

# FOCUS

for Ontario Dental Hygienists

Research corner

Student column



**DIABETES**

CEO's message

IPAC column

Professional development

**odha**  
Ontario Dental Hygienists' Association

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MEMBERSHIP REGISTRATION IS OPEN  
2023-2024 Membership October Perks



Gingival Health - A New Approach to an Old Problem

# CEO'S MESSAGE

Marg Harrington, MHS, MHE  
Chief Executive Officer



Happy Fall!

I have always taken the change in seasons as a signal to pause and reflect on the potential opportunities that may lie ahead. As I write this message, I am reflecting on what an exciting time it is in the area of oral health care. I believe so many wonderful opportunities are coming for dental hygienists in Ontario.

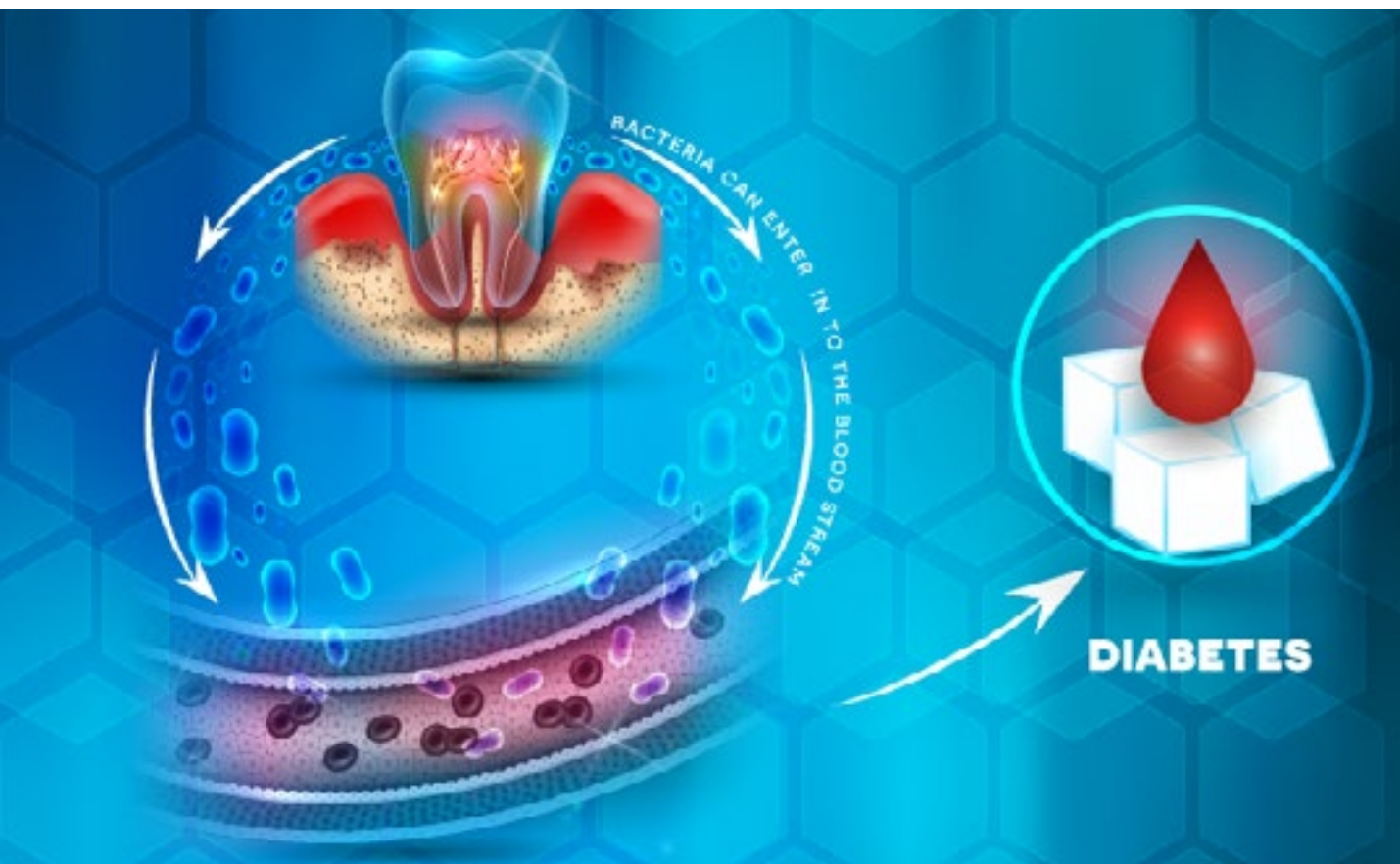
Last week, the Council of the College of Dental Hygienists of Ontario (CDHO) rescinded the Standard for Authorization to Self-Initiate Profession Specific Acts. All registered dental hygienists are now authorized to perform the controlled act of scaling and root planing on their own initiative, subject to the contraindications set out in the Contraindications Regulation. The council's decision recognizes all dental hygienists, at entry to practice, possess the competence to make clinical decisions related to self-initiation. To support this change, the CDHO has developed new resources to support registrants in making decisions to self-initiate. As noted during the CDHO's Council meeting, these resources will support dental hygienists in "building their confidence, not competence, to self-initiate." Please visit the [College's website](#) to learn more. ODHA applauds CDHO's decision, which we believe helps remove barriers to access to care for all clients across Ontario. We congratulate the CDHO on making this important decision!

Another initiative to remove barriers to care is the rollout of the Canada Dental Care Program (CDCP). Once fully implemented, it is estimated the CDCP will support up to 9 million uninsured Canadians with an annual family net income of less than \$90,000 in getting the oral health care they may not have been able to afford. I have met with the Ministry of Health staff in the spring to discuss the alignment of the federal initiative with the provincially funded oral health programs, emphasizing the need to streamline the two initiatives. We have also emphasized the need to focus on prevention, thereby directing attention to upstream approaches to oral health.

Another important opportunity for dental hygienists lies in the discussions ODHA is having with key stakeholders in the long-term care (LTC) sector. In the spring, Carolyn Weiss (RDH), Lynda McKeown (RDH), and I presented to the two provincial long-term care associations (Ontario Long-Term Care Association and AdvantAGE) about how dental hygienists can improve the oral health of residents in LTC. We are excited these associations have invited us back this fall to continue these discussions about the importance of oral health to overall health and how we can work together to benefit their residents, the staff of the LTC facilities, and the health system in general.

Exciting times for registered dental hygienists!





## Research corner

# DIABETES AND ORAL HEALTH

Kim Ivan, RDH, BIS (Hon) is an award-winning dental hygienist with over 38 years of dental hygiene and leadership experience. She is a long-time member and volunteer of ODHA serving in various capacities including former president. Currently, Kim is ODHA's Policy Advisor and Chair of the Research Advisory Board.

### Periodontal treatment for glycemic control in people with diabetes

Diabetes is a serious chronic disease characterized by elevated blood glucose levels due to impaired insulin secretion, defective insulin action, or both. Complications from long-term hyperglycemia include cardiovascular disease, neuropathy, nephropathy, and retinopathy. Glycemic control is a key component in diabetes management. Studies have shown evidence of a bidirectional relationship between glycemic control and periodontitis.



The recent update of the [Cochrane review of periodontitis treatment and glycemic control](#) reported periodontal treatment using subgingival instrumentation significantly improves glycemic control in individuals with periodontitis and diabetes compared with no treatment or usual oral health care.

#### Why this study is important:

- Reinforces the significance of periodontal health in diabetes management.
- Demonstrates the potential for clients to improve glycemic control through treating their periodontitis and the essential role of dental hygienists in educating and treating clients.
- Emphasizes the need for communication between oral health and medical professionals to facilitate appropriate treatment to minimize risk of diabetes complications.

Similarly, research reveals treating periodontitis [reduces C-reactive protein](#), with comparable inflammatory response between [hand and ultrasonic instrumentation](#). However, hand instrumentation may be [superior in reducing periodontal pocket depths](#).

To complement your client education, access the ODHA fact sheet on '[Diabetes and Oral Health](#).'

### Toothbrushing and glycemic control

A [systematic scoping review](#) found twice-daily toothbrushing was associated with better glycemic control and oral health, and interventions to improve toothbrushing were associated with improvements in glycemic control and oral health in type 2 diabetes.



#### Why I like this study:

- Establishes toothbrushing as an additional strategy to complement healthy diet, exercise, and healthy body weight to help manage type 2 diabetes.
- Demonstrates coaching clients to improve oral self-care is more effective than simply educating them about toothbrushing.

To enhance your learning on diabetes, listen to [Conversations with Dr. Glogauer and Kim Ivan](#):

- Episode 91 for types, complications, and risk factors.
- Episode 93 for diagnosis, treatment, and prevention of office medical emergencies.
- Episode 94 for the relationship with oral health.

Access Dental Hygiene Newswire for additional resources on diabetes and oral health:

- [Oral health associated with incident diabetes](#)
- [Better oral hygiene linked to lower diabetes risk](#)
- [Low education associated with poor periodontal status in type 2 diabetes](#)
- [Association between diabetes and dental implant complications](#)

Disclaimer: Research corner is not intended to provide clinical advice nor should it be used as a replacement for professional dental or medical advice. Dental hygienists are encouraged to consult with CDHO practice advisors and refer to CDHO guidelines. Dental hygienists are responsible for the decisions they make and for the consequences associated with those decisions.

### Event recap – 2023 Educators' Forum



ODHA organizes an annual Educators' Forum, which is designed to gather educators from all Ontario dental hygiene programs. The 2023 event was hosted at Fanshawe College in London and was co-chaired by faculty from Fanshawe College and Southern Ontario Dental College. Over 40 educators from nine dental hygiene programs attended this full day of learning and collaborating, with a focus on diversity, equity and inclusion, and building these principles into the dental hygiene curriculum. Past topics have included curriculum design, community outreach, teaching methodologies and motivating students. This event generated very positive feedback. Planning for 2024 has begun, and all dental hygiene programs will receive a save the date notice soon.

### Committee members needed for New Grad Advisory Panel

We know new graduates of dental hygiene programs have unique needs and concerns: Finding and applying for jobs, entering the workforce, gaining experience and confidence, and connecting with other dental hygienists, to name a few.

ODHA is enhancing its support for these members by launching the New Grad Advisory Panel. If you graduated from a dental hygiene program within the past two years and want an opportunity to voice your thoughts on what supports are needed by new dental hygiene graduates, we invite you to apply. Applications will open in November 2023. Together, we will work to continuously ease the transition from school to practice.

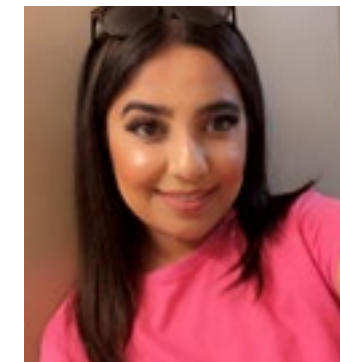


## STUDENT AMBASSADOR PROFILE - AEMAN AEMAN

Cambrian College of Applied Arts & Technology

Why do you want to become a dental hygienist?

I am passionate about oral health and helping people maintain healthy smiles. I believe dental hygiene plays a crucial role in overall well-being, and I want to make a positive impact on clients' lives by providing the knowledge and care they need to achieve and maintain good oral health.



What do you like to do for entertainment?

I find fulfillment in various ways, including physical activity like running and trying new sports, which keeps me fit and relaxed. I also have a passion for travel, allowing me to explore different cultures and landscapes for personal growth. Additionally,

What type of practice setting do you hope to work in?

I am open to various practice settings, but I am particularly interested in working in a private dental office where I can build long-term relationships with clients and provide personalized care. I also have an interest in public health initiatives and may consider working in a community health clinic to reach underserved populations. Additionally, I am dedicated to completing my dental hygiene degree and have ambitions to venture into teaching within the field as well.

amid the stress of dental hygiene school, I rely on mindfulness and meditation for calm and balance. These practices are essential for my well-being as they help manage stress effectively during the demanding academic and clinical aspects of my education.

Tell us a fun fact about yourself.

A fun fact about me is I love dedicating my free time to working with young students and educators across Canada and providing STEM (Science, Technology, Engineering, and Mathematics) education. I volunteer at schools, organize workshops, and engage in community programs to make science and technology exciting and accessible to them. Witnessing the spark of curiosity and understanding in young minds is incredibly rewarding. I'm passionate about empowering the next generation with the tools to tackle real-world challenges and foster a lifelong love for learning. This is a fulfilling endeavour!

Tell us about your best study tip or technique.

One of my most effective study technique is creating a structured study schedule. I break down my study materials into manageable sections and allocate specific time slots for studying and reviewing. Consistency in my study routine helps me stay organized and ensures I cover all necessary topics before exams. I consistently put in a tremendous amount of effort and commit substantial hours to both my academic pursuits and professional responsibilities. This dedication is a fundamental aspect of my approach to achieving my goals and excelling in my chosen field.



# PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT

## Free online course for members

### Gingival Health: A New Approach to an Old Problem

Presented by Dr. Thomas Nguyen, DMD and Robert D'Ambrogio, BS, sponsored by [Colgate](#).

This course will review the bacterial etiology of gingivitis and other factors, such as systemic diseases, medications, and malnutrition. Clinical signs for both gingivitis and periodontitis will be discussed and a close look at the pathogenesis of periodontal disease will be presented.

Recent concepts about periodontal disease will be presented, along with research about the natural progression of the disease and the consequences of not receiving treatment.



## PD in-person event - Oct. 13, 2023

Presented by Kerry Lepicek, RDH

A powerful in-person half day of professional development is being held in partnership with [Crest+Oral-B](#), [OraVital](#) and [VOCO](#): A Modern Day Approach to Oral Disease Detection and Management.

The [seminar](#) will be held on Friday, October 13th, from 8:00 a.m. to 12:00 p.m. at the Nottawasaga Inn in Alliston.



\* Registration is full. Watch out for the next PD event in spring 2024.

## New online course is coming soon

### It's All in Your Head: Oral Health and Brain Health

Presented by Jo-Anne Jones, RDH, sponsored by [Philips](#)

Over 747,000 Canadians are living with Alzheimer's or another form of dementia. The global picture is sobering, with over 44 million people living with dementia, which is more than the entire population of Canada. This is a health crisis. How is this connected with oral health? In this course, Jo-Anne Jones, an international and award-winning speaker, will discuss:



- The significant incidence of Alzheimer's and population trends in Canada;
- explain the biological pathway in which periodontal pathogens can exacerbate degenerative changes in the brain; and
- the role of the dental hygienist in promoting the importance of oral health and advocacy for overall health.



This article is provided by Orascope for ODHA members interested in Orascope loupe products, which are offered with discount as a member benefit.

**Q:** Is it essential to have an Orascope loupe fitting conducted in-person?

**A:** Yes, this is essential. We do all our demonstrations as in-person appointments, giving our customers the opportunity to try on all types of magnification, frames and headlights so as to be able to make a more informed decision on what products are right for them. After deciding on the best suited products, we take custom measurements, including working distance and inter-pupillary distance to ensure optimal fit for visual acuity and correct ergonomic positioning.

You can schedule your own complimentary [demo appointment](#) by visiting [our website](#).

**Q:** Does Orascope have a money back guarantee?

**A:** Yes, all of our products come with a 45-day trial period which starts when you have the products in-hand. If you are not satisfied with the product, you can make any changes, exchanges or refunds within the 45-day trial period. Loupes are a long-term investment in your overall career and health which you will use on a daily basis, we want to help ensure you are 100% happy with your decision.

**Q:** What are Orascope's warranties?

**A:** Our loupes have a limited lifetime warranty on the telescopes and each of our standard loupe frames features a 3-year warranty. In regard to our headlight systems, there's a three-year warranty on wired headlight components, a two-year warranty on our Spark wireless headlight and a one-year warranty on the headlight battery packs. To access more information about our warranties, please visit [our website](#).

**Q:** Does Orascope offer eye prescriptions in their loupes and prescription changes?

**A:** Yes, we build eye prescriptions into our loupes free of charge for the first time and we do offer future prescription changes as well. Those are free for dental hygiene students and have a charge for non-students.

**Q:** Does mounting an Orascope headlight to Orascope loupes add a lot of weight?

**A:** Adding an Orascope headlight to your loupes only adds about ten grams of weight if wired and around 30 grams of weight if wireless. If you are really sensitive to weight, we would recommend our Dragonfly loupes as an option, which features an all-in-one loupe and light frame that counterbalances the weight of the loupes towards the back of the head, taking pressure off of the nose. Check out our Dragonfly loupes at: <https://www.orascope.com/en-ca/dragonfly-rdh>.

**Q:** What is the battery life of Orascope headlights?

**A:** Our wired headlight options feature batteries that last longer with our regular Endeavour battery lasting up to 18 hours and our Endeavour XL battery lasting up to 24 hours. Our wireless products, Spark and Dragonfly feature batteries run between three and four hours.

**Q:** What accessories come with an Orascope loupe?

**A:** All loupes come with a head strap, side shields, carrying case, cleaning cloth, anti-fog cloth and optical screwdriver. Our headlights come with a curing filter, charger and carrying case as well.

**Q:** Does Orascope have a local Ontario representative?

**A:** Yes, we have a local Ontario representative based in Toronto. Her name is Alexandra Buffone and she can be reached at 416.556.4425 or [Alexandra.Buffone@envistaco.com](mailto:Alexandra.Buffone@envistaco.com).





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## AUTUMN, IS IT TIME TO AUDIT YOUR PRACTICE?

It has been four years of change and uncertainty working through the SARS-CoV-2 pandemic. Now it feels like there may be a light at the end of the tunnel! A new vaccine, the Moderna Spikevax COVID-19 vaccine has just been approved by Health Canada.<sup>1</sup> The College of Dental Hygienists of Ontario<sup>2</sup> has announced the amalgamation of their Revised Infection Prevention and Control (IPAC) Guidance: COVID-19 document and its IPAC Guidelines into one document that was developed in collaboration with the three other Ontario oral health profession regulators (dentists, denturists and dental technologists) to align changes in IPAC guidance.

As preparations begin for the fall respiratory season, is your practice ready?

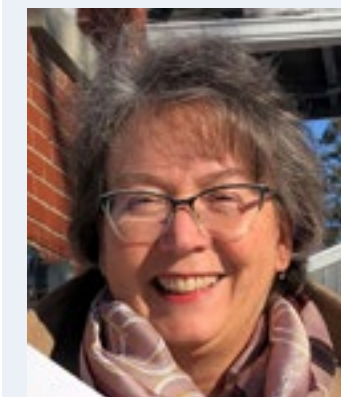
Have you considered auditing your practice? The “purpose of [an] audit is to measure clinical performance against an agreed standard and use the results to improve practice.”<sup>3</sup> Audit and feedback have been found to improve the quality of client care.<sup>4</sup> Whether you audit to assess the overall function of the practice or you target your audits (e.g., personal protective equipment use, environmental cleaning) the process is the same.

Planning is key. During planning involve those who may be affected by the audit.<sup>3</sup> Carefully consider who will perform the audit and which audit tool will be used.<sup>5,6</sup> There are a number of audit tools. To assess the entire practice consider the checklist developed by the Royal College of Dental Surgeons of Ontario, [the Self Audit Review Form Infection Prevention and Control](#).<sup>7</sup> Other options are [the IPAC Checklist for Dental Practice Core Elements](#) and [IPAC Checklist for Dental Practice Reprocessing of Dental/Medical](#)

[Equipment/Devices](#) published by Public Health Ontario.<sup>8,9</sup> If targeted auditing is the goal, your office could consider [Personal Protective Equipment \(PPE\) Auditing](#).<sup>10</sup> When auditing, ensure you have sufficient time; you are not rushed and do not collect information that is not essential for the audit.<sup>3</sup> Analyze the results and provide feedback.<sup>3,11</sup> Next, implement evidence based strategies to correct any deviations from best practices and reassess after changes have been made. The purpose of this is twofold, first to ensure the changes have been made and second to help ensure the changes are sustained.<sup>3,11</sup> Finally celebrate your success!<sup>3</sup>

Much has happened over the last four years. We are about to enter into another respiratory season with some uncertainties remaining. Consider auditing your practice to help ensure a safe place to practise and a safe place to receive care.

\* References available upon request.



Anne Augustin, MLT, CIC, is an infection prevention and control professional with over 30 years of experience. She is a member of Infection Prevention and Control Canada.

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