

**Invitation to Comment on
Amendments to the *Dental Profession Act* and Regulations**

Introduction

Community Services is seeking public input on proposed changes to the *Dental Profession Act* and regulations. These proposed changes are intended to enable dental hygienists to provide specific services for which they are trained and to prepare a patient for an examination by a dentist.

In Canada, training for dental hygienists consists of either a diploma program or a bachelor's level degree. Typically, these programs range between 18 months and 4 years. While dental hygienists are professionally trained and accredited, an update to the act is required to make it legal for them to provide these services. The list of services dental hygienists can provide in Yukon requires clarification and is currently much more restrictive than in other parts of Canada. For example, most Canadian jurisdictions permit dental hygienists to take x-rays, and in most of those jurisdictions the x-rays can be taken before the patient is examined by a dentist.

These amendments would permit dental hygienists to provide these services in dental clinics and in schools as part of the Yukon Children's Dental Program. Yukon families who do not have regular access to a dentist rely on the Yukon Children's Dental Program in schools for their children's dental care.

We would like to know that we are on the right track with the changes we are proposing. We would like to hear from dental professionals and members of the public who are interested in the scope of services that dental hygienists provide. What follows is an overview of the proposed changes, and some questions for your consideration.

Highlights of Proposed Amendments

Clarified Scope of Practice	Amendments to the <i>Dental Profession Act</i> regulations would clarify the scope of practice for dental hygienists in Yukon. This would permit dental hygienists to provide x-rays, fluoride treatments, sealant placements, and interim stabilization treatments.
Pre-examination Services	Amendments to the <i>Dental Profession Act</i> would enable dental hygienists to provide specific services in preparation for examination by a dentist. These would include x-rays and fluoride treatments.
License and Registration	Amendments to the <i>Dental Profession Act</i> would create a distinction between licensing and registration for all dental professions regulated by the act. This would not affect the experience of regulated dental professions, but would enable more accurate record keeping by the registrar.

1. As a dental professional, do you have specific concerns regarding the clarified and expanded scope of practice for dental hygienists proposed by these changes?
2. Do you see any implications for your profession as a result of these changes?
3. As a member of the public, do you think these changes will meet the needs of Yukoners seeking hygienist services as part of the Yukon Children's Dental Program?

Please provide your comments and suggestions to the Community Services' Professional Licensing and Regulatory Affairs Branch at: plra@gov.yk.ca.