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## Important information for dentists

### Delegation of bucco-dental acts

Further to the article entitled "[Attention, dentistes délinquants](#)" published on July 3 on the *Actualités* page of *La Presse+*, the Order feels that it should remind its members of certain principles of professional ethics, in particular those raised by the article in question.

The article paints a very negative portrait of the dental profession and could lead to misunderstandings and confusion among the general public regarding the abilities and roles of the different members of the dental team.

Dentists are fully responsible for acts performed on their behalf. It goes without saying that clients are not consulting a company, but a health professional in whom they must have complete confidence.

Given the article's unfavourable reports of "illegal acts" in dental offices, we wish to remind you of the importance of respecting the **currently** applicable regulations concerning the delegation of bucco-dental acts, including the examination and prior diagnosis by the dentist.

For 15 years now, the Ordre des dentistes has been working hard to convince government authorities of the need for modernization, through changes to the fields of practice of dental hygienists and dental assistants.

Both dentists and dental hygienists may have been led to believe, as a result of untimely and, to say the least, premature information and statements, that the status of dental hygienists had changed. That is not the case.

The dental acts that may be performed at present by dental hygienists, **once the dentist has conducted an examination and established a diagnosis and a treatment plan**, are still those described in the regulation governing the Ordre des dentistes. Pending legislative amendments to dental hygienists' field of practice, the *Regulation respecting certain acts that may be performed by dental hygienists*, RSQ, c. D-3, r. 3, remains law and no one may contravene it.

#### Bucco-dental acts that may be performed by dental hygienists:

1. Topical application of a desensitization substance, such as a varnish or adhesive cement.
2. Inserting and sculpting filling materials.
3. Collecting and gathering together information relative to pulpal vitality tests.
4. Removal of sutures.
5. Placing a temporary filling, without drilling, when the pulp is not exposed.
6. Placing and removing orthodontic bands and braces.
7. Removal of periodontal dressings.
8. Cementing space maintainers.
9. Supra and subgingival scaling, including smoothing the exposed part to the root.
10. Taking radiographs.

Dental assistants in Quebec may not perform dental acts in the patient's mouth or take radiographs. As the legislation now stands, they may assist the dentist (four-handed dentistry). Regardless of their training and their knowledge in the context of clinical practice, no regulation has yet been adopted allowing them to exceed their field of practice.

The vast majority of dentists work in close co-operation with the members of their clinical staff, hygienists and assistants, with complete respect for their professional ethical obligations and their patients' rights. It is essential that this be the case for all, rather than most, dentists.

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President



Désabonnement