
— 2001-2002

— Bylaws

— Code of Ethics



BYLAWS

AMERICAN DENTAL HYGIENISTS' ASSOCIATION

ARTICLE I. NAME AND OFFICE

Sec. 1. The name of this association shall be American Dental Hygienists' Association hereinafter referred to as the association.

Sec. 2. The association shall maintain a registered office as required by the laws of the State of Illinois and executive offices as determined by the board of trustees.

ARTICLE II PURPOSES AND MISSION

Sec. 1. The purposes of this association shall be to improve the oral health of the public; to advance the art and science of dental hygiene; to maintain the highest standards of dental hygiene and practice; to represent and protect the interest of the dental hygiene profession; to improve the professional competence of the dental hygienists; to foster research in oral health; to provide professional communication; to publish a scientific journal: the Journal of Dental Hygiene; and to conduct other activities as may be permitted by the State of Illinois to carry out the purposes of this association.

Sec. 2. To improve the public's total health, the mission of the American Dental Hygienists' Association is to advance the art and science of dental hygiene by ensuring access to quality oral health care, increasing awareness of the cost-effective benefits of prevention, promoting the highest standards of dental hygiene education, licensure practice, and research, and representing and promoting the interests of dental hygienists.

ARTICLE III MEMBERS

Sec. 1. Classifications of Members. Members shall meet the following requirements and such other uniform requirements as may be established by the house of delegates.

- A. Voting Members: Membership in ADHA, a constituent and a component, if one exists, shall be required.
1. Active Members: Any dental hygienist who holds a certificate or degree in dental hygiene granted pursuant to a dental hygiene program which has a minimum of two academic years of curriculum provided in a college or institution of higher education, the program of which is recognized by the

United States Department of Education and/or an appropriate national voluntary agency, or who is licensed to practice dental hygiene in the United States under the provision of a "grandfather clause"; who is licensed to practice in any state, territory or possession of the United States if such license is required for the practice of dental hygiene; who agrees to adhere to the bylaws and code of ethics of this association; and who agrees to hold membership in a constituent and component of the association if such exists where the member is licensed, practicing or residing; shall be eligible for active membership in this association upon application to that constituent or the ADHA executive director.

2. Life Members: Any voting member who has made outstanding contributions on a national level to both dental hygiene and the association through national, constituent or component service shall be eligible for life membership upon application to the board of trustees at least 30 days prior to fall board of trustees meeting, nomination by the board of trustees and election by the house of delegates. An elected president of the association who has completed the term of office shall automatically become a life member.
3. Retired/Senior Members: Any active member who has reached the age of sixty-two (62) years and has been an active member for at least (1) 25 years, (2) 20 consecutive years, or (3) continuously from the date eligibility shall be eligible for retired/senior membership upon application to the executive director and accompanied by proof of qualification.
4. Members with Disabilities: Any dental hygienist who has a disability, has been a voting member and is prohibited from being employed due to the person's disability shall be eligible for members with disabilities membership upon application to the executive director, submitted through and verified by the member's constituent and/or component, and accompanied by proof of qualification.

B. Non-Voting Members

1. International Members: Any licensed dental hygienist residing outside the United States who agrees to adhere to the bylaws and the code of ethics of this association shall be eligible for international membership application to the executive director.
2. Student Members: Any student in accredited dental hygiene program or a graduate of an accredited dental hygiene program who is pursuing a baccalaureate or graduate degree complementary to a career in dental

hygiene, shall be eligible for student membership upon application to the executive director, following recommendation by the director or a duly-appointed representative of the institution.

3. Supporting Members: Any licensed dental hygienist who is not employed in a dental hygiene-related career, and who agrees to adhere to the bylaws and code of ethics of this association, shall be eligible for supporting membership upon application to and verification by the executive director. Enrollment in this category shall require membership in ADHA, a constituent and component, if one exists.
4. Honorary Members: Any individual not a dental hygienist, who has made outstanding contributions to dental hygiene or dental health shall be eligible for honorary membership upon nomination by the board of trustees and election by the house of delegates.
5. Allied Members: Any individual who supports the purposes and mission of this Association and who is not otherwise qualified for any other class of membership shall be eligible for allied membership upon application to the executive director.
6. Corporate Members: Any corporation, institution or organization which supports the mission of this Association shall be eligible for corporate membership upon application to the executive director.

Sec.2. Privileges of Members.

- A. Voting members shall have the right to vote, hold office, be elected a delegate or alternate to the house of delegates, be elected or appointed to any office, board, council or committee of this association and of the constituent and the component to which the member belongs, and such other privileges as the house of delegates may determine.
- B. Non-voting member shall have such privileges as the house of delegates shall determine, but shall not have the right to vote or hold office, with the exception of one voting student delegate.

Sec. 3. Resignation. A member desiring to resign from the association shall submit such resignation in writing to the executive director. No member's resignation shall be accepted until all prior dues, fees, and assessments are paid.

Sec.4. Non-Payment. If a member fails to pay dues, fees, or assessments within 30 days from the time they become due, or ceases to be a member of the constituent,

component, or other organization required for membership in the association, membership shall automatically terminate.

Sec. 5. Reinstatement. Any member having resigned from the membership may be reinstated upon application to the constituent in the area in which the member is licensed, practicing or residing. Any member who has forfeited membership for non-payment of dues, fees or assessments may be reinstated upon application to the appropriate constituent or the ADHA executive director, and upon meeting such uniform terms as may be established by the board of trustees.

Sec. 6. Suspension Termination. Membership in the association may be suspended or terminated by the board of trustees for cause. Sufficient cause for such suspension or termination of membership may be violation of these bylaws, the code of ethics, or any lawful rule of practice adopted by the association, or other conduct deemed by the house of delegates to be prejudicial to the best interest of the association. A statement of the charges shall be sent by registered mail to the last recorded address of the member, accompanied by notice of the time and place of the meeting at which the charges are to be considered. At least thirty days' notice shall be given, and the member shall have the opportunity to appear in person or to be represented by counsel and to present any defense to such charges before action is taken by the board of trustees. The house of delegates may adopt such rules as may be necessary to assure due process to the member. The decision for suspension or expulsion shall be by a two thirds vote of the board of trustees.

Sec. 7. Dues.

a. The amount of annual dues, fees, and assessments for any class of membership in the Association shall be established by the house of delegates. A two-thirds vote shall be required for any dues increase.

ARTICLE IV ELECTED OFFICERS

Sec. 1. Officers. The elected officers of the Association shall be the president, president-elect, vice president, treasurer, immediate past president, speaker of the house, and the district trustees.

Sec. 2. Qualifications. All elected officers shall be voting members and members of a constituent. A district trustee shall also be a member of a constituent within the district to be represented.

Sec. 3. Elections and Term of Office. The president-elect and vice-president shall

be elected by ballot by the house of delegates to serve for one year or until their successors are elected. Upon completion of their respective terms, the president-elect shall succeed to the office of president and the president shall succeed to the office of the immediate past-president. The treasurer and the speaker of the house shall be elected by ballot by the house of delegates to serve for two years or until their successors are elected. The treasurer shall be elected in odd-numbered years, and the speaker of the house in even-numbered years. In the event that no candidate receives a majority of the votes cast on the first ballot, the two candidates receiving the highest number of votes shall be voted upon again by ballot. District trustees shall be elected by the delegates of the constituents of that district at a caucus during the annual session or at a district meeting held during the 120 days prior to annual session. Odd numbered districts shall elect trustees in the odd-numbered years; even-numbered districts shall elect trustees in the even-numbered years.

Sec. 4. Limitations on Service. No member shall hold more than one office at a time, and no member shall be eligible to serve more than two consecutive terms in the same office. A member having served more than a half term in an office shall be deemed to have served a term. The term of office shall begin at the close of the last meeting of the house of delegates of annual session at which they were elected.

Sec. 5. Vacancies. Should the office of the president become vacant, the president-elect shall become president automatically, to serve as president for the unexpired term immediately following. Should the office of the president-elect become vacant, it shall be filled at the next annual session by the house of delegates. Should the offices of vice-president, treasurer, or speaker of the house become vacant, they shall be filled by appointment by the president with the approval of the board of trustees to serve until the next annual session, when the house of delegates shall fill the vacancy for any unexpired term. Should the office of any district trustee become vacant between annual sessions, the vacancy shall be filled by appointment by the president after consultation with the presidents of the constituents within that district to serve until the next annual session, when that district in caucus shall fill the vacancy for any unexpired term. Should the office of immediate past president become vacant, it shall remain vacant.

Sec. 6. Resignation. Any elected officer may resign by submitting that resignation in writing to the board of trustees.

Sec. 7. Removal. Any elected officer may be removed for cause. Sufficient cause for such removal may be violation of the bylaws, the code of ethics, or any lawful rule, practice, or procedure adopted by the association or other conduct deemed by the House of Delegates to be prejudicial to the best interest of the association. For removal of an elected officer for cause, it shall be necessary for the body which elects that officer to hold a formal hearing. A statement of the charges shall be sent by registered mail to the recorded address of the officer, accompanied by notice of the time and place of the meeting at which the charges are to be considered. At least thirty days notice shall be given, and the officer shall have the opportunity to appear in person or to be represented by counsel and to present any defense

to such charges before action is taken.

The body holding the hearing shall adopt such rules as may be necessary to assure due process to the office.

Sec. 8. Compensation. Elected officers may receive compensation for service as officers. The board of trustees may also authorize reimbursement of expenses incurred in the performance of their duties for the association, and prescribe procedures for approval and payment of such expenses.

ARTICLE V DUTIES OF OFFICERS

Sec. 1. General Duties. Officers shall perform the duties prescribed by these bylaws and the parliamentary authority adopted by the association.

Sec. 2. President. The president shall have general supervision and direction of all officers of the association, shall be the chair of the board of trustees and finance committee, shall address the opening meeting of the annual session, shall submit a written annual report to the house of delegates, shall serve as the speaker of the house in the temporary absence of the speaker, shall appoint, with the approval of the board of trustees, all chairs and members of councils and standing committees, special committees, and shall be ex-officio a member of all councils and committees.

Sec. 3. President-Elect. The president-elect shall have the powers of and perform the duties of the president during any absence or disability of the president, and shall have such other powers and duties as may be determined by the board of trustees or the president.

Sec. 4. Vice-President. The vice president shall have such powers and duties as may be determined by the board of trustees or the president.

Sec. 5. Treasurer. The treasurer shall consult with the executive director concerning books and financial records in ascertaining the financial condition of the association, shall be attentive to fiscal matters, and shall have other such powers and duties as may be determined by the Board of Trustees or the President.

Sec. 6. Speaker of the House. The speaker of the house shall preside over the meetings of the house of delegates, shall consult with the president and the executive director as necessary for the orderly operation of the house of delegates, and shall have such other duties as may be determined by the board of trustees.

Sec. 7. District Trustees. District trustees shall discharge their powers and duties on the board of trustees so as to be in the best interests of the entire association and shall report to the constituents within their districts, actions taken by the board of trustees.

ARTICLE VI
APPOINTED OFFICERS

Sec. 1. Definition. The appointed officers of the association shall be the executive director and such other officers as may be established by the board of trustees.

Sec. 2. Qualifications. Qualifications for appointed officers shall be determined by the board of trustees. A majority vote of the board of trustees shall be necessary for appointment. The board of trustees shall fill vacancies as they occur.

Sec. 3. Duties. The appointed officers shall perform duties prescribed by the board of trustees except as otherwise provided in these bylaws.

The executive director shall serve under the direction of the board of trustees as the principle administrative officer of the association; shall supervise and manage the offices of the association and engage all employees as directed by the board of trustees; shall compile reports of all officers, councils and committees for distribution to each member of the board of trustees, speaker of the house, appointed officers, delegates and alternates in advance of the annual session; shall submit to the board of trustees a written annual report; shall serve as custodian of all monies, other properties and deeds belonging to the association and hold, invest and disburse the same as directed by the board of trustees; shall serve as managing editor of all publications of the association unless otherwise provided by the board of trustees; shall serve as secretary of the house of delegates and the board of trustees; shall serve as secretary of the house of delegates and the board of trustees; and shall serve as secretary of the corporation.

ARTICLE VII
MEETINGS

Sec. 1. Annual Meeting. The annual meeting of the association shall be known as the annual session, and shall be held at a time and place the board of trustees shall determine, and at which time the house of delegates shall meet.

Sec. 2. House of Delegates. The house of delegates shall be the legislative body of the association, with the authority to determine the policies to govern the association in all its activities subject to these bylaws and the laws of the State of Illinois.

A. Voting Members.

1. The voting members of the house of delegates shall consist of one delegate from each constituent plus one hundred additional delegates to be allocated among the constituents in accordance with the formula adopted by the house of delegates which shall be a ratio of voting members within the constituent to the total number of voting members of the association, determined according to membership figures on the last day of the fiscal year preceding

the annual session.

- a. Delegates and alternates shall be voting members of the Association and of the constituents they are to represent, and shall be selected by the voting members of that constituent.
 - b. For each delegate allocated to a constituent, that constituent may have one alternate.
2. One voting student delegate elected by the twelve student delegates to the ADHA House of Delegates shall have voting privileges during the ADHA House of Delegates.

B. Non-voting Members. Non-voting members of the house of delegates shall be elected and appointed officers of the association, elected finance committee members, and one student delegate from each district, who shall be student members of the districts they are to represent, except for the one voting student delegate.

Sec. 3. Official Call. The official call to the annual session giving the time and place of the meetings of the house of delegates shall be published in the official publication of the association at least 90 days in advance of the session.

Sec. 4. Quorum. A quorum shall consist of a majority of the voting members of the house of delegates registered as attending.

Sec. 5. Special Meetings. Special meetings of the house of delegates shall be called by the president upon written request of three-fourths of the board of trustees or two-thirds of the delegates in attendance at the previous annual session of the house of delegates. Such special meetings shall be held within fifty days of such request. The time and place of a special meeting shall be determined by the president and published in the official publication of the association or sent to the address of record of each delegate. Not less than five days' notice of a special meeting shall be given, and only that business specified in the call may be transacted. Delegates and alternates to the annual session shall be the delegates and alternates to any special meeting of the house of delegates held prior to the next annual session.

ARTICLE VIII
BOARD OF TRUSTEES

Sec. 1. Composition. The board of trustees shall consist of the president, president-elect, the vice president, treasurer, immediate past president, and the district trustees. The executive director shall be an ex-officio member without vote.

Sec. 2. Powers. The board of trustees shall be the administrative body of the association, vested with full power to conduct all business of the association, and shall have the power to enact interim policies when the house of delegates is not in session when such policies are necessary to the proper conduct of association affairs. All such policies shall be reported to the house of delegates at the next annual session for ratification.

Sec. 3. Duties. The duties of the board of trustees shall include: to provide for and maintain office facilities for the association; to be responsible for all property, real and personal, owned or held by the association and cause to be bonded all officers and employees entrusted with such property; to establish the fiscal year of the association; to cause the accounts of the association to be audited annually by a certified public accountant; to adopt a budget for the next fiscal year, and approve such amendments to the budget as may be necessary or appropriate; to provide leadership/organizational guidance to the constituents and delegates; to submit to the house of delegates an annual financial report supporting the strategic plan; to review the reports of officers, councils and committees of the association and any recommendations and resolutions to come before the house of delegates, and to make recommendations thereto; to adopt rules and regulations for the conduct of the affairs of the association; to appoint such agents, attorneys and others it deems necessary; to perform such other duties as are prescribed or permitted by the laws of the State of Illinois for the board of trustees or directors or by these bylaws and the policies adopted by the house of delegates.

Sec. 4. Meetings. There shall be at least two regular meetings of the board of trustees each year. Special meetings may be called by the president and shall be called upon the written request of a majority of the voting members of the board of trustees. Ten days notice shall be given except for meetings which may be called during an annual session. Business shall be limited to that which is stated in the call.

Sec. 5. Quorum. A majority of the voting members of the board of trustees shall constitute a quorum.

ARTICLE IX FINANCE COMMITTEE

Sec. 1. Establishment. A finance committee shall be established by the House of Delegates.

Sec. 2. Composition. The finance committee will be composed of the president, president-elect, the treasurer and four non-board of trustees members elected by the house of delegates on a regional basis to serve staggered, two-year terms. The president shall serve as chair.

Sec. 3. Duties. The committee will meet annually to prepare a proposed budget. The chair will report to the winter board of trustees meeting to discuss the proposed budget and work with the board to compile a budget report to the house of delegates.

Sec. 4. Limitations on Service

a. A non-board of trustees member shall be ineligible to serve more than two consecutive terms. A non-board of trustees member who has served more than a half term shall be deemed to have served a full term. The term shall begin at the close of the meeting of the house of delegates of the annual session at which they were elected.

b. A Finance Committee member may not serve as an ADHA delegate.

Sec. 5. Vacancies Should a non-board of trustees member vacancy occur between annual sessions, the president, in consultation with the district trustees from the region of the vacancy, shall appoint a member from the region to serve until the next annual session, when the house of delegates shall elect a member from the region to fill any unexpired term. If the vacancy occurs following the committee meeting, the position will remain open until the next annual session, when the house of delegates shall elect a member from the region to fill any unexpired term.

ARTICLE X
COUNCILS AND COMMITTEES

Sec. 1. Establishment. Councils and standing committees shall be established by the house of delegates. Special committees shall be established by the house of delegates or the board of trustees. Councils and committees shall have such duties as designated by the house of delegates or the board of trustees, and shall include the preparation and filing of reports.

Sec. 2. Composition. Councils and committees shall have no fewer than three members, who shall be voting members of the association. If cooperative efforts with other associations make the appointment of a non-member desirable, it shall be made only with the approval of the board of trustees. An elected officer shall be appointed as a non-voting advisor to advise each council and committee.

Sec. 3. Appointments. Chairs and members of the councils and standing committees shall be appointed by the President with the approval of the board of trustees. Members of special committees shall be appointed by the president. Members of the councils/committees shall serve terms coinciding with that of the president making the appointment.

ARTICLE XI
ABSENTEE VOTING

Sec. 1. Mail Ballot. Any question may be submitted in writing, within an established

body of the association for determination in lieu of a meeting of that body. If one-third of the members of any such body, except the board of trustees, which will require three (3) challenge the mail ballot on the grounds that sufficient information is available for proper consideration of the question, the question will be postponed to the next meeting of that body. A report of any action taken by mail shall be verified and made a part of the minutes of the next meeting of that body.

Sec. 2. Conference Call. Members of the board of trustees or of any council or committee designated by the board of trustees may participate in a meeting of the board of trustees or of such council or committee through conference telephone or similar communication equipment by means of which all persons participating in the meeting can hear each other at the same time, and such participation shall constitute presence in person at the meeting.

Sec. 3. Procedures. Specific procedures not in conflict with Sec.1. above for conducting any absentee voting shall be determined by the board of trustees.

ARTICLE XII DISTRICTS

Sec. 1. Establishment. The American Dental Hygienists' Association shall be geographically divided into districts. The ADHA House of Delegates shall establish the geographic divisions of each district. Each constituent shall be a member of a district.

Sec. 2. Trustee Election. The ADHA delegates of the constituents within each district shall elect from among their members eligible to vote, a trustee who shall represent the members of that district on the board of trustees.

ARTICLE XIII CONSTITUENTS

Sec. 1. Organization. All voting members of the association who are licensed, practicing or residing within a particular state, commonwealth, federal district, territory or possession of the United States may be organized as a constituent of the association upon application to the board of trustees. If the application is approved by the board of trustees, the executive director shall issue a charter to the constituent, giving its name, which shall be taken from the political entity within which it is chartered, and its geographical territory, which shall be approved by the board of trustees.

Sec. 2. Tripartite. ADHA is a tripartite organization, therefore, each constituent association shall adopt and maintain bylaws that are in compliance with the bylaws of ADHA. Voting membership categories, with the exception of life membership, must be identical. Constituents shall notify the executive director of any amendments within sixty days of their enactment.

Sec. 3. Revocation. The charter of a constituent may be revoked by the house of

delegates by a two-thirds vote upon recommendation by the board of trustees. Due notice shall be given by the board of trustees to the constituent in question, by registered mail and reasonable opportunity shall be allowed for the constituent to meet the requirements or correct infractions before final action is taken to revoke the charter.

Sec. 4. Choice of Constituent. A member who qualifies for membership in more than one constituent shall be eligible to membership in only one constituent, which shall be the choice of the member.

Sec. 5. Transfer. A member of a constituent may transfer to another constituent by written request to the executive director, who shall effect the transfer and shall notify both constituents. Full membership privileges shall be granted to the transferred member without payment of current dues provided current dues have been paid to the previous constituent.

ARTICLE XIV COMPONENTS

All voting members of a constituent within a geographical territory within that constituent may be organized as a component by the constituent. The name, boundaries, and eligibility requirements shall be determined by the constituent, and the constituent shall have the right to terminate a component's charter.

ARTICLE XV PUBLICATIONS

Sec. 1. The Journal of Dental Hygiene is the refereed scientific publication of the American Dental Hygienists' Association.

Sec. 2. Additional publications may be authorized by the board of trustees.

ARTICLE XVI FOUNDATIONS AND SPECIAL SECTIONS

The house of delegates may establish, administer, operate or dissolve a foundation or special section as a separate entity to perform or engage in functions or activities deemed necessary or appropriate by the house of delegates and upon terms and conditions established by the house of delegates.

ARTICLE XVII INDEMNIFICATION

The corporation shall, to the fullest extent permitted by Section 24a of the General Not For Profit Corporation Act of the State of Illinois, as the same may be amended and supplemented from time to time, indemnify any and all persons whom it shall have power to indemnify under said section from and against any and all of the expenses, liabilities or other

matters referred to on or covered by said section, and the indemnification provided for herein shall not be deemed exclusive of any other rights to which those indemnified may be entitled under the Articles of Incorporation of the corporation or any agreement, or vote of disinterested trustees or otherwise, both as to action undertaken in his or her official capacity and as to action in another capacity for another corporation or other entity which is undertaken at the behest of the corporation, and shall continue as to a person who has ceased to be a trustee, officer, employee or agent and shall inure to the benefit of the heirs, executors and administrators of such a person. To the extent permitted by applicable law, the indemnification provided shall be contingent upon the indemnitee's giving of prompt notice of any claims for which indemnification is or may be sought and the indemnitee's agreement that the corporation, its designee or its insurance carrier shall be empowered to control, should it so elect, and the manner, nature and extent of the defense the attorneys to be retained to handle the defense, and the terms of settling or resolving any and all such claims for which indemnification is or may be sought.

The indemnification provided by this article shall be limited to the assets of this corporation, and no one shall be personally or individually liable therefore to any extent.

The corporation may purchase and maintain insurance on the behalf of any person who is or was a trustee, officer, employee, agent or delegate of the corporation against any liability asserted against him or her and incurred by him/her in any such capacity, or arising out of his or her status as such or arising out of his or her capacity with another corporation or another entity which is undertaken at the behest of the corporation, whether or not the corporation would have the power to indemnify him or her against such liability under the provision of this article.

ARTICLE XVIII DISSOLUTION

The association shall use its funds only to accomplish the purposes and mission stated in these bylaws, and no part of its funds shall inure or be distributed to the members of the association. On dissolution of the association, all funds remaining shall be distributed to one or more regularly organized and qualified professional societies, trade associations, charitable, educational, scientific or philanthropic organizations to be selected by the board of trustees.

ARTICLE XIX PARLIAMENTARY AUTHORITY

The rules contained in the current edition of Robert's Rules of Order, Newly Revised, shall govern the association in all cases to which they are applicable and in which they are not inconsistent with these bylaws and any special rules of order the association may adopt.

ARTICLE XX
AMENDMENT OF BYLAWS AND CODE OF ETHICS

These bylaws and code of ethics may be amended at any meeting of the house of delegates by a two-thirds vote, provided that a copy of the proposed amendment has been sent to all delegates at least sixty (60) days prior to that meeting, or without notice at any meeting of the house of delegates held during the annual Ssssion by a three-fourths vote.

CODE OF ETHICS FOR DENTAL HYGIENISTS

1. Preamble

As dental hygienists, we are a community of professionals devoted to the prevention of disease and the promotion and improvement of the public's health. We are preventive oral health professionals who provide educational, clinical, and therapeutic services to the public. We strive to live meaningful, productive, satisfying lives that simultaneously serve us, our profession, our society, and the world. Our actions, behaviors, and attitudes are consistent with our commitment to public service. We endorse and incorporate the Code into our daily lives.

2. Purpose

The purpose of a professional code of ethics is to achieve high levels of ethical consciousness, decision making, and practice by the members of the profession. Specific objectives of the Dental Hygiene Code of Ethics are

- to increase our professional and ethical consciousness and sense of ethical responsibility.
- to lead us to recognize ethical issues and choices and to guide us in making more informed ethical decisions.
- to establish a standard for professional judgement and conduct.
- to provide a statement of the ethical behavior the public can expect from us.

The Dental Hygiene Code of Ethics is meant to influence us throughout our careers. It stimulates our continuing study of ethical issues and challenges us to explore our ethical responsibilities. The Code establishes concise standards of behavior to guide the public's expectations of our profession and supports dental hygiene practice, laws and regulations. By holding ourselves accountable to meeting the standards stated in the Code, we enhance the public's trust on which our professional privilege and status are founded.

3. Key Concepts

Our beliefs, principles, values and ethics are concepts reflected in the Code. They are the essential elements of our comprehensive and definitive code of ethics, and are interrelated and mutually dependent.

4. Basic Beliefs

We recognize the importance of the following beliefs that guide our practice and provide context for our ethics:

- The services we provide contribute to the health and well being of society.
- Our education and licensure qualify us to serve the public by preventing and treating oral disease and helping individuals achieve and maintain optimal health.

- Individuals have intrinsic worth, are responsible for their own health, and are entitled to make choices regarding their health.
- Dental hygiene care is an essential component of overall health care and we function interdependently with other health care providers.
- All people should have access to health care, including oral health care.
- We are individually responsible for our actions and the quality of care we provide.

5. Fundamental Principles

These fundamental principles, universal concepts and general laws of conduct provide the foundation for our ethics.

Universality

The principle of universality expects that, if one individual judges an action to be right or wrong in a given situation, other people considering the same action in the same situation would make the same judgement.

Complementarity

The principle of complementarity recognizes the existence of an obligation to justice and basic human rights. In all relationships, it requires considering the values and perspectives of others before making decisions or taking actions affecting them.

Ethics

Ethics are the general standards of right and wrong that guide behavior within society. As generally accepted actions, they can be judged by determining the extent to which they promote good and minimize harm. Ethics compel us to engage in health promotion/disease prevention activities.

Community

This principle expresses our concern for the bond between individuals, the community, and society in general. It leads us to preserve natural resources and inspires us to show concern for the global environment.

Responsibility

Responsibility is central to our ethics. We recognize that there are guidelines for making ethical choices and accept responsibility for knowing and applying them. We accept the consequences of our actions or the failure to act and are willing to make ethical choices and publicly affirm them.

6. Core Values

We acknowledge these values as general for our choices and actions.

Individual autonomy and respect for human beings

People have the right to be treated with respect. They have the right to informed consent prior to treatment, and they have the right to full disclosure of all relevant information so that they can make informed choices about their care.

Confidentiality

We respect the confidentiality of client information and relationships as a demonstration of the value we place on individual autonomy. We acknowledge our obligation to justify any violation of a confidence.

Societal Trust

We value client trust and understand that public trust in our profession is based on our actions and behavior.

Nonmaleficence

We accept our fundamental obligation to provide services in a manner that protects all clients and minimizes harm to them and others involved in their treatment.

Beneficence

We have a primary role in promoting the well being of individuals and the public by engaging in health promotion/disease prevention activities.

Justice and Fairness

We value justice and support the fair and equitable distribution of health care resources. We believe all people should have access to high-quality, affordable oral healthcare.

Veracity

We accept our obligation to tell the truth and expect that others will do the same. We value self-knowledge and seek truth and honesty in all relationships.

7. Standards of Professional Responsibility

We are obligated to practice our profession in a manner that supports our purpose, beliefs, and values in accordance with the fundamental principles that support our ethics. We acknowledge the following responsibilities:

To Ourselves as Individuals...

- Avoid self-deception, and continually strive for knowledge and personal growth.
- Establish and maintain a lifestyle that supports optimal health.
- Create a safe work environment.
- Assert our own interests in ways that are fair and equitable.
- Seek the advice and counsel of others when challenged with ethical dilemmas.
- Have realistic expectations of ourselves and recognize our limitations.

To Ourselves as Professionals...

- Enhance professional competencies through continuous learning in order to practice according to high standards of care.
- Support dental hygiene peer-review systems and quality-assurance measures.
- Develop collaborative professional relationships and exchange knowledge to enhance our own lifelong professional development.

To Family and Friends...

- Support the efforts of others to establish and maintain healthy lifestyles and respect the rights of friends and family.

To Clients...

- Provide oral health care utilizing high levels of professional knowledge, judgement, and skill.
- Maintain a work environment that minimizes the risk of harm.
- Serve all clients without discrimination and avoid action toward any individual or group that may be interpreted as discriminatory.
- Hold professional client relationships confidential.
- Communicate with clients in a respectful manner.
- Promote ethical behavior and high standards of care by all dental hygienists.
- Serve as an advocate for the welfare of clients.
- Provide clients with the information necessary to make informed decisions about their oral health and encourage their full participation in treatment decisions and goals.
- Refer clients to other healthcare providers when their needs are beyond our ability or scope of practice.
- Educate clients about high-quality oral health care.

To Colleagues...

- conduct professional activities and programs, and develop relationships in ways that are honest, responsible, and appropriately open and candid.
- Encourage a work environment that promotes individual professional growth and development.
- Collaborate with others to create a work environment that minimizes risk to the personal health and safety of our colleagues.
- Manage conflicts constructively.
- Support the efforts of other dental hygienists to communicate the dental hygiene philosophy and preventive oral care.
- Inform other health care professionals about the relationship between general and oral health.
- Promote human relationships that are mutually beneficial, including those with other health care professionals.

To Employees and Employers...

- Conduct professional activities and programs, and develop relationships in ways that are honest, responsible, open, and candid.
- Manage conflicts constructively.

- Support the right of our employees and employers to work in an environment that promotes wellness.
- Respect the employment rights of our employers and employees.

To the Dental Hygiene Profession...

- Participate in the development and advancement of our profession.
- Avoid conflicts of interest and declare them when they occur.
- Seek opportunities to increase public awareness and understanding of oral health practices.
- Act in ways that bring credit to our profession while demonstrating appropriate respect for colleagues in other professions.
- Contribute time, talent, and financial resources to support and promote our profession.
- Promote a positive image for our profession.
- Promote a framework for professional education that develops dental hygiene competencies to meet the oral and overall health needs of the public.

To the Community and Society...

- Recognize and uphold the laws and regulations governing our profession.
- Document and report inappropriate, inadequate, or substandard care and/or illegal activities by a health care provider, to the responsible authorities.
- Use peer review as a mechanism for identifying inappropriate, inadequate, or substandard care provided by dental hygienists.
- Comply with local, state, and federal statutes that promote public health and safety.
- Develop support systems and quality-assurance programs in the workplace to assist dental hygienists in providing the appropriate standard of care.
- Promote access to dental hygiene services for all, supporting justice and fairness in the distribution of healthcare resources.
- Act consistently with the ethics of the global scientific community of which our profession is a part.
- Create a healthful workplace ecosystem to support a healthy environment.
- Recognize and uphold our obligation to provide pro bono service.

To Scientific Investigation...

We accept responsibility for conducting research according to the fundamental principles underlying our ethical beliefs in compliance with universal codes, governmental standards, and professional guidelines for the care and management of experimental subjects. We acknowledge our ethical obligations to the scientific community:

- Conduct research that contributes knowledge that is valid and useful to our clients and society.
- Use research methods that meet accepted scientific standards.
- Use research resources appropriately.
- Systematically review and justify research in progress to insure the most favorable

benefit-to-risk ratio to research subjects.

- Submit all proposals involving human subjects to an appropriate human subject review committee.
- Secure appropriate institutional committee approval for the conduct of research involving animals.
- Obtain informed consent from human subjects participating in research that is based on specification published in Title 21 Code of Federal Regulations Part 46.
- Respect the confidentiality and privacy of data.
- Seek opportunities to advance dental hygiene knowledge through research by providing financial, human, and technical resources whenever possible.
- Report research results in a timely manner.
- Report research findings completely and honestly, drawing only those conclusions that are supported by the data presented.
- Report the names of investigators fairly and accurately.
- Interpret the research and the research of others accurately and objectively, drawing conclusions that are supported by the data presented and seeking clarity when uncertain.
- Critically evaluate research methods and results before applying new theory and technology in practice.
- Be knowledgeable concerning currently accepted preventive and therapeutic methods, products, and technology and their application to our practice.

