



SDHA

Saskatchewan Dental Hygienists' Association

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SDHA Laser Policy Position Statement – 2022

In February 2014, the Saskatchewan Dental Hygienists' Association (SDHA) first established a position statement regarding the use of lasers by registered dental hygienists for periodontal treatment. At that time, a commitment to perform a bi-annual review of this policy as it related to current research and practice was made. A review of literature and best practice was subsequently performed in 2016, 2018, 2020, and 2022.

It is the SDHA's primary responsibility to ensure the public receives safe, competent dental hygiene care, and thus the establishment of policies/guidelines relating to scope of practice falls within the SDHA's Council's mandate.

In the summer of 2022, a working group was struck that included SDHA Council members, and other SDHA dental hygiene members. The following review was performed:

- Consultation with all SK Periodontists
- Consultation with the Department of Periodontology, University of Saskatchewan College of Dentistry
- Consultation with laser experts across Canada
- Consultation with the College of Dental Surgeons of Saskatchewan
- Review of the position statements from the American Academy of Periodontology (AAP)
- Review of the position statements from the Canadian Academy of Periodontology (CAP)
- Review of the current research in the field
- Review of policy statements of other Canadian Dental Hygiene Regulatory Authorities

Based on this review, the SDHA's position statement regarding the use of lasers by dental hygienists for periodontal treatment remains unchanged: The SDHA does not allow the use of lasers in the treatment of periodontal disease, or other oral conditions (aphthous ulcers, geographic tongue, etc).

The SDHA has adapted this position through the review of research, legislation and consultation with experts. Laser technology is not utilized or supported for the treatment of periodontal disease by Saskatchewan Periodontists, nor is it taught as part of the curriculum of either the dental hygiene or dentistry programs in Saskatchewan. In addition, there continues to be a lack of high-quality scientific evidence regarding the efficacy of lasers in the treatment of periodontal disease. In accordance with The *Radiation Health and Safety Regulations*, dental hygienists are not named as qualified operators of laser devices.

The SDHA Council respects that current research and practice must continually be considered. As such, this policy and related literature will be reviewed bi-annually (next review in 2024)