

FAQS for Dental Hygienists and Certified Dental Assistants Updated January 12, 2022

1. What is this new CDA Alliance?

As of December 13, 2021, the BC Dental Hygienists' Association will welcome CDAs to join as members. This arrangement is a pilot for a three-year period, during which time a CDA Steering Committee will manage the development, oversight and direction of the CDA Alliance, and will collaborate with BCDHA to share services as the CDA Alliance works to establish itself as the 'go to' place for CDAs. As we near the end of the three-year period, CDAs will decide themselves what the future of their Alliance should look like.

2. Why is BCDHA accepting Certified Dental Assistants (CDAs) to become members of the Association?

We have had a number of CDAs reaching out to join BCDHA as they have witnessed the advantages that Dental Hygienists experience belonging to a robust professional association. Whether looking for a stronger advocacy voice, continuing education opportunities, or simply wanting to feel more connected and "in the know," these CDAs are seeking to be part of a well-established association that can support their progress as a profession.

3. What prompted this change?

A group of CDAs from both clinical practice and education approached BCDHA to express their interest in working with us, BCDHA recognizes that many CDAs are struggling to find support and could benefit from what a well-established professional association can offer. BCDHA has the resources, experience, infra-structure, and staff to help build a CDA Alliance that will support the needs of CDAs. BCDHA also understands that CDA's require flexibility, so we will be supportive of helping the CDA Alliance establish its own identity during this pilot project.

4. Why is this important for CDAs?

BCDHA is excited to share a strong infrastructure with expertise in support, advocacy, and professional advancement, with the CDAs of the province. BCDHA can assist CDAs to have their voice heard, to help advance the CDA profession and their own career. Through the CDA Steering Committee, CDA members will find transparency, honesty, and a passion for improving the lives and culture of Certified Dental Assistants in British Columbia.

5. Why would CDAs want to be led by Hygienists?

You will not be! In this structure, a steering committee made up entirely of CDAs will establish the CDA Alliance. This committee will establish the agenda for the CDA Alliance, direct the staff team around the CDA file and will be accessible to CDA members who want to make suggestions about how the Alliance should evolve. Dental hygienists do not want to lead the CDAs, they want to work collaboratively to ensure dental assistants have the best possible opportunities to solidify and advance their own profession.

6. Will CDAs have full access to the programs and services that BCDHA offers to dental hygienists?

For the initial term of our agreement (three years), CDAs will join BCDHA as Support Members. This will allow CDAs to access their own area of the BCDHA website, which will include information specific for CDAs including information about advocacy work, a wage survey, opportunities to participate in policy discussions, networking, discounts, perks and continuing education. We anticipate this area of the website will grow over time as we connect with members to learn more about what they would like as professional supports and member benefits (e.g., CDA job board, CDA newsletter, etc.)

7. What will you offer CDAs?

CDAs who join will have access to a strong, paid group of professionals who make up the BCDHA staff team. This includes three practice advisors, a policy analyst, communications expertise, an office manager, and the Executive Director. This team enables BCDHA to offer several programs and services:

- **Practice Advice** – oral health professionals you can call or email if you have a practice question and you are not sure how to proceed, need support or would like to talk to someone about your options.
- **Dedicated Steering Committee of CDAs** who will work with the Executive Director to advance the profession, recognize, and respond to member needs and ensure that the CDA Alliance is led by and for CDAs.
- **Advocacy** for the key changes in the profession that CDA's think are important.
- **Dedicated website** where CDAs can get the most current information about what is happening in the profession and access CDA specific surveys and information.
- **Continuing Education** – BCDHA offers a host of continuing education events throughout the year and are always interested in adding to our offerings. If you have a specific webinar or session you would like to see included, we want to hear from you!

- **Access to our Employment Lawyer** if you find yourself needing legal advice about something happening at work.
- **Interprofessional collaboration opportunities** - Ability to help inform oral health policy around key health issues that impact patients, CDAs, and the entire oral health team.
- **Liability insurance** for all CDAs starting February 1, 2022.
- **Access to perks including discounts** for entertainment, shopping and travel.

8. What will it cost me and what is my \$100 used for?

BCDHA currently has seven staff members and recognizes that the strength of any organization is the team that delivers programs, supports and advice. Your \$100 will pay for all of the benefits listed above.

9. What if I have a paid membership with CDABC and want to join the CDA Alliance?

No one wants you to pay for membership twice, so if you have recently renewed your membership with the CDABC (September 2021 or later) BCDHA will honour that purchase with a complimentary 6-9 month membership giving you access to BCDHA benefits until October 2022. This excludes your malpractice insurance, but you will be covered by your CDABC plan until fall of 2022, at such a time you can purchase a 6-month prorated BCDHA membership. In this case, your first full membership fees will be due February 2023! This complimentary membership will require confirmation of CDABC membership with receipt of purchase.

10. Will CDAs continue to be licensed by CDSBC?

Yes, CDAs will continue to be licensed by the CDSBC, in no way would a change of association membership affects their professional licensure. Malpractice insurance will be available to CDA members through BCDHA.

11. I would like to join the Steering committee, is that possible?

The CDA Alliance Steering committee is made up of 3-6 CDA members who serve on a 3-year term. The 3 CDA members that negotiated the CDA Alliance agreement have been appointed as the Steering committee for the initial 3-year term, at such time other members will be invited to join the committee.

12. What if I decide to join the CDA Alliance halfway through the year, do I have to pay the full membership fee?

CDA Alliance Membership is renewed annually, starting February 1st 2022, when the full membership fees are due. CDAs and CDA students that apply to become Support

Members six (6) months or more after the start of the membership year and will pay half the annual membership fee.

13. Why are CDAs listed as support members and not full members?

CDAs have needs to be met now! By becoming support members, we were able to expedite this process and provide CDAs access to Association benefits now. This type of agreement provides us with the opportunity to run a three-year pilot project where at the end of this period, both parties (the BCDHA Board and CDA Steering committee) can determine if they would like to branch off or re-negotiate the terms of the initial agreement.

14. Will CDAs continue to be licensed by CDSBC?

Yes, CDAs will continue to be licensed by the CDSBC, in no way would a change of association membership affects their professional licensure. Malpractice insurance will be available to CDA members through BCDHA.

15. Why are CDAs listed as support members and not full members?

CDAs have needs to be met now! By becoming support members, we were able to expedite this process and provide CDAs access to Association benefits now. This type of agreement provides us with the opportunity to run a three-year pilot project where at the end of this period, both parties (the BCDHA Board and CDA Steering committee) can determine if they would like to branch off or re-negotiate the terms of the initial agreement.

16. I'm a student, can I be a member?

Yes, students can join for \$15 and that membership will continue until they complete their studies and become licensed with the CDSBC.

17. I'm a chairside assistant, can I join?

Non-Certified Dental Assistants may join as support members for the \$100 fee, but cannot hold leadership positions within the CDA Alliance Steering Committee and will not be provided with liability insurance.

18. Will the CE Activities provided by the BCDHA be eligible for credit with the CDSBC?

The BCDHA aims to provide exciting and relevant education opportunities for all its members. CDA's are required to have 36 CE credits per licensure cycle with CDSBC, and there are many CE offerings to help meet this requirement. If there is a particular topic

that you would like to recommend, don't be afraid to make a suggestion - we want to hear from you!

19. Will there be awards for DA students as part of the pilot project?

Yes! Each accredited dental assisting program in BC will present one annual award on behalf of the CDA Alliance ; the CDA Alliance Award of Excellence. The award presented to the graduating student with the highest overall achievement in their program will consist of \$150 and a certificate of recognition. Details for submission can be found in the CDA Alliance Student Award Guide.

20. Will the CDA Alliance offer a student membership incentive to a class that has 100% enrollment?

Yes, all accredited programs with 100% enrollment in the CDA Alliance will receive an honorarium towards their graduation festivities. The first school to reach 100% membership will receive \$300, the second \$200 and all other schools \$100.

21. What does the CDA Alliance offer to CDA's for support that is different than CDABC?

The BCDHA is an organization with a proven track record of exceptional member support, excellent government relations and robust resources and services for our members. CDAs will have access to all of these through the CDA Alliance. When you call the CDA Alliance, someone will answer your call! There are three practice advisors that work tirelessly to meet the needs of the members they support and will continue to work hard for CDAs. Going into amalgamation, CDAs will have the ability to feel confident that someone is looking out for their professional needs and ensuring their interests are advocated for with government. Last but not least, CDAs will notice the difference that access to valuable resources brings for them personally and professionally.

22. What were dental assistants hoping for? They have an association that has few members? What will making their membership increase by joining the CDA Alliance?

There is an excellent letter from the CDA Alliance steering committee that explains exactly what they were hoping for when they approached the BCDHA for support and we encourage you to read it to understand how this began. You can access it through this link

23. Are there any ongoing member incentives for joining the CDA Alliance?

For every 50 members that join the CDA Alliance, there will be a draw for a \$25 gift card (options may include Starbucks, Amazon, etc.) and a CDA Alliance nametag. Winners will be notified by email.

24. Who do I contact if I have more questions?

There are 3 dedicated Practice Advisors who are available to answer your practice questions and will do their best to reply within 24 hours. Please send those questions to practicesupport@BCDHA.com.

You may also reach out to the CDA Steering Committee at CDA@BCDHA.com or send any general questions about membership at info@BCDHA.com.