously established requirements and timelines. This policy directive is effective as of February 18, 2011.



**This document is a legal document and is binding on all private career colleges. Every private career college shall comply with and be operated in accordance with this policy directive.**

### **Need More Information?**

If you have questions about the *Private Career Colleges Act, 2005* contact the Ministry of Training, Colleges and Universities at:

Private Career Colleges Branch  
Ministry of Training, Colleges and Universities  
9<sup>th</sup> Floor, Mowat Block  
900 Bay Street  
Toronto, ON M7A1L2

Telephone: (416) 314-0500 or 1-866-330-3395 or Fax: (416) 314-0499

**OR**

Visit our website at:

<http://www.tcu.gov.on.ca/eng/postsecondary/schoolsprogram/pcc/>

Visit CDAC's website for more details on the accreditation process at:

<http://www.cda-adc.ca/cdacweb/en/>

Visit NDHCB's website for more details on the dental hygiene entry-to-practice exam and eligibility requirements at:

[http://www.ndhcb.ca/en/exam\\_eligibility.php](http://www.ndhcb.ca/en/exam_eligibility.php)

Visit CDHO's website for more details on the Entry-to-Practice Competencies at:

[http://www.cdho.org/Home\\_WhatsNew\\_Main.htm](http://www.cdho.org/Home_WhatsNew_Main.htm)

The full text of the act and regulations can also be downloaded from the Ontario government E-Laws website at:

[www.e-laws.gov.on.ca](http://www.e-laws.gov.on.ca)

## Disclaimer for Non-accredited Dental Hygiene Programs

Dental hygiene is a regulated health profession in Ontario. To legally practise dental hygiene in Ontario, persons must register with the College of Dental Hygienists of Ontario (CDHO). One of the requirements for registration is that a candidate pass the National Dental Hygiene Certification Examination (NDHCE).

The dental hygiene program offered at \_\_\_\_\_ was unsuccessful at its most recent attempt at accreditation in December 2010 and therefore is **not** currently accredited by the Commission on Dental Accreditation of Canada. This means that your credential **may not** be recognized in Ontario or any other Canadian province or territory or in any state of the United States. In addition, you are not guaranteed eligibility to write the NDHCE.

You must have your academic qualifications individually assessed by the National Dental Hygiene Certification Board (NDHCB) to determine your eligibility to write the NDHCE. This process can take up to 12 - 14 weeks after you complete your dental hygiene program. In addition to writing the NDHCE, you will also be required to take and pass a provincial clinical competency assessment, administered by the CDHO. If you do not pass both of these requirements, you will not be able to practise as a dental hygienist in Ontario.

You are responsible for contacting the NDHCB and CDHO to find out about the details with respect to writing the NDHCE and registering with the CDHO.

I \_\_\_\_\_ acknowledge that I have read the above notice and understand how my employment as a graduate of a non-accredited dental hygiene program may be affected by \_\_\_\_\_ [PCC name]'s non-accredited status. Despite \_\_\_\_\_ [PCC name]'s non-accredited status, I request admission to the dental hygiene program at \_\_\_\_\_.

\_\_\_\_\_  
Student Signature

