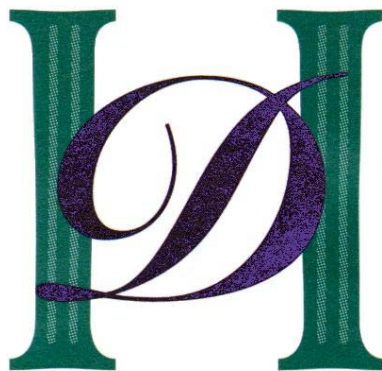

Career Map for Internationally Trained

Dental Hygienists



This document was developed in collaboration with the Ontario Ministry of Citizenship and Immigration, Labour Market Integration Unit in August, 2007. Requirements may have changed by the time you apply. Please contact the College of Dental Hygienists of Ontario before completing your application.

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ACCESS TO THE DENTAL HYGIENE PROFESSION IN ONTARIO

This Career Map is written for graduates of dental hygiene programs which have not been accredited by the Commission on Dental Accreditation of Canada or by the American Dental Association Commission on Dental Accreditation.

The practice of “dental hygiene” is defined in the *Dental Hygiene Act, 1991* as follows:

“... the assessment of teeth and adjacent tissues and treatment by preventive and therapeutic means and the provision of restorative and orthodontic procedures and services.”

The dental hygiene profession is regulated in the Province of Ontario by the College of Dental Hygienists of Ontario (CDHO), an organization that is responsible for regulating the practice of dental hygiene in the interest of the overall health and safety of the public. To practise dental hygiene in Ontario you must be registered with the CDHO. **Only registrants of the CDHO can legally use the term “dental hygienist”, or a variation or abbreviation of the term, in this province.**

The practice of dental hygiene is regulated under the *Regulated Health Professions Act, 1991*, and *Dental Hygiene Act, 1991*. All registered dental hygienists in Ontario must comply with a number of regulations. The CDHO provides applicants with copies of legislation and guidelines related to the practice of dental hygiene in the province.

The CDHO registers dental hygienists for practice only within Ontario. There are three classes of certificates of registration offered by the CDHO:

General – This category applies to those dental hygienists who meet the registration requirements and do not hold a specialty.

Specialty – This applies to someone who has taken an approved course of study in restorative dental hygiene.

Inactive – This is usually held by registrants who are taking some time away from practice; for example, a maternity leave. You cannot practise dental hygiene in Ontario while holding an inactive certificate of registration.

There are approximately 9,050 active registered dental hygienists in Ontario. They perform some or all of the following procedures in a variety of health care settings, including private practice, long-term care, public health, education, research and administration:

- implement the dental hygiene process of care which includes conducting an initial dental hygiene assessment, planning treatment, implementing the plan and evaluating the treatment

- consult with other health care providers on patient care
- take dental impressions
- instruct patients regarding oral hygiene procedures and disease prevention
- clean above and below the gums to prevent gum disease
- remove stains and deposits from teeth to prevent tooth and root decay
- apply fluoride and/or other therapeutic treatments
- take and develop X-rays
- may perform restorative and orthodontic procedures in collaboration with a dentist
- may work collaboratively with dental assistants, denturists, dental technicians, and or dentists in their health care functions

In Ontario, dental hygiene is considered a separate and distinct health profession from dentistry. If you are a dentist and are interested in dental hygiene as an alternative please contact an educational institute which offers an approved program in dental hygiene. There is a listing of approved institutions at the end of this document.

Different countries and regions use different terminology to describe dental hygiene and related occupations. For example, the term “dental therapist” is used in the Canadian provinces of Saskatchewan and Manitoba, and in the territories, to describe someone who may perform many of the same procedures as a dental hygienists but who can also drill and fill cavities. While “dental therapists” and “dental hygienists” may have overlapping skills, they are registered separately in these regions of the country and the titles are not interchangeable.

Dental hygienists work with dentists in a variety of practice settings, for example private practice, long-term care, education, research and administration. They may also work with the military and with public health departments. Dental hygienists work with patients of all ages. Work hours are generally 9:00 a.m. to 5:00 p.m. Evening and Saturday work may be necessary to meet the needs of patients.

Dental hygienists may be employed by one dentist or facility or may work for more than one dentist or facility during their work week. In Ontario, if dental hygienists contract their services to a dentist, they are required to meet self-employment criteria set by the Canada Revenue Agency. In some provinces, dental hygienists are restricted from owning their own business, stand-alone clinic or mobile practice offering service to the public, by a legislative requirement. Dental hygienists in Ontario may own their own businesses. Certain procedures cannot begin without an order from a dentist.

ENTRY-TO-PRACTICE REQUIREMENTS IN ONTARIO

The CDHO is responsible for making sure that you meet all the current registration requirements of the CDHO before you are permitted to register as a dental hygienist in Ontario. In accordance with Section 31(1)1 of Regulation 537/99 made under the *Dental Hygiene Act*, you must have graduated from at least a two-year recognized accredited dental hygiene program. You may also have graduated from a program the Registration Committee of the CDHO considers equivalent. There are no exceptions to this rule.

The CDHO supports the Commission on Dental Accreditation of Canada. This body determines which educational institutions in Canada are accredited. The Commission has a reciprocal agreement with a U.S. accreditation authority. This means that they agree on which Canadian and American institutions are accredited.

APPLICATION PROCESS

Before You Immigrate to Canada

The CDHO will accept and process an application for registration from an applicant from a foreign country. All applications are treated in the same manner and must meet the requirements as specified in this document.

When You Arrive in Ontario

You may choose to wait until you have arrived in Ontario to begin your application to the CDHO.

Steps

In order to receive an application package you must

- submit a written request for the package to be sent to you
- provide the name of the educational institution where you studied dental hygiene and the date of graduation.

This request can be sent to

The College of Dental Hygienists of Ontario

69 Bloor Street East, Suite 300

Toronto, ON M4W 1A9

Fax: 416.961.6028

Email: deputyregistrar@cdho.org

The CDHO does not provide informal assessments. Completed applications are reviewed to find out whether you meet the current registration requirements. You must complete the entire form and include the appropriate documents.

Application files are confidential and information can only be provided to you, the applicant. You must provide CDHO with your written authorization before it will release information to a third party (for example, an employer, spouse or agency).

This chart describes all the documents you need to submit to the College. All documents submitted in languages other than English or French must include official translations. These translations can be done in Ontario or overseas.

Form	Title	Description
Form A	Application for Registration as a Dental Hygienist in Ontario	<p>Submit a completed and notarized form.</p> <p>Form A includes a section on professional liability insurance. This insurance can be obtained from the Canadian Dental Hygienists Association, 1-800-267-5235; the Ontario Dental Hygienists Association, 1-800-315-ODHA, or Pottruff & Smith Insurance Brokers, 1-888-768-8001 x 384. You may also contact a broker of your choice.</p> <p>Please note that all registrants holding a general certificate must maintain a minimum of \$250,000 in professional liability insurance. You should wait to obtain your professional liability insurance until your application has been approved if your application has been referred to the Registration Committee.</p>
Form B	Certificate of Professional Conduct	<p>This form is completed by the regulatory body in any jurisdiction in which you practised dental hygiene or any other regulated profession and sent directly to the CDHO. This form must be current and submitted within the three months before you register, unless you have not practised in that jurisdiction since the form was received by the CDHO.</p>
Form C	Certificate of Dean or Principal of College/University Granting Diploma/Degree in Dental Hygiene	<p>A representative from your college of graduation completes this form and sends it directly to the CDHO along with an official transcript of your results.</p>
Form D	Authorization to Release Information	<p>This form authorizes the CDHO to verify or obtain additional information related to your</p>

		application.
Form E	Confirmation of Attendance at CDHO Jurisprudence Presentation	Take this form to the Jurisprudence presentation you are attending. A CDHO representative will sign it there.
- OR - Form E1	Declaration to Attend a Jurisprudence Presentation given by a Representative of the College of Dental Hygienists of Ontario Prior to Registration	By signing and submitting this form you are promising to attend a Jurisprudence presentation before you register.
Form F	Declaration that Application Expires within one year	By signing and submitting this form you are promising to participate in the CDHO certificate of registration examinations within one year of being considered eligible to do so.
		A notarized copy of your degree/diploma in dental hygiene
		A notarized copy of the National Dental Hygiene Certification Board certificate or a letter indicating that you are not eligible to sit their examination.
		A notarized copy of your Canadian birth certificate, current Canadian passport, citizenship card or permanent residency papers or authorization under the <i>Immigration and Refugee Protection Act (Canada)</i> .
		A notarized copy of the documentation to support a name change, if applicable.
		Registration Application Checklist

Appeals

An applicant whose course of study is not considered equivalent by the Registration Committee can request a review of the decision from the Health Professions Appeal and Review Board.

Equivalency Assessment Process

Step 1 — Assessing Academic Qualifications

You must first have the National Dental Hygiene Certification Board (NDHCB) assess your course of study and determine whether or not you are eligible to take its national examination. If you are eligible to take the national examination you are not required to

have your course of study assessed again by the Registration Committee of the CDHO. Contact information for the NDHCB is listed at the end of this document.

If you are not eligible to take the NDHCB examination, you can request that your application be referred to the Registration Committee of the CDHO for consideration.

In this case, you must arrange for your college of graduation to send an original, detailed course description directly to the CDHO. Note that the course description must relate to your years of study.

This course description will include

- a detailed description of all the subjects taught within your course of study
- the number of hours spent in each subject
- the number of clinical hours actually spent on scaling, root planing and prophylaxis procedures
- how many and what types of clients you were required to perform these procedures on during your course of study

It takes approximately three months for the Registration Committee of the CDHO to assess the course of study and come to a decision once it has received the completed application form and all the required documentation.

The assessment fee is \$250. If your application is successful, the CDHO will credit this amount towards your initial certificate of registration fee.

Step 2 — Examinations

There are two kinds of examinations: written certification and clinical competency assessment.

a) written certification examination

This examination is offered by the National Dental Hygiene Certification Board. You will find their contact information at the end of this document. Do this examination first.

If you are not considered eligible to sit the NDHCE and the Registration Committee considers your course of study equivalent, you will be required to successfully complete a provincial examination.

b) clinical competency assessment

If you have graduated from a non-accredited dental hygiene program you are required to successfully complete a provincial clinical competency assessment. The Registration Committee of the CDHO will set or approve this assessment.

You will be eligible to complete the clinical competency assessment if

- you have already successfully completed the NDHCB written certification examination; or
- your course of study has been approved by the Registration Committee and you have successfully completed the provincial written examination.

This examination is held at least once a year. You may try up to four times to pass. If you do not pass the first time you may try again two more times not more than two years after the failure unless you show the Registration Committee that you have taken upgrading. In that case you may retake the examinations more than two years after you have failed.

If you do not pass the third time you must show the Registration Committee that you have taken upgrading. The Committee can decide to let you take the examination one more time.

If you do not pass on the fourth attempt you may not try again until you have obtained another diploma from a dental hygiene program acceptable to the Registration Committee. Every time you obtain the kind of diploma described above you become eligible to write the examinations four times.

Step 3 — Registration

Please note the following registration requirements for a general certificate of registration:

1. If you have previously practised dental hygiene or another profession you must satisfy the CDHO that there has been no finding of, or current proceeding involving allegations of, professional misconduct, incompetence or incapacity or any like finding or proceeding against you that affects your fitness to practise the profession.
2. You must satisfy the CDHO that you have not been convicted or charged with, and not found “not guilty” of an offence that affects your fitness to practise the profession.
3. You must be a Canadian citizen or a holder of a permanent resident status in Canada or be authorized under the *Immigration and Refugee Protection Act* (Canada) to engage in the practice of the profession.
4. You must be able to speak and write either English or French with reasonable fluency.

5. If you completed your dental hygiene program more than three years before you apply for registration with the CDHO you must successfully complete a refresher course or professional competency assessment set or approved by the Registration Committee, unless you have been practising dental hygiene in a recognized jurisdiction.

Language Proficiency Assessment

The CDHO requires you to have reasonable fluency in either English or French. This is assessed informally through your ability to successfully complete the written examination(s) and clinical competency assessment.

Occupational Training and Upgrading

You may not have practised dental hygiene within the three years before you apply to the CDHO and in a jurisdiction recognized by the CDHO. In this case, you must successfully complete a refresher course or professional competency assessment.

Make sure that you check with the CDHO before you take a refresher course to make sure that it is approved.

The NDHCB provides a guide and sample questions to assist a candidate prepare for its exam. There are individual dental hygiene educators who may contract with applicants to help them prepare for examinations.

The CDHO Quality Assurance Program provides guidelines for continuing education.

LABOUR MARKET INFORMATION

The labour market information for dental hygienists in Ontario varies according to where you would like to work. In general, jobs are more limited in the communities in which there are accredited schools. This is because graduates tend to find a job and remain near where they went to school.

The employment outlook is currently listed as “good” in Barrie, Halton, Peel, Hamilton, Toronto and York Region. The employment outlook is listed as “limited” in the Niagara area, Owen Sound, Collingwood, Walkerton and the Thunder Bay area.

Employment possibilities will continue to look fairly good to 2009 across the country because of Canada’s trend towards a growing and aging population that requires more health services. Canadians also tend to have more dental insurance coverage than before. The number of dentists hiring a dental hygienist is increasing and the number of dental hygienists per office is also rising. In addition, recent legislative changes permit dental hygienists more flexibility in where they can provide their services.

Technological advancements in dental health are resulting in the introduction of new procedures, such as laser teeth whitening

Figures from 2005 show that the average hourly wage for dental hygienists across Ontario was \$33.75. For more information on labour market conditions see

- www.labourmarketinformation.ca – You can search by city in Ontario to obtain more detailed information about what is happening in different areas of the province.
- www.jobfutures.ca

This information is also available at public libraries or Employment Resource Centres in your community.

FEES AND COSTS (in Canadian dollars)

The following is a general indication of costs required to become registered. These prices may be subject to change.

Your cheque or money order must be in Canadian funds, payable to the CDHO. The CDHO does not accept credit card or debit card payments.

Initial Application Fee	\$ 75.00
Assessment of Course of Study Fee**	\$250.00
Examination Fees	
CDHO Provincial written examination.....	\$ 75.00
CDHO clinical competency assessment	\$500.00
Annual Certification Fee – General Certificate	\$250.00
Annual Certification Fee – Specialty Certificate	\$250.00
Annual Certification Fee – Inactive Certificate	\$ 50.00

** If your application is successful, the CDHO will credit the assessment fee towards your initial certificate of registration fee.

FOR MORE INFORMATION

For more information on registration requirements in Ontario contact

College of Dental Hygienists of Ontario
69 Bloor Street East, Suite 300
Toronto, Ontario, M4W 1A9
Telephone: (416) 961-6234
Toll Free: 1-800-268-2346
Fax: (416) 961-6028
E-mail: deputyregistrar@cdho.org
Web site: www.cdho.org

For information on courses visit

www.cdho.org/Registration_EducationalInstitutions.htm

If you are applying to a private dental hygiene program in Ontario and would like to know the status of this program contact the Ministry of Training, Colleges & Universities, Private Institutions Branch at (416) 314-0500 or visit www.serviceontario.ca/pcc/default.htm.

For more information on professional associations contact

The Canadian Dental Hygienists Association
96 Centrepointe Drive
Ottawa, Ontario, K2G 6B1
Telephone: (613) 224-5515
Toll Free: 1-800-267-5235
Fax: (613) 224-7283
E-mail: info@cdha.ca
Web site: www.cdha.ca

Ontario Dental Hygienists' Association
201 – 3425 Harvester Road
Burlington, Ontario, L7N 3N1
Telephone: (905) 681-8883
Toll Free: 1-800-315-6342
Fax: (905) 681-3922
E-mail: info@odha.on.ca
Web site: www.odha.on.ca

For more information on the National Dental Hygiene Certification Board contact

The National Dental Hygiene Certification Board
1929 Russell Road, Suite 322
Ottawa, Ontario, K1G 4G3
Telephone: (613) 260-8156
Fax: (613) 260-8511
E-mail: exam@ndhcb.ca
Web site: www.ndhcb.ca

For information on where and how to get help with settlement in Ontario visit www.settlement.org or contact

Ontario Council of Agencies Serving Immigrants (OCASI)
110 Eglinton Avenue West, Suite 200
Toronto, Ontario
M4R 1A3
Telephone: (416) 322-4950
Fax: (416) 322-8084
E-mail: ocasi@web.net
Web site: www.web.net/~ocasi

For information about accessing health related professions in Ontario contact

Health Force Ontario
Access Centre for Internationally Educated Professionals
Ryerson University
285 Victoria Street, 7th floor
Toronto, ON M5B 1W1
Tel. 416-314-4409 or 1-800-596-4046
TTY. 416-598-5964
Fax. 416-598-5968
Email. accesscentre@healthforceontario.ca
Website. www.healthforceontario.ca

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