

CDHA position statements and papers: Questions and answers

What is the difference between a position statement and a position paper?

A position statement is a concise statement of an organizations official position on critical issues. A position statement is usually between one to several sentences in length. A position paper is a lengthier document which contains a comprehensive review and critical analysis of specific issues, as well as a list of recommendations. A position statement is developed based on the findings in the position paper.

What is the purpose of CDHA position statements?

CDHA position statements are concise statements of CDHA's official positions on critical issues relating to oral health. These statements are supported by research which is analyzed in CDHA position papers and based on CDHA's policy goals.

Position statements have the following purposes, they

- Allow CDHA to provide leadership on important issues.
- Alert CDHA members, the public and government about important oral health issues.
- Clarify priority issues for government follow up.
- Provide direction for government decision makers on oral health matters.
- Provide direction for dental hygiene clinicians, organizations, and educational institutions.
- Provide information and direction to oral health advocates.

What is the purpose of CDHA position papers?

CDHA position papers are comprehensive reviews and critical analysis of the literature on specific topics. They include a critical analysis of the literature, as well as recommendations and position statements.

CDHA position papers have two purposes: first, to gather comprehensive background information on oral health issues that are of concern to the Canadian Dental Hygienists Association (CDHA), its members, oral health practitioners, educators, researchers, policy-makers and the public; and second, to examine the literature on a specific topic in order to explain issues in some detail and to permit CDHA to base its position statements on in-depth analysis.

What are the guiding principles for CDHA position statements?

CDHA position statements

- Pertain to national or international dental hygiene and oral health issues.
- Present new positions on a topic area or support other organizations/associations positions.
- Are developed in consultation with issue experts, CDHA members, and other organizations with an interest in the topic area.
- Maximize CDHA member involvement in the development process.

How are CDHA position statements/papers developed?

Emerging issues are identified by CDHA Research Advisory Committee members, CDHA staff, CDHA members, the public, industry, government and other stakeholders. A course of action is developed by CDHA staff to deal with the emerging issues. A position paper may be developed in order to determine if a position statement is warranted, a position paper may be developed collaboratively with another association/organization, the issue may be referred to another association/organization, or the issue may simply be monitored. The development of a position paper does not guarantee the development of a position statement, since the research may not support the development of a formal position.

Position papers are developed by an individual with research expertise, in consultation with the CDHA Research Advisory Committee, issue experts and also CDHA members.

Development process:

- Develop the research question(s), or PICO statement, which includes a statement about the population, intervention or exposure, comparison, and outcome.
- Conduct a literature search of relevant international English language research primarily focusing on the last 5 to 10 years, of articles published in MEDLINE and the Cumulative Index of Nursing and Allied Health Literature (CINAHL) databases and the Cochrane controlled trials register. The search will include “grey” literature, information not reported in scientific periodicals, as well as websites known to contain publications on the topic. In addition, the researcher will manually search references cited in the database search articles. Journals that are not indexed on these databases but that are relevant to the topic will be identified from the CDHA collection.
- Consult with issue experts regarding the literature sources and the outline of the paper.
- Develop draft paper.

- Consult with issue experts, CDHA members and Board, and organizations with an interest in the topic area. The member consultation consists of an on-line survey.
- Revise paper.
- Publish in the Canadian Journal of Dental Hygiene and post on the CDHA web site.

How will CDHA position statements and papers be distributed?

CDHA position statements and papers will be distributed to CDHA members, politicians, policy-makers, government bureaucrats, and the media in order to communicate and advocate for changes in funding, policies, programs and services. CDHA periodically presents briefs to government bodies such as the House of Commons Standing Committee on Finance and the House of Commons Standing Committee on Health. The CDHA government briefs, presented to these government bodies, will include position statements and research found in the position papers. CDHA members will be notified about new position statements/papers via e-mail broadcasts and the position statements/papers will be published in the Canadian Journal of Dental Hygiene. Also, power point presentation material may be developed upon request from the CDHA Research Advisory Committee, by individual CDHA members, or the public.