



Entry-to-Practice Canadian Competencies for Dental Hygienists (EPCCoDH)

The EPCCoDH project launched in December 2019 and is developing a single up-to-date set of national entry-to-practice (EtP) competencies for dental hygienists (DHs), building from those developed in 2010. The Federation of Dental Hygiene Regulators of Canada (FDHRC) has appointed CamProf Inc as consultants after a competitive tender process. It is anticipated that the new competencies will be used across Canada for a wide variety of purposes, including:

- Comparing DH credentials, including internationally;
- Designing educational DH programs, accreditation, examinations/assessments and continuing professional development offerings;
- Regulating DHs at entry-to-practice, re-entry and continuing competence;
- Providing orientation and on-boarding of new staff;
- Managing performance and identifying training needs.

They will be used by a variety of stakeholders: regulators, educators, examiners, employers, individual DHs and those seeking to practise as DHs in Canada.

In spite of the Covid-19 crisis, the project has made substantial progress:

- After a nation-wide recruitment which attracted 52 applications, Paula Benbow, MPH, RDH, was appointed as a subject matter expert to join the CamProf Inc consultancy team;
- Seven key informants who represent regulatory bodies, educational institutions, professional associations, certifying and accrediting boards have been interviewed to inform the development of the new competencies;
- Sixteen dental hygienists representing the spectrum of practice have been assembled from across Canada as an Expert Working Group (EWG);
- A 3-day workshop was held with the EWG in Toronto from March 13-15, 2020. The purpose of this workshop was to draft the initial competencies;
- The EWG continued to work on the draft competencies remotely by videoconference in the following weeks.

The CamProf team will finalize the first draft of the profile, and solicit feedback from members of the FDHRC and its stakeholders over the next few months.

During the summer, the project will carry out a bilingual Validation Survey with all Canadian registered dental hygienists, giving them a chance to comment on the draft competencies before they are finalized. This will enable the project to finish by the end of the year.

The FDHRC is committed to advancing the dental hygiene profession through a multi-stakeholder development approach of these national competencies. This collaborative approach will produce a set of competencies that will be relevant and beneficial for a wide variety of stakeholders. The FDHRC would like to thank everyone who has been involved in this important project and for their commitment to the dental hygiene profession.

Stacy Bryan, RDH, Dip DH, MA Lead

Registrar, College of Dental Hygienists of Nova Scotia
Chair, Federation of Dental Hygiene Regulators of Canada