



Association of Alberta Dental Assistants
Update for the Canadian Dental Assistants Association
April 15, 2019

On June 1, 2017, the Association of Alberta Dental Assistants (AADA) was accepted as an Organizational Member of the Canadian Dental Assistants Association (CDN DAA) for a 2 year probationary period ending June 1, 2019. The representative that AADA has elected to serve on the Canadian Board is Dianne Hennig SSStJ RDA MFR. Dianne is a founding member of the Association of Alberta Dental Assistants and serves in a non-voting role for our organization as Corporate Agent, Parliamentarian and Recording Secretary.

Between July 1 and December 31, 2017, the AADA began recruiting our members to support the CDN DAA with voluntary membership. For the 2018 CDN DAA fiscal year the AADA processed 124 CDN DAA membership payments. For the 2019 CDN DAA fiscal year the AADA has processed 129 CDN DAA membership payments to date in the first quarter of the year.

In the 2018-2019 term, AADA met with several organizations and government to advance our profession and our association. These meetings and presentations included:

January 2018: Phone meeting with Alberta Federation of Labour, Director of Government Affairs and Political Action, Chris Galloway. Our discussions centered around WCB and our position that all working Albertans are entitled to protection and benefits under that program with employers needing to prove that they should have an exemption rather than relying on decades old classifications that are no longer relevant.

May 2018: Meeting with OHS Ross Nairne, Executive Director OHS Policy and Program Development and Glennis Leathwood, WCB and OHS Policy Analyst. Their perspective was that realistically we are more likely to obtain WCB through discussions with the Alberta Dental Association and College (ADA&C) than through a re-classification of industries at this time. The legal perspective of risk management for the employers is the best approach to voluntary coverage by employers in our industry.

It is likely that the current government won't have time to make any further changes to OHS and WCB before the next election. The current legislation requires a regular review of WCB every 3 years with the next review being in 2020. A goal for the coming year will be for the AADA to connect with the HSAA and ADA&C with regard to employment issues and we will ask AHS to broker that meeting if possible. The benefits to the employer of obtaining WCB, including risk management, will be emphasized. Eliminating workplace harassment will be a second topic of discussion at this meeting.

July 2018: Meeting w CADA Registrar Jennifer Tewes. The focus of our meetings has been to establish a collegial relationship and collaboration between CADA and AADA where possible and practical.

October 2018: Meeting with Alberta Paramedics Association President Dusty Myshrall. This meeting was to discuss common challenges affecting our 2 relatively new provincial professional associations. APA was incorporated 5 years ago and AADA 6 ½ years ago. Our meeting resulted in APA sharing some correspondence with us re: PLI and identifying issues we shared.

November 2018: Joint presentation by AADA/CDN DAA representatives to CADA Council re: Proposal to transfer provision of PLI to the associations. CDN DAA ED Stephanie Mullen Kavanagh, CDN DAA President Sina Allegra Sacco, AADA Board Chair Jane Sadler and AADA Corporate Agent Dianne Hennig made a ½ hour presentation to CADA Council proposing that a return of PLI to the associations would assist in returning a level balance between protection of the public (the purpose of the College) and protection and advocacy for the profession (the role of professional associations) resulting in a stronger profession with access to sufficient resources to work towards progress and advocacy for the profession.

December 2018: Exploratory meeting of Alberta health profession associations. In Alberta, regulatory Colleges have an organization where they collectively address issues common to all legislated health profession colleges. There is no similar organization for the professional associations. This meeting was to discuss and discover whether there was interest in and value to establishing a provincial association of associations. The group that met determined that it would be valuable to create such an organization. The 3 groups that called for the exploratory meeting will develop a framework for review and approval at an as yet to be determined date for a second meeting.

January 2019: Meeting with CADA Registrar Jennifer Tewes. In Alberta, the government implemented Bill 21 which required all health profession colleges to be ready to comply with the Bill effective April 1, 2019. All Colleges were focused on those preparations and therefore CADA staff was delayed in preparing their report to Council on the implications of approving the AADA/CDN DAA proposal of November 2018. It is expected that the report will be ready for the May 2019 Council meeting and a response forthcoming following that meeting. The time window that AADA has for implementing that change for 2020 requires that we have a response from CADA by mid-June 2019.

February 2019: Letter to AB Health Minister Sarah Hoffman. The AADA requested a meeting with the Minister to discuss PLI and whether it was a conflict of interest for Colleges to provide this to their registrants. The Minister suggested a meeting with AHS Directors to discuss this issue.

April 2019: Meeting with Andrew Douglas, Director Health Professions Policy & Partnerships, Health Workforce Planning and Accountability Division Alberta Health and Ali Abdelrahman, Executive Director, Health Professional Regulation and Physician Workforce Branch Alberta Health. Our key asks were:

1. Will the government support our request to the CADA for a return of PLI to our associations for the purpose of removing a conflict of interest, providing registrants with a choice of where to obtain PLI and balancing the playing field in terms of financial support for the associations who advocate for and protect the professional vs the colleges who protect the public?

2. Change the language in HPA to College "Registrants". Member is a term that has a connotation the benefits and services that are provided by an Association.

3. Preclude Colleges from including PLI with licensure and support the choice of registrants to obtain PLI where they wish with the only caveat that it meets the requirements of the College in terms of amount of coverage and type of coverage.

4. Include accountability and transparency requirements in the HPA of the College to their registrants. Require Colleges to hold AGMs, ensure open access of registrants to attend hearings and Council meetings as observers. Require Registrants to have direct access to College Council members.

5. How can RDAs in Alberta work towards obtaining a change in title under the HPA to that of Licensed Dental Nurse?

The AADA held our 7th AGM on Saturday April 6, 2019 and held our election for the incoming Board of Directors. The officers of the 2019-2020 AADA Board are:

<i>Chairman of the Board</i>	Maeghan Heck RDA
<i>Vice Chair</i>	Susanne Strueby RDA
<i>Past Chair</i>	Jane Sadler RDA
<i>Treasurer</i>	Danelle Fulawka RDA
<i>Directors at Large:</i>	Geri Moir RDA, Kimberly Free RDA, Arlene Pettifer RDA, Karen Allan RDA, Vicky Tatoulis RDA, Patricia Hillton RDA.

The following goals were identified for AADA to pursue in the 2019-2020 term:

1. Return the provision of Malpractice Liability Insurance in Alberta to the professional associations, and more specifically to provide it through the CDN DAA as was done prior to 2014.

2. Continue to address HPA concerns with government, including:

Language used in the HPA can confuse when the term member is used (connotation relates to membership associations). We promote a change to the more relevant designation of "Registrant".

Accountability to "Registrants" is lacking when there is no requirement in the HPA for Colleges to hold AGMs, for Colleges to readily accommodate "Registrants" as observers at Council meetings and Hearings.

We advocate for transparency to "Registrants" and provision of a simple process for pre-registration to attend College meetings and Hearings, easily accessible dates of these meetings and hearings, and ability for "Registrants" to contact Council members directly.

We advocate for restrictions on role of a College to preclude them from conducting the business of an Association. This would include provision of professional development, benefits, services and any other traditional provisions of an association.

We advocate for a declaration precluding a College from provision of PLI as a conflict of interest to their role in disciplining their "Registrants".

We advocate of provisions in the HPA to allow us to change the title of our profession to "Dental Nurses". This is a commonly used title in other commonwealth countries and more accurately reflects the current training requirements and scope of practice of our profession in Alberta. It will more readily support the argument for expansion of our scope of practice into areas of direct patient treatment and unsupervised practice of licensed activities for our profession.

3. Develop and conduct our first survey of RDAs in AB to update our stats on workplace injuries and illnesses, to determine how RDAs are obtaining their professional development, to ask questions about continuing competency requirements and determine priorities for AADA to address the concerns of AB RDAs.

4. Continue to advocate for WCB coverage for dental staff in Alberta. AADA will follow up with the Minister of Labour and monitor government actions in changes to WCB. AADA will also pursue support from the Executive Director of Occupational Health and Safety Policy and Program Development for WCB for dental staff. This is a follow up to our meeting with OHS on May 11, 2018 when we discussed issues brought forward by RDAs about safety concerns in the dental workplace, a need to identify a process for

industry assessment of hazards, and to clarify a process for reporting when there is no WCB in place at a dental workplace.

5. **Meet with ADA&C** to discuss issues brought forward by RDAs about employer conduct and determine what steps can be taken to improve the work environment for dental staff. We will use the survey results obtained from the CDN DAA surveys conducted in November 2018 and March 2019 to inform our discussions.

6. **Renew our OM agreement with the CDN DAA** for a 3 year term from June 1, 2019 to June 1, 2022 with the goal of increasing supporting membership from AB RDAs and promoting the benefits of the results of work done by the CDN DAA to our members and our profession as a whole.

The AADA is pleased to have a voice for our members at the national table and we look forward to making significant contributions towards national initiatives taken on by the CDN DAA. Our best wishes to our colleagues across Canada for a progressive year ahead for our profession.

Submitted by:



Maeghan Heck RDA
Board Chair – Association of Alberta Dental Assistants

and



Dianne Hennig SSSJ RDA MFR
Alberta Director – Canadian Dental Assistants Association