

## An Update from the College of Alberta Dental Assistants President June 17, 2020

I hope you, your family and loved ones have remained safe and healthy as our province gradually reopens for business and dental offices add more services. Thank you for contributing to the health and safety of all Albertans throughout this pandemic.

As a Council, we're aware that the uncertainty created by COVID-19 is challenging. Many dental assistants have experienced difficulties such as lay-offs and reduced income because of the suspension of non-essential oral health care services. Some dental assistants and the Association of Alberta Dental Assistants have asked us to issue partial refunds for this year's practice permit fee and/or reduce or waive the practice permit renewal fee for the upcoming year.

We've been discussing fees for several weeks now. At our most recent council meeting we had a thoughtful debate about several options and their possible outcomes. It was a difficult decision, but we decided to not issue refunds or reduce renewal fees. We approved the budget based on maintaining the practice permit renewal fee as it has been since the 2017 practice permit renewal. We made this decision because our budget enables the College to do the work required by the *Health Professions Act*. That work has not changed throughout the COVID-19 pandemic.

Because we've been diligent in finding cost-effective ways to do business and increase efficiencies, we've maintained our practice permit renewal fees at the lowest of all the Alberta regulated health professions. Most of our revenue comes from those renewal fees. With so much uncertainty remaining, no one can predict what things will look like in the coming months and even years. Therefore, we need to consider what works for today and for the future. It would be irresponsible of us to make changes that jeopardise the College's finances and put our ability to protect the public at risk.

We, as a Council, are committed to frequently reviewing the pandemic effects and monitoring the re-launching of Alberta over the coming months. We'll remain thoughtful and careful about what we do to maintain confidence in the profession. And, we'll keep sending you updates as information becomes available and decisions are made.

Be resilient, stay strong and keep smiling. We'll get through this together.

Sincerely,

Lisa Rahimi, RDA  
President