



**THE CANADIAN DENTAL
HYGIENISTS ASSOCIATION**

**L'ASSOCIATION CANADIENNE
DES HYGIÉNISTES DENTAIRES**

**Request for Proposal
White Paper: National Oral Health Care Plan for
Canadians**

Issued: March 19, 2021

Proposals due: 12:00pm ET, April 15, 2021

The Canadian Dental Hygienists Association (CDHA) is a national non-for-profit organization that represents the professional interests of more than 30,000 dental hygienists. CDHA exists so that its members are able to provide quality preventive and therapeutic oral health care as well as health promotion for the Canadian public. CDHA provides leadership on critical issues related to oral health, through the development of position papers, statements, research papers, clinical practice guidelines, advocacy initiatives, and public awareness programs. CDHA is governed by volunteer board members whose strategic direction take the form of specific and measurable outcomes called “Ends”. A top priority is:

Public Policy Environment:

Members play a key role in influencing the public policy environment to improve not only their ability to practice as primary health care providers, but also the overall health of Canadians.

1. Purpose

CDHA is seeking proposals for the development of a white paper entitled: A National Oral Health Care Plan for Canadians. The white paper is intended to inform and support public policy discussions on the essential aspects of a universal, public oral health care program in Canada. The paper will examine the relevant evidence to support the development of a national oral health care plan, address the accessibility challenges faced by vulnerable populations, and look to prevention-based imperatives for investing in a national, publicly funded system of oral health care coverage for all residents of Canada. Particular emphasis should be placed on strategies to improve access to oral care for seniors and the working poor.

2. Background

CDHA has identified national oral health care as a priority in addressing access to preventive oral health services for all Canadians. The white paper, commissioned on behalf of CDHA’s board of directors, is part of CDHA’s ongoing federal advocacy to support access to preventive oral health care for Canadians.

As experts in preventive oral health care, dental hygienists understand that many untreated, yet largely preventable, oral diseases place a heavy burden on Canada’s health care system. Too often, Canadians seek treatment for dental pain in hospital emergency rooms. Those with untreated gum disease are at greater risk of developing serious health conditions, such as cardiovascular disease, diabetes, aspiration pneumonia, and stroke.

Vulnerable populations in Canada, including seniors and the working poor, lack access to professional oral care. While we take great pride as a nation in our universal health care system, we must not forget that publicly funded oral health care are very limited and most Canadians must rely on private insurance or pay out of pocket. For people in our communities who do not have dental insurance coverage, including seniors (who lose work-related insurance coverage when they retire) and people with low or fixed incomes and their children, the cost of routine dental hygiene appointments to prevent disease and detect problems is a barrier to accessing oral health care. Publicly funded oral health care benefits are very limited and most Canadians must rely on privately based funded benefits or pay out of pocket.

There is significant research that supports the oral systemic link and the importance for good oral health and the impacts on overall health. Oral health is intimately related to overall health and consequently, poor oral health is intimately related to the cycle of poverty, low income, and lack of access to care.

In December 2019, the federal government made a commitment to study universal dental care for all Canadians. Given that seniors and low-income earners have been particularly hard hit during the COVID-19 pandemic, it is time for Canadian policy makers to work towards a universal oral health care plan for all Canadians. We need to move away from the current patchwork, filling the gap types of programs and focus on a strong preventive approach to oral health care for Canadians. There have been studies and proposals for national dental care, but the focus has been primarily on treatment-based services. Dental caries is the #1 disease in the world...and it's mostly preventable, as is gum disease. Treating disease after it has occurred is not a fiscally responsible strategy for any government. Investing in access to regular preventive services, and treatment will improve the oral and overall health of Canadians.

A comprehensive white paper is required to support national oral health care to provide detailed evidence and policy recommendations to federal and provincial policymakers. We recognize that there are numerous vulnerable sectors of the population, however the scope of this paper is restricted to seniors and the working poor.

3. Objectives

The objective of the Request for Proposal (RFP) is to contract a qualified individual or team to work with a volunteer project advisory committee to write a white paper on the development of a national, publicly funded oral health care plan for all Canadians. This paper must include the following:

- Identify/document the current publicly funded dental/oral health care programs at the federal and provincial levels. This should be broken down by province. Also, an identification of the key issues/limitations with the current programs must be included. Identification of detailed information for funding available for seniors and the working poor is a priority.
- Identify/document the current privately funded dental/oral health care programs. Inclusion of specific details on access to this private funding for seniors and the working poor must be included.
- A gap analysis of public and private oral health funding available to Canadians.
- Identify critical preventive and therapeutic oral health initiatives that, if offered to all Canadians, would have a direct impact on the oral and overall health of Canadians.
- Policy recommendations for establishing a publicly funded oral health care plan for Canadians. This could include a phased-in approach for priority populations, such as seniors and working poor/low-income Canadians.
- Identify critical preventive and therapeutic oral health initiatives that if offered to all Canadians would have a direct impact on the oral health and overall health of Canadians.
- Provide costing estimate scenarios for policy recommendations.

4. Project reporting and oversight

CDHA's Director of Dental Hygiene Practice will oversee this project and will solicit experts for the White Paper Advisory Committee that will provide expertise, advice, and guidance to this project. The consultant(s) will confer with the White Paper Advisory Committee at all stages of document development. Contact with the Advisory Committee will take place by videoconference. CDHA will provide administrative support to facilitate meetings with the Project Advisory Committee.

5. Project Schedule

The table below reflects the RFP and project schedule.

Milestone	Date
RFP issued	March 19, 2021
Deadline for receipt of RFP	April 15, 2021
Selection of successful consultant(s)	April 22, 2021
Contract finalized	April 28, 2021
Initial status report	June 30, 2021
Final white paper due	September 15, 2021
Presentation to CDHA Board of Directors	October 15, 2021

6. RFP Requirements

a. Consultant(s) Information

Include a brief overview of your background and previous experience. At a minimum, provide how long you have been doing work of similar scope, types of consulting contracts/projects you have been involved with. Include in this profile an overview of your work with not-for-profit organizations and/or your knowledge of and experience with the Canadian health care system and policy initiatives.

b. Resources and References

Provide the project team composition. Identify the named individuals who will be assigned to this project, their specific qualifications, and role on the team. Describe similar projects successfully completed by you or your team. Provide a minimum of two references, including at least one from a health care project/paper.

c. Pricing

Provide a pricing for all services and anticipated expenses.

d. Methodology

Describe the approach and methodology that will be applied to ensure the success (on budget, on schedule and at full scope) of this project.

e. Workplan/Schedule

Propose a workplan for meeting the objectives and requirements for this project.

7. Evaluation

The following factors will be taken into consideration in the evaluation:

- Experience of the consultant(s)
- Comprehensiveness of proposal
- Cost to perform work

8. Proposal submissions and questions

Proposals are due no later than 12:00pm EST on April 15, 2021 to the attention of:

Ondina Love, CEO
Canadian Dental Hygienists Association
Email: olove@cdha.ca

9. Deadline

Proposals are due no later than 12 noon EST on April 15, 2021.