

Dear Colleague,

For years, many of us have been frustrated by the lack of support for Certified Dental Assistants (CDAs) within British Columbia. Whether we've been struggling to find answers to employment and practice questions, seeking a clear understanding from health care leaders about the future of the profession, or wishing we had a voice in discussions about consistent standards and certification, many of us have found there is no viable option for resolving the issues and frustrations that impact our work.

We have heard you, and we felt exactly the same way!

Earlier this year we approached the BC Dental Hygienists' Association (BCDHA) to ask if there was a way CDAs could join their Association, which is well-established, fully staffed and provides a number of programs and services. After several months of negotiation, we believe we have landed on an amazing opportunity that will allow CDAs to join forces with the BCDHA while retaining our own autonomy. This is our opportunity to have CDA expertise brought to the forefront of oral health and we hope you will join us as we work towards strengthening our profession and providing support for all of you!

As the inaugural Steering Committee, we are excited that the CDA Alliance will be run **by** CDAs and **for** CDAs, and we hope in the months to come, some of you also be interested in participating on the Steering Committee and helping to lead this work into the future.

As a member of the CDA Alliance, you will have access to relevant opportunities for career development through enhanced continuing education opportunities; be empowered to participate as a valued member of policy-making committees and projects; have a voice in advocating for changes to the CDA profession; provide and gain valuable insight into trends for wages and employment within the profession; have access to legal support if you have an employment issue and so much more. Most importantly, within this new structure, CDAs be included in the evolution and the implementation of pertinent public policy. Together, we can connect to our professional community, while advancing CDA recognition and decision making.

We have initially struck a three-year agreement with BCDHA, to help us grow membership, connect with all of you, and provide you with an opportunity to have a say in your future. At the end of the initial three-year agreement, CDAs will have the knowledge and authority to determine our next steps - Will we branch off and form our own association? Will we continue to work with BCDHA? In the meantime, over these years, our partnership with BCDHA will expedite support and provide flexibility as we take this opportunity to stabilize and lean on our dental hygiene colleagues to get ourselves connected and moving forward.

Please show your support for your profession by joining the CDA Alliance [by clicking on this link](#). Take some time to browse the opportunities you will have as CDA Support Members, as well as the Continuing Education and resources you will have access to.

British Columbia Dental Hygienists' Association

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Membership will be \$100 per year (February 1st 2022 to January 31st 2023), but by joining any time before February 1st, you will receive immediate access to membership for the same price. Your \$100 will include all of the perks and benefits outlined in this email and on the website, and beginning February 1, 2022, it will also include liability insurance. Students will pay \$15 for membership, which will last until the completion of their licensure.

As we move forward towards a new amalgamated Oral Health College, and as we consider the value of dental assistants at every level of oral care, it is time for Certified Dental Assistants to get involved!

Questions? Please join the CDA Steering Committee of the new CDA Alliance, our Executive Director, and staff for our monthly virtual Coffee Chats held on Wednesdays. [Please follow the link to participate](#). We will welcome questions, comments and suggestions. Don't worry if you miss it, we will have many more of these in the future.

Let's stand together collectively and get our voices heard. We can be the change for the future of our profession. Please join us in this amazing opportunity for CDAs and our fellow dental colleagues to be united, collaborative and strong!

Sincerely,
Steering Committee