



## TIPS FOR RECRUITING CLIENTS FOR CLINICAL REQUIREMENTS AT SCHOOL

*Contributors: Parul Sharma, PhD; dental hygiene student at APLUS Institute and Kim Ivan, Policy Advisor, ODHA*

All dental hygiene students know that there is a long list of clinical requirements to complete before graduation. It takes three or four appointments of about four hours each to complete the work on each client, not to mention all the paperwork involved. Some students are able to find clients through their school databases and some are able to draw on family and friends to be patient and understanding clients who can commit to completing all these appointments.

For those who don't have family or friends who are local though, it can be very overwhelming to try to find strangers who are willing to act as clients and to accept the time commitment involved. Although potential clients will benefit from the thorough oral assessment and cleaning they will receive, there can be barriers to their participation, including:

- Securing enough time off work to attend lengthy appointments
- Understanding that the first couple of appointments may not involve any tooth cleaning
- Comfort level with services provided by students

---

**These, and other barriers, can make it challenging to recruit enough clients to satisfy your clinical requirements. If this is your experience, you may find more success through targeting the following groups:**

**NOTE:** Verify your school's policies about independently reaching out to prospective clients before doing so.

- **Stay at home parents.** Try contacting local businesses offering parent and baby programming, play cafes or libraries.
- **New immigrants.** Google newcomer or settlement services in your area. These services can be run by a number of different organizations, including YMCAs or Public Health programs.
- **People who are unemployed.** Search for support organizations in your area who can post or pass on your information. These organizations could include food banks, employment services, shelters, and community Facebook groups (try looking for and joining groups that offer help and services in your neighbourhood or elsewhere).
- **Other students.** Students can have more flexibility in their schedules and understand the demands of school programs. Try connecting with students from other programs at your college, as well as other nearby colleges, if applicable, and high schools.

- **Places of worship** can also be great community hubs, with dedicated areas to post local services. You may want to consider contacting nearby mosques, temples, churches or other places of worship.

Sometimes, students report that people they've approached feel nervous and unsure about where they service they're offering is legitimate. In these cases, try:

- **Referring** these potential clients to the [list of student-led dental hygiene](#) clinics on the ODHA website. This list outlines the services provided at each clinic in Ontario, along with any applicable fees. Seeing these services listed on the website of a professional association may put the prospective clients' minds at ease.
- **Purchasing printable business card templates** (from Staples or similar store) and customizing them with your school information, your name, Dental Hygiene Student title and your contact information. This gives the prospective client a point of contact for you and lends a professional feel to your interaction.