

Mosaic

THE  CANADIAN
ASSOCIATION OF PUBLIC
HEALTH DENTISTRY

ASSOCIATION  CANADIENNE
DE LA SANTÉ DENTAIRE
PUBLIQUE

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Dr. Keith Da Silva

President's Message

As always, it is an honour and privilege for me to be a part of the Canadian Association of Public Health Dentistry (CAPHD), which serves as the voice of dental public health in Canada. As I enter my second year as President, I reflect on the fact that the CAPHD has never been more relevant and important for oral health care in Canada. With the launch of the Canadian Dental Benefit, and the ongoing development of a more comprehensive Federal Dental Plan, the CAPHD and our members remain actively engaged at all levels.

This past year also saw a commitment to a new dental therapy program and the launch of the next Oral Health Component of the Canadian Health Measures Survey, both of which are critical to our work and long overdue. These changes around us, whether political, social, scientific, economic, or otherwise, require that we continue to help our profession navigate through new landscapes which will undoubtedly have a profound impact on the communities that we serve.

In this newsletter, we provide a brief glimpse of some highlights from the year, as well as a snapshot of some of the amazing work being done by our members. A special thanks to all our committee members who have contributed to this edition of the newsletter. As we move ahead into 2023, I look forward to what will be another productive year for all of us and hopefully a chance to meet again face-to-face as we move forward with the planning for an in-person annual conference!

Sincerely,

Keith Da Silva. DDS, MSc, FRCD(C)
President, Canadian Association of Public Health Dentistry



The Canadian Association of Public Health Dentistry (CAPHD) is pleased to announce Dr. Amrinderbir Singh as the association's president-elect.

Dr. Singh, who currently serves as a CAPHD board director, is an assistant professor and director of Inclusive Community Outreach at the College of Dentistry, University of Saskatchewan.

Dr. Singh's commitment to public health dentistry emphasizes responsiveness to the needs of communities. His professional work supports the development of a comprehensive, integrated and community based holistic health model and the creation of innovative opportunities to extend service and care to priority populations. As the college's Director of Inclusive Community Outreach, he oversees a network of clinics operated across Northern Saskatchewan through partnerships with communities and other contributors.

His research interests include Canadian Indigenous oral health, access to oral health-care services in Canada, spirituality and health, oral health and nutrition, patient and family-centered care, and holistic approaches to oral health.

Prior to joining USask, Dr. Singh worked in Northern Saskatchewan in different capacities as Director of Primary Health Care with Saskatchewan Health Authority and as Regional Inter-sectoral Coordinator with Northern Human Services Partnership.

He completed his Bachelor of Dental Surgery at Sri Guru Ramdas Institute of Dental Sciences and Research in India. He practiced as a dentist before completing his Master of Public Health from the University of Saskatchewan in 2015. 🍁

POLITICAL ACTION COMMITTEE (PAC) UPDATE

During 2022, the CAPHD Political Action Committee (PAC) redirected its focus to the Federal Dental Program (FDP) following the federal government's announcement of the proposed plan, which stemmed from an agreement between the NDP and Liberal government in May 2022. This initiative has the potential to positively impact many Canadians, particularly from priority populations, who experience financial barriers to accessing oral health care.

Shortly after the Federal Government announcement, the PAC was invited to attend a focus group to discuss the proposed FDP, hosted by Dr. John O'Keefe and Costa Papadopoulos on behalf of the Canadian Dental Association. We were asked a series of standardized questions and engaged in great open dialogue to discuss the proposed plan. This information was compiled together with all the focus group information gathered by the CDA and a report was shared with the PAC following completion of the project. This report was shared with the Federal government as they finalized the process for implementing the interim FDP's initial phase.

In fall of 2022, Bill C-31 was approved, and the Federal Dental Program started on December 1, 2022. The interim benefit provides direct financial support for families through income qualification verification with the CRA, for dental care services received by their children under 12 years of age in the period starting retroactively in October 2022 and ending in June 2024. The second phase of the program will commence sometime in 2023 and is purported to include seniors and youth to 18 years of age.

The PAC will be tracking these ongoing developments. The PAC supports the Federal Dental Program and will be following the newest developments closely. From a public health perspective, the PAC would like to positively contribute feedback from the CAPHD for the next phase of the program. Additionally, PAC would like to create suggestions to support CAPHD members and community private practice dentists to promote and educate their community members and patients regarding the FDP. Stay tuned! 🍁

UPDATE

New Dental Therapy Program

by Douglas Brothwell DMD, BEd, DDPH, MSc, CQM
 Professor and Lead, Dental Therapy Program
 College of Dentistry, University of Saskatchewan



It gives me great pleasure to provide an update on the progress that has been made on the new Dental Therapy Educational Program being developed by the University of Saskatchewan and its three partners (<https://dentistry.usask.ca/programs.php#DentalTherapy>). The program is on track for a Sept 2023 program start, accepting a total of 49 students into the initial cohort. Online student admissions will open on March 23, 2023. The following FAQ's provide some detail into the developing program:

What does the program endeavor to achieve?

The Mission of the new dental therapy educational program is "To develop the ideal work force to meet the oral health needs and aspirations of Canada's Indigenous people and communities."

What Partners are collaborating in the educational program?

The four equal partners in the educational program include the University of Saskatchewan, the Northern Inter-Tribal Health Authority (NITHA), Saskatchewan Polytechnic, and Northlands College.

What type of credential will graduates receive?

Graduates completing the program will receive a B.Sc. in Dental Therapy credential from the University of Saskatchewan.

Where is the program being offered?

The BSc Program is being offered in four campus locations, in Regina at the Saskatchewan Polytechnic Campus, in Saskatoon at the USask Campus, in Prince Albert at the USask PA Campus, and in La Ronge at the Northlands College Campus.

How many students will be admitted to the program each year? Is there a residency restriction?

The BSc Program will admit 21 students each year into the first year of studies (seven per campus site in Regina, Prince Albert and La Ronge), and an additional 7 students into the second year of the program in Saskatoon. The program accepts applicants from across Canada. For September 2023 only, the BSc Program will also accept up to 21 dental hygienists or Internationally-trained dentists into the second year of

studies (further details below). Starting in September 2024, the BSc Program will accept each year a limited number of dental hygienists or Internationally-trained dentists into the second year of studies (further details below).

What are the Admission Criteria?

The program has two primary options for admissions: Admission to first year is open to high school graduates with a minimum 70% average in select courses. Admission to second year is open to licensed Canadian dental hygienists who have completed an accredited dental hygiene program and to Internationally-trained dentists who have completed a minimal four-year degree in dentistry from an academic institution not recognized by CDAC.

Does the program target any groups for admission?

Eligible Indigenous applicants will be given priority for selection. Those Indigenous applicants who are sponsored by their band or other eligible organization will receive highest priority.

What is the duration of the program?

For students admitted into first year, the program requires two years of full-time study over six terms.

For dental hygienists admitted into second year, the program requires a 4 to 6 week 'Bridging Module' followed by one year of full-time study over three terms. For Internationally-trained dentists admitted into second year, the program requires one year of full-time study over three terms.

What options are there for students that leave the program early?

The BSc Program will use a multi-entry, multi-exit model where students who successfully complete the first term will be eligible to receive a Dental Aide credential from Saskatchewan Polytechnic. We continue to work on the option of a Dental Assisting Certificate for those students who leave the program after successfully completing term three.

Who provides instruction in the program?

The primary instructors in the BSc Program are eight licensed


dental therapists (not yet hired). They will be supported by USask dentists and dental specialist faculty as well as Saskatchewan Polytechnic dental hygiene faculty and instructors.

What will students learn?

The BSc Program was designed to provide instruction in the full Scope of Practice for a Dental Therapist in Saskatchewan (http://www.sdta.ca/mrws/filedriver/Scope_of_Practice.pdf). Instruction in the BSc Program uses a mix of in-person classroom, online didactic, simulated clinical care, and clinical patient care. Notably, each of the four campuses includes a high-fidelity dental haptic simulator which supports

student psychomotor learning in a virtual environment. This cutting-edge technology supports student hand skill development under a self-directed mastery-learning approach – something that is not currently available in any other oral health education program in Canada.

Will the quality of the program be externally verified?

Work continues at this time to ensure that the BSc in Dental Therapy Program achieves 'Accredited Program' status through Equal, the health education accreditation program of Accreditation Canada (<https://accreditation.ca/assessment-programs/health-education-accreditation/>). 

2022/2023 CAPHD Membership Survey Highlights

In March 2022, our Communication and Membership Committee developed and distributed an online survey to CAPHD members to help guide future planning. On behalf of the committee, I want to thank the 72 members who completed the survey and encourage those who did not get the chance to complete it to provide their valuable feedback in the future.

Almost one-half of the survey respondents were aged 50-69 years, and one-third were aged 35-49. Thirty five percent have been members of CAPHD for 6-10 years, and 33% have been members for 15 years or more. Seventy percent of the respondents held full membership, and 13% were students. 70% of those members who completed the survey were female.

Most (75%) survey respondents showed interest in attending a virtual conference in 2022 versus an inperson conference. Regarding the online conference format, more than half of the respondents preferred a series of webinars held over multiple days. The majority of participants chose universal access to dental care as the preferred topic to be featured at the 2022 conference, while oral health for seniors was the second most requested topic by members.

Regarding benefits of CAPHD membership, respondents indicated that they benefited the most from Listserv



discussions and webinars and the least from the membership directory. Almost two-thirds were satisfied or very satisfied with membership fees. Forty-five percent of respondents were satisfied with the website. Respondents expressed an interest in a more visually appealing, up-to-date website with more content, for example, recent CAPHD documents, oral health education resources and a career corner for jobs in public health dentistry. These results align with our efforts over the past several years to focus on website improvements to deliver more value to our members.

Facebook and LinkedIn were the most common social media platforms used by respondents, who requested that CAPHD should use those platforms, as well as Instagram and Twitter, to communicate with members.

Thanks go to the Communication and Membership Committee for their volunteer efforts in undertaking this survey. It is valuable feedback and will guide our next steps as we continue to improve the overall membership experience.

2022 CAPHD VIRTUAL CONFERENCE A SUCCESS!

Theme: Shaping the Future Together

Date Held: September 16, 23 & October 7, 14, 2022

A free event for CAPHD Members!

After careful consideration, the CAPHD Board of Directors decided to bring CAPHD members, for the third year in a row, a virtual conference experience. This decision was made to ensure the health and safety of CAPHD members and broader community during the COVID-19 pandemic.

The 2022 virtual event was a great success! It consisted of 4 weekly sessions accessible to CAPHD members for free. The online sessions explored a variety of topics related to oral health and dental public health in Canada. At the first session Dr. Taylor shared exciting developments in the field of oral health care and the upcoming Canadian Health Measures Survey Cycle 7. Dr. Da Silva described recent CAPHD initiatives and advocacy activities, and Dr. Doucet presented on the politics of change and the future of oral health care in Canada. The second session focused on successful programs and initiatives supporting equitable and accessible oral health care, with excellent presentations from Dr. Tom Harle, Shannon Firnkes, and Denise Kokaram.

The final 2 sessions consisted of 12 scholarly scientific presentations chosen based on abstract selection. Abstracts are available online: <https://caphd.ca/wp-content/uploads/2022/09/Abstracts2022.pdf>

Conference Program: <https://caphd.ca/wp-content/uploads/2022/09/CAPHD-2022-Conference-Program.pdf>

2022 Virtual Conference Session	# of Registrants
Oral Health Developments in Canada	69
Improving Access to Oral Healthcare	53
Scientific Session #1	64
Scientific Session #2	63

NEW WEBSITE!

In Spring 2022, the Canadian Association of Public Health Dentistry (CAPHD) launched its new website!

<https://caphd.ca>

We continue to make changes to our new website.

The new website is now mobile friendly.

Improved and more engaging experience due to behind the scenes improvements to flow and responsiveness.

As the national voice for dental public health in Canada, we are pleased to deliver content in line with the latest techniques and technology!

Thank you for supporting this community. Please share with your networks:
<https://caphd.ca>

CALL FOR SUBMISSIONS

Now accepting submissions for the Fall 2023 Issue of the Mosaic Newsletter.

To ensure that the Mosaic publication is valuable, relevant, and informative to CAPHD members, we rely on your submissions. Please consider submitting for the Fall 2023 issue!

Due Date: Articles for Fall 2023 Mosaic are due August 1, 2023.

Format: Submissions must be in .doc or .docx format.

Images: Images must be submitted as separate JPG or GIF files in high quality. Please include descriptive captions, as

required, and ensure that you include references to any images that do not belong to you. Copyright rules require written permission from the owner to publish any image. Consent must be acquired from any individuals in photos.

Author information: Please include your name and credentials, along with a short biography and photo (optional).

References: Please include an organized list of references using Vancouver citation style, if applicable.

Please email submissions and/or questions to info@caphd.ca.

CAPHD reserves the right to edit/alter articles for length or clarity. Authors will be notified of any such changes prior to publishing the newsletter. Opinions contained in this newsletter are of the authors and may not reflect the opinions of the Canadian Association of Public Health Dentistry.

CAPHD 2022 AWARD WINNERS

The CAPHD Board of Directors was pleased to announce CAPHD award recipients for 2022. **Congratulations to these valued members!**

CAPHD Merit Award

LISETTE DUFOUR, RDH SENIOR ORAL HEALTH ADVISOR



Lisette, a registered dental hygienist, has been employed by the federal government for the past 17 years. Currently, she holds the position of senior oral health advisor in the Office of the Chief Dental Officer of Canada. One of her main files is the implementation of the oral health component on the next Canadian Health Measures Survey 2022–2024 conducted by Statistics Canada in partnership with Health Canada. From 2012 to 2015, she held a management position at the Non-Insured Health Benefits Program (NIHB), where she successfully implemented the National Dental Predetermination Centre. Furthermore, Lisette has been instrumental in the implementation of the First Nations and Inuit Oral Health Survey in 2008–2010 and was highly involved with the management of the Children’s Oral Health Initiative (COHI). Prior to joining the federal public service, Lisette worked in the insurance industry as a dental claims specialist, practiced clinically for 17 years in Northern Ontario and in the National Capital Region, and taught dental hygiene part-time for 10 years while being involved with the National Dental Hygiene Certification Board.

The Merit Award recognizes the efforts of individuals and/or groups who have played a role in improving the oral health of all Canadians. These efforts can include, but are not limited to, administrative work, inter-professional education, and health promotion. Congratulations Lisette on this achievement!

CAPHD Honorary Award

DR. CHRISTOPHE BEDOS

Christophe has dedicated his career to research that tangibly improves access to dental care for those who are underserved and develops the concept of person-centred dentistry. He trained as a dentist in France and practiced there and in Africa for several years before coming to Montreal and undertaking a MSc and then PhD at Université de Montréal in community health and public health, respectively. He completed his academic training with a postdoctoral fellowship at McGill and was appointed as Assistant Professor at the Faculty of Dentistry, McGill University in 2003. Since 2017, he has been the Director of the FRQ-S funded Réseau de recherche en santé buccodentaire et osseuse (<https://www.rsbo.ca/en/>). During his time in Quebec and at the Faculty, he has made major contributions to dental public health, particularly in the area of equitable access to dental care at local, provincial, national and international levels. The Honorary Award recognizes the efforts of individuals who have made a substantive contribution to public health dentistry at the provincial or national level. Congratulations on this achievement Dr. Bedos! 🍁

2022 Annual General Meeting



On October 28, CAPHD held its 2022 Annual General Meeting. To review the annual report, meeting agenda, and/or other meeting materials, please visit the Archives section of the Members Only section on the website.

Comments from the Canadian Society for Disability and Oral Health on The Interim Canada Dental Benefit and the Proposed National Dental Care Program

“Having access to quality dental care is an integral part of overall health and wellbeing.”¹

- The Honourable Jean-Yves Duclos, P.C., M.P., Minister of Health for Canada

The [Canadian Society for Disability and Oral Health](#) (CSDH) appreciates this opportunity to comment on the status of access to oral health care for Canadians with disabilities, to describe the interim Canada Dental Benefit, and to provide our recommendations for an oral health strategy that will serve the needs of Canadians with disabilities.

Canadian adults with disabilities face enormous barriers accessing oral health care, partly because the provincial and territorial public dental programs typically pay significantly lower fees than the provincial Dental Association fee guides. For example, in the 2022 [Environmental Scan of Publicly financed Dental Care in Canada](#),² the section on British Columbia (BC)³ confirms that BC did not increase dental fees for adults with disabilities during the period 2016 to 2022, the years included in the Scan. In fact, BC has not increased dental fees for adults under the [Provincial Persons with Disability Dental Plan](#) since 2004, causing many BC dentists to refuse to treat adults with disabilities.

However, underfunded public dental insurance is only one barrier to care facing Canadians with disabilities. Canadian dental education does not include mandatory training to treat adults with disabilities and many dentists report that they feel unqualified to treat adults with disabilities.⁴ Because oral health, apart from limited exceptions, is not a part of the Canadian public health care system, hospitals provide limited access to adults with disabilities who require dental treatment under general anesthesia. Also, apart from Ontario, the provincial and territorial dental regulators have not approved dental anesthesia as a dental specialty. Consequently, adults with disabilities who require treatment under general anesthesia face additional challenges accessing medically necessary oral health care. The CSDH is taking steps to address these barriers.

CSDH Board members met with the Association of Canadian Faculties of Dentistry (ACFD) in 2022 to present “A functional model to help Canadian dental graduates care for individuals with disabilities.” The CSDH recommended to the Canadian Dental Regulatory Authorities Federation (CDRAF) that the required

competencies for a beginning dentist be enlarged to include competence to treat persons with disabilities and recommended that the CDRAF approve Dental Anesthesia as a Canadian dental specialty to improve access to treatment for persons with disabilities. The CSDH will continue this advocacy work.

Thirty-five percent of Canadians have no dental insurance, and twenty-seven percent avoid dental treatment because of the cost.⁵ In 2022, the federal Government committed to provide financial assistance to help lower-income families access dental care. In December 2022, the **Interim Canada Dental Benefit** (the Benefit)⁶ came into force, initially covering children under age 12. The Benefit provides payments to families with adjusted net annual income under \$90,000 who have no private dental insurance. The Benefit amount is inversely related to family income as follows:

- \$650 for each eligible child if the family’s adjusted net income is under \$70,000.
- \$390 for each eligible child if the family’s adjusted net income is between \$70,000 and \$79,999, and
- \$260 for each eligible child if the family’s adjusted net income is between \$80,000 and \$89,999.

The Canada Revenue Agency (CRA) administers the payments. Families must apply to the [CRA Canada Dental Benefit Program](#) for the Benefit and must attest that:

- Their child does not have access to private dental insurance,
- They have (or will have) out of pocket dental care expenses for which they will use the Benefit, and
- They understand that they may need to provide documentation to verify out of pocket expenses and that the CRA may ask them to provide receipts confirming treatment.

Health Canada advised CSDH that families may use any funds remaining after the completion of treatment to purchase oral health supplies, such as high fluoride toothpaste or electric toothbrushes, subject to families providing receipts to verify they used the Benefit for the intended purpose.

The Benefit coverage will expand during 2023 to include children under 18, seniors, and persons living with a disability. In 2025 the Benefit will apply to all age groups. The Benefit will remain in force while Health Canada works with government agencies, oral health provider organizations, educators, and dental advocates, including the CSDH, to design a national dental care program.

While the Benefit is a step forward for Canada, it will not meet the needs of persons with disabilities. The CSDH recommends that a comprehensive national oral health program for persons with disabilities include the following attributes:

- The program must focus on achieving and maintaining oral health as part of overall health and must have a seamless relationship with Canada's medical health care system.
- The program must enable practitioners to assess functional oral health, to diagnose necessary treatment, and to provide or refer for prompt treatment to achieve and maintain the patient's optimal oral health.
- All oral health treatment must be evidence-informed and patient-centred to meet the oral health needs of individual patients. Patients with a disability should have a dental home to ensure continuity of care and oversight of specialized treatment.
- The program must incorporate time-based remuneration to oral health care providers to enable practitioners to treat patients with differing functional needs and abilities.

- The program must enable patients to access a full spectrum of care, including desensitization programs and all levels of sedation, including general anesthesia where necessary, to meet the individual patient's needs.

- Canadian oral health education must incorporate special needs training from undergraduate through specialist programs.

- The program should incorporate continuing provider education and patient outreach education to incorporate the best oral health practices into the disability community.

The proposed Federal Oral Health Program for Canadians with Disabilities presents an enormous opportunity for Canada to eliminate inequitable access to quality oral health care for Canadians with disabilities. We anticipate a continued dialogue with the Ministry to achieve that goal.

Please join us at the CSDH as we continue with this work. We invite your ideas and recommendations for a Canadian dental program that ensures every Canadian can aspire to having optimal oral health. We look forward to working with you!

— Joan Rush, Advocacy Committee Chair, CSDH


¹ *Message from the Minister of Health regarding Request for Information from Industry on Proposed National Dental Care Program*, July 25, 2022

² Environmental scan of publicly financed dental care in Canada: 2022 update, commissioned by the Office of the Chief Dental Officer of Canada, June 2022.

³ *Ibid*, Section 3.2 at 28.

⁴ Meeting the Needs for Special Care Dentistry in Canada, A Report to the Canadian Dental Association and Canadian Faculties of Dentistry by CDA-ACFD Special Care in Dentistry Working Group, December 1, 2015.

⁵ [Dental Care, 2018 \(statcan.gc.ca\)](https://www150.statcan.gc.ca/n1/pub/82-625-x/2018001/article/00001-eng.htm); And see note 2 supra.

⁶ *An Act respecting cost of living relief measures related to dental care and rental housing*, Part I, Bill C-31, 1st session, 44th Parliament, October 27, 2022. 

SAVE THE DATE

CDSS/CAPHD JOINT CONFERENCE 2023

The CAPHD is happy to announce that our 2023 annual conference will be an in-person event! In partnership with the College of Dental Surgeons of Saskatchewan (CDSS), **this joint conference will take place from Friday September 22, 2023 until Sunday September 24, 2023** in Saskatoon, SK. Keep an eye on our website over the coming months for further details related to registration, accommodations, and schedule.

We hope to see you there!