



*The College is updating its documents to reflect the transition to regulation under the Health Professions Act and College Bylaws. The principles and requirements outlined in all documents continue to apply to dentists and CDAs.*

## **POLICY STATEMENT**

### **Infected/Affected Dentists & Certified Dental Assistants**

This policy describes how the College will work with dentists and certified dental assistants (CDAs) and applicants for registration or certification who report a physical or mental disease or condition that has substantially affected or may, over time, substantially affect their ability to practise safely or competently. Reporting of such conditions is mandatory and an important ethical responsibility compatible with the Code of Ethics, (Section 5 e):

*Duties to the public. Registrants owe a duty of service to the public, and, in rendering that service, must strive to maintain high standards of integrity and ethical behaviour. Service to the public includes, but is not limited to, the following:*

- (e) Reporting requirements. A registrant must report to the Registrar, without delay, any conduct or practice of a registrant which raises a substantial question as to a violation of the Code of Ethics, or as to whether the registrant has provided, is providing, or will provide competent, safe and appropriate dental care to patients.*

The policy is based on current scientific knowledge and is designed with the purpose of protecting the public while being fair and not unduly restrictive to the individual practitioner involved. It will be reviewed as any new scientific information becomes available.

### **Features of the Policy**

1. An Expert Panel is formed to deal specifically and confidentially with the infected/affected dentist/CDA;
2. The Panel will include the dentist's/CDA's personal physician, experts in the field of the dentist's/CDA's disease/condition, and dentists and/or CDAs who are knowledgeable about this issue who could provide the dental expertise necessary to advise a dentist/CDA about altering his/her practice habits;
3. The Panel will provide advice and direction to the infected/affected dentist/ CDA regarding patient care in which he/she is involved. The Panel also will assist the dentist/CDA to determine if or when, in the interests of the public, it might be appropriate to modify or leave dental practice due to disability.

October 2003

**Confidentiality Assured**

Strict confidentiality will be maintained to protect the co-operating infected/affected dentist/CDA. Access to the administration of the file is limited to the registrar or the registrar's designate. Written information provided to the Panel will have identifying features about the dentist/CDA removed.

Every attempt will be made to deal with dentists/CDAs compassionately and helpfully rather than punitively.

**Information, Advice and Assistance Available**

Dentists/CDAs with potentially debilitating mental or physical conditions or diseases are urged to contact the College for more information, advice or assistance. Please direct your calls to the registrar.