



# COLLEGE CONTACT

Volume 9, Issue 1

Spring 2002

## Your "Contact Point" with the College of Denturists of Ontario

### MISSION STATEMENT:

*The mission of the College of Denturists of Ontario is to regulate, govern and develop the profession of Denturism in Ontario while serving the public interest.*

### PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE:

The College welcomes Susan J. Carlyle, LL.B., as our new Registrar. Ms. Carlyle has extensive experience in dealing with complex regulatory issues as a result of her past activities with the Law Society of Upper Canada. Her knowledge of the basic principles of professional conduct and administrative law as it relates to compliance, disciplinary and competence matters is certain to prove an asset to the College in fulfilling its mandate under the *Regulated Health Professions Act, 1991* and the *Denturism Act, 1991*.

We would also like to thank Roy E. Todd, CD, DD, RDT, for his services as Interim Registrar, as well as for his previous activities as Chief Examiner and Chair of the Quality Assurance Committee. The College is quite fortunate that Mr. Todd was willing and available to take on the position of Acting Registrar on such short notice.

*Keith Collins, DD*  
*President*

### OPEN MEETINGS AND HEARINGS:

For more information regarding the date and location of up-coming open meetings, please call the office from 9:00 am. - 5:00 p.m. Monday to Friday, either locally at (416) 925-6331 or toll-free at 1-888-236-4326.

Friday, March 22, 2002 — Council Meeting  
Friday, June 21, 2002 — AGM & Council Meeting

*Please contact the CDO at least one week in advance to confirm your attendance as seating is limited.*

### REGISTRAR'S MESSAGE:

I am very pleased to be on board as your new Registrar in these fascinating and challenging times for members of the Regulated Health Professions.

As the health professions are becoming subject to more and more legal obligations, it is essential that the members and their governing bodies work together to develop the policies and procedures necessary to protect the public that we serve.

The College needs more and more input and assistance from our registrants in order to carry out our mandate to regulate the profession in the best interests of the Public. Experienced Denturists and new members alike have the right to tell their governing body how its actions and policies are perceived, how the patients feel about the care that they are getting and what could be done to improve the process.

Please call me to discuss the many different ways that you can get involved in the governance and regulation of your chosen profession.

I hope to hear from all of you in the near future.

*Susan J. Carlyle, LL.B.*  
*Registrar*

*As a result of staffing changes, the publication of the College Contact suffered a brief delay. The Patient Relations Committee is pleased that their activities are back on track.*

*Any questions, comments, or suggestions for future articles are welcomed and may be submitted to the CDO by mail, fax or e-mail.*

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## CDO LICENSE # 1 RETIRES

Karl Barthmann, the first Denturist to be granted a license to practice in Ontario, has retired. Now 80 years old, Mr. Barthmann successfully completed the very first entry-to-practise examinations in 1973. In the late 1970's, he purchased a practice from a local prosthodontist where he has practiced independently, until his daughter joined him as a licensed denturist in 1986. Mr. Barthmann and his wife plan to take as many cruises as they can fit into their busy schedules.

## ELECTION 2002 UPDATE:

This year, the opportunity to stand for election or nominate a colleague is available to all licensed denturists in districts 3, 4 and 5.

Duly completed nomination forms, recently sent to all eligible Denturists, must be returned to the CDO office no later than 2:00 p.m. on Wednesday April 24, 2002.

Being a Council member is a three year part-time commitment involving a number of responsibilities. Varied member backgrounds and experience assist in the consideration of issues from a broad perspective. A per diem is paid and expenses, such as travel and accommodation are covered where appropriate.

Please give serious consideration to letting your name stand. If you would like to receive more information on CDO activities or other opportunities to get involved, please do not hesitate to contact the College at (416) 925-6331.

## RESUSCITATION / TREATMENT KITS

Some of our members have been approached by representatives of a company selling "Emergency Treatment Kits" for use by Denturists. The kits include items such as Epinephrine injections, Autopine Sulfate, Diphenhydramine, Insta-Glucose and Ammonia inhalants to name a few.

The College feels very strongly that our members ought not to keep such materials in their professional practice environment until full consideration is given to the legal implications of doing so. We are in the process of arranging to meet with representatives of the company and to develop guidelines for appropriate first aid equipment and training in the Denturist's practice.

If you have any question on this or any other practice standard issue, please contact the College locally at (416) 925-6331 or toll-free at 1-888-236-4326.

## HIGHLIGHTS FROM THE DECEMBER COUNCIL MEETING:

- ◆ The Council considered several options to reduce the costs to the CDO including renovations to the office premises to permit Council meetings to be held on-site.
- ◆ The Council reviewed several pieces of pending legislation which will impact the profession, including Privacy of Information, Ethics and Transparency and Professional Incorporation.
- ◆ The Council was updated on the progress of our joint submission with the College of Dental Hygienists pertaining to Dental Hygienists and Denturists prescribing radiographs.
- ◆ The Council discussed developments with and responses to the Five-year Review of the RHPA.

***It is with great sadness that we inform you, Ben Sweet, a man that many registrants considered the "father of denturism in Ontario" passed away at his home in Sudbury, Ontario in December 2001.***

## IMPLICATIONS OF BREACHING COLLEGE REGULATIONS AND STANDARDS:

### USE OF EDUCATIONAL QUALIFICATIONS:

The College has received a number of inquiries recently as to when members can use designations and educational qualifications. Typically, this issue arises when members use their educational qualifications or designations in advertisements, signs, letterhead and business cards.

It is professional misconduct for a denturist to use a term, title or designation other than one authorized by the *Denturism Act* or the regulations. There is provision for the Executive Committee to authorize the use of an impersonal name or title in certain circumstances.

The reason for these rules is to protect the public from being misled. Often, educational qualifications or designations are used in a manner that confuses the public and leaves them with the impression that a denturist has qualifications that he or she, in fact, does not have. A byproduct of these rules is also that denturists can then communicate their services to potential clients on a level playing field without other denturists having an unfair advantage by means of potentially misleading advertisements.

The Executive Committee is prepared to offer guidance to members as to the sorts of educational qualifications or designations that would be considered misleading. Members should submit a letter to the Committee setting out the educational qualification or designation intended to be used, a description of where and how the educational qualification or designation was obtained, and back-up documents to verify the obtaining or achieving of the educational qualification or designation.

## CLOSING OR LEAVING A PRACTICE RESPONSIBLY:

**I am closing my practice. What should I do with my records? This is a common question posed to the College. The two underlying principles that apply are as follows:**

1. Records must be maintained for a minimum period of 5 years from the time of the patient's last visit. Members may wish to maintain records for a longer period of time in case questions arise in respect of their treatment or services.
2. Patients should be able to access their records or information contained in their records.

How these two fundamental principles are achieved depends on the circumstances of your closing the office.

Consider the following examples:

**(a) The office is closing but you are continuing to practice at another office.**

You can maintain the records at the new office. Unless you are keeping the same telephone number it might be a good idea to write to your patients so they know where to find you.

**(b) You are closing all of your offices but you are not resigning from the College.**

You can maintain your records in a secure place (not your garage) for 5 years. Or you can give your records to another dentist who will hold them for the required period on your behalf. You should send a letter to your clients telling them where they can reach you to obtain their records. Alternatively, in the letter you can tell your clients that if they want a copy of their record they should contact you by a set date at a set address.

**(c) You are leaving the profession entirely.**

Again you need to make some arrangements for you or another dentist to hold the records for five years. Even though you are not intending to remain a member of the College, you are obliged to make such arrangements. The College has the jurisdiction to take disciplinary action, including a fine, against members who fail to make appropriate arrangements. Again, you should send a letter to your clients telling them where they can reach you to obtain their records. Alternatively, in the letter you can tell your clients that if they want a copy of their record they should contact you by a set date at a set address.

**(d) You are selling your practice to another dentist.**

The purchasing dentist will likely want to maintain your records. You can enter into an agreement with him or her to maintain the records for five years and provide you and your clients reasonable access to them. If the new office will be at the same location clients do not need any additional notification. If the office will be at a new location, a letter should probably be sent to recent clients.

*For more information see the article entitled "Leaving a Practice" published in the January 1998 issue of Contact and the pending record keeping regulation. Both of these documents are also found at tab 2 of the quality assurance binder. The College is currently considering detailed guidelines which may assist you further.*

***The Patient Relations Committee is always looking for suggestions for up-coming issues.***

***If you have any specific questions regarding standards of practice issues, chances are your colleagues do as well. Please send any questions to the College by mail, fax or e-mail and we will try to provide you with additional information in future issues of the College Contact.***

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## QUESTIONS & ANSWERS:

**Q. I like an informal and relaxed office environment. Is this likely to lead to complaints about my practice?**

**A.** Some people like to work in a more informal environment than others. Generally this is a matter of choice for the individuals involved. You and your staff members may have established a working style with which you are both comfortable. Clients, however, who attend your office infrequently, may see these interactions in a different light, and may be offended by what they observe.

Denturists need to remember that all employer/employee and patient/practitioner relationships must be courteous, respectful and professional.

In an effort to prevent complaints about their conduct, Denturists should ensure that they avoid: the telling of any sexually related or politically incorrect jokes; the making of personal comments about an individual or a particular group; and/or the use of terms of endearment when referring to staff or clients.

**Q. I am worried that a patient will misinterpret a therapeutic procedure, and as a result, make a sexual abuse allegation against me. How do I ensure that procedures such as putting on the bib, taking impressions or assessing dental bite will not be misinterpreted?**

**A.** The most important component in ensuring that patients do not misinterpret an aspect of the professional encounter, is communication. Patients may only attend a Denturist's office once every few years. For this reason, they may not be familiar with the specific procedures required to assess for and prepare dentures.

It is important that the Denturist explain each procedure to the patient prior to commencing it. The Denturist should outline what action will be taken, why it is necessary, and then seek the patient's consent to proceed. If after the patient consents and the procedure has been started, the Denturist notices any signs of anxiety or discomfort in the patient, he/she should stop the procedure and address the patient's concerns.

## INCORPORATION FOR REGULATED HEALTH PROFESSIONALS

In your annual registration renewal package, you will have received proposed revisions to the College's by-laws relating to Professional Incorporation. The Ministry of Health and Long-Term Care has recently passed the regulations that will allow our profession to incorporate

The wording is slightly different from what had been expected. As a result, we ask you to disregard the Proposed Revisions to the CDO regulations and by-laws contained in the Annual Renewal Package.

We are drafting a new version in conjunction with other Regulated Health Colleges that will be presented to Council for approval shortly. Once approved, it will be sent to the membership for review and comment. The CDO hopes that the process of Incorporation can be in place by the end of the year.

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***We look forward to receiving your comments and feedback following the distribution of each issue.***

## QUALITY ASSURANCE UPDATE

Along with your annual registration renewal package, all members, active and inactive, have also been asked to submit a copy of their completed professional portfolio from the Quality Assurance Manual. The manual was distributed to all members in January 2001. The Portfolio is designed to serve as a self assessment tool to assist you in evaluating the ways in which you maintain your continued competency in the practice of denturism.

As this is the first time you will be submitting your portfolio, the QA Committee suggests that you consider your activities over the last three years.

Make sure that you keep a copy of the portfolio for yourself as completing it is an annual activity of the Quality Assurance Program.

### **Quick Fact:**

**Effective communication is key to ensuring that patients understand the reasons behind each therapeutic activity and do not misinterpret the Denturist's actions.**

### LETTERS TO THE EDITOR:

To express your views on editorial content or on any College matter, please contact the Editorial Board / Patient Relations Committee (Harry Orfanidis, Carlo Di Nardo, John Brereton and Ken Battell with administrative support from Michelle Kennedy and Susan Carlyle) by mail, fax or e-mail.

### HOW TO CONTACT THE COLLEGE:

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