



ROUND TABLE TOPICS – presentation descriptions

IPAC I-SPY: Spotting Risks

Michelle Aube-Simmonds, RDH | Maxill, Fanshawe College, ODHA Board Member

In the early years of practice, Infection Prevention and Control decisions are often influenced by routine, time pressure, and workplace habits. Developing IPAC leadership requires the ability to quickly recognize risk, distinguish between evidence-based standards and assumption-driven practices, and respond with clarity and confidence. IPAC I-SPY: Spotting Risks is an interactive, image-based roundtable session designed to strengthen early-career Registered dental hygienists' ability to identify compliance gaps and apply evidence-informed solutions in real time. Participants will analyze a series of realistic clinical IPAC images reflective of everyday practice environments.

By the end of this session, participants will be able to:

1. Identify visible IPAC risks within common clinical environments.
2. Apply evidence-based reasoning to determine appropriate mitigation strategies.
3. Strengthen confidence in making defensible IPAC decisions in early practice settings.

Volunteering and Oral Health Outreach Opportunities

Dr. Sanjukta Mohanta, DDS | Watermelon Dental

Learn about different volunteer opportunities and how it improves your life, not just those you serve. Dr. Sanjukta Mohanta volunteers locally at Filling the Gap Dental Outreach and internationally with 1000 Smiles in the Caribbean helping people who cannot afford dental care. She volunteers with the Ontario Dental Association (ODA) and is on the board of the Canadian Association of Public Health Dentistry. She

serves remote Indigenous communities with the ODA's Remote Areas Program.

Money Matters: Building Financial Peace of Mind

Jeff Chapman, CFP, CHS | G.E. Chapman Financial Services Inc.

This session offers a practical introduction to personal finance essentials, designed with early-career professionals in mind. We'll cover the basics of managing cash flow, protecting your income and assets, and building smart savings habits from the start, including an overview of tools like RRSPs and TFSAs. Whether you're just beginning to think about your financial future or looking to build on what you already know, you'll leave having learned something you can put to use right away.

Dental Hygiene Practice Ownership (Independent Practice)

Dezarae Aldridge, RDH, OM | Dental Hygiene with Dezarae, ODHA Board Member

Curious about what it really takes to build and operate an independent dental hygiene practice? Join this interactive roundtable discussion where we'll explore the realities, rewards and challenges of practicing independently. Whether you're simply curious or already considering opening your own practice one day, this session offers an honest conversation about the journey from clinician to business owner. We'll discuss topics such as getting started, developing confidence, building a patient base, marketing your services, creating systems, managing finances, working through challenges, and balancing patient care with running a business. This is an opportunity to ask questions in a relaxed environment, hear real-life experiences, and connect with dental hygienists who have taken different paths within independent practice. We'll also discuss how independent practice can create greater flexibility, professional autonomy and opportunities to deliver comprehensive preventive care that aligns with your vision as a clinician. Whether independent practice is part of your immediate future or simply something you'd like to understand better, you'll leave with practical insights, valuable resources, and a clearer understanding of the possibilities available within our profession.

Myofunctional Therapy Q&A

Joe Siegfried, RDH | Kingsmill Dental Hygiene

Join an interactive round-table discussion designed specifically for registered dental hygienists interested in learning more about myofunctional therapy and its growing role in oral health care. Attendees will learn about education/training to be able to include myofunctional therapy in practice, how to incorporate it into your practice, and career opportunities. This will also be an opportunity for group discussion and Q&A.

RDH Career Paths - Becoming an Educator and Advanced Degrees

Cristina Gullo, MS, BS, RDH, DA | Conestoga College, Fanshawe College

Join presenter Cristina Gullo as she provides an overview of her journey through completing her dental hygiene program and master's degree, how she arrived at her teaching career, as well as what led her to decide to pursue a PhD. Bring your questions if you are thinking of continuing your education and are considering a career in education.

Beyond the Dental Chair: A Career in Public Health

Karen Richards, RDH, BScDH | Ontario Association of Public Health Dentistry

When most people think of dental hygiene, they picture clinical practice. However, public health offers a unique career path where dental hygienists can use their skills to improve the health of entire communities. From oral health programs and community outreach initiatives to leadership opportunities, acting supervisory positions, and supporting emergency response efforts during the COVID-19 pandemic, Karen's experiences highlight the diverse possibilities available within public health. Participants will learn about the role of dental hygienists in health promotion, disease prevention, health equity, school-based programs, community partnerships, and population health initiatives. The session will also explore the knowledge, skills, and competencies that support success in public health. Through examples from Peel Public Health, attendees will gain insight into how dental hygienists contribute to improving access to care, supporting vulnerable populations, and addressing oral health inequities at the community level.

RDH Career Paths – Orthodontics

Renata Albonese, RDH | Canadian Academy of Dental Health and Community Sciences, ODHA Board Member

Curious about what it's really like to work in orthodontics? Join Renata for an interactive roundtable discussion about one of the many exciting career paths available to dental hygienists. Drawing on more than 30 years in dentistry, as a dental assistant, registered dental hygienist, clinical educator, and practicing orthodontic dental hygienist, Renata will share her journey into orthodontics, discuss the education and skills that can help you build a career in the specialty, and offer practical insights from both the classroom and the clinic.

Bring your questions, your curiosity, and your enthusiasm, we'll have an open conversation about orthodontics, career opportunities, and the realities of working in this rewarding specialty.

From Doubt to Degrees: How Distance Education Changed by Academic Journey

Jennifer Barkans, RDH | Ohio State Online

Distance education can be a practical way for registered dental hygienists to enhance credentials and complete a degree without having to relocate. Presenter Jennifer Barkans will provide an overview of her experience with completing her undergraduate and master's degrees online, and will discuss some of the research she has been conducting related to the Canadian Dental Care Plan. Drawing from her own educational journey, she will discuss how she overcame her own belief that she was not a strong student and share strategies that helped her succeed in completing both undergraduate and graduate degrees.

Keeping the Spark Alive: Fueling Your Professional Fire Through Learning and Connection

Amy Currie, RRDH | President, ODHA Board of Directors

Amy Currie, President of ODHA's Board of Directors, and previous board member, speaks with experience about how to keep your enthusiasm throughout your career, the value of networking, staying engaged with your professional associations, advocating for yourself and pursuing your areas of interest.

Introduction to Interim Stabilization Therapy

Kim Lawrence, RDH, BA | Southern Ontario Dental College

Those interested in the use of interim stabilization therapy (IST) are invited to join presenter Kim Lawrence for an overview of IST (clinical application, indications, limitations), CDHO scope of practice related to temporary restorations, real-world applications, and more.

Navigating CDHO's Quality Assurance Program with Confidence

Kathleen Bokrossy, RDH, BSc | rdhu

Quality Assurance isn't just about preparing for an assessment—it's about building confidence, reflecting on your practice, and supporting your ongoing professional growth. Join Kathleen Bokrossy for an interactive discussion on the CDHO Quality Assurance Program, including the different assessment pathways, navigating the SMILE Portal, preparing your Quality Assurance portfolio, and practical strategies to make the process more manageable while helping you stay audit ready. Bring your questions and leave with greater clarity, confidence, and a plan for moving forward.