



PROFESSIONAL STANDARDS

FOR THE ORAL HEALTH TEAM

June 30, 2025

BCCOHP

British Columbia College of
Oral Health Professionals

About BCCOHP's Standards Framework

The British Columbia College of Oral Health Professionals' (BCCOHP's) Standards Framework is made up of two types of standards:

PROFESSIONAL STANDARDS

Oral health professionals are required to meet BCCOHP's **Professional Standards** with regard to professional and ethical performance, conduct and behaviour. The Professional Standards apply to all aspects of oral health care.

PRACTICE STANDARDS

Practice Standards are additional requirements for high-risk aspects of oral health care that must be met alongside the Professional Standards.

The Professional Standards are the foundation of BCCOHP's Standards Framework. Together, the Professional and Practice Standards support oral health professionals in the delivery of safe oral health care while also providing patients a reference for what to expect from oral health professionals.

Compliance with BCCOHP Standards

The Professional Standards are the minimum professional and ethical requirements for oral health professionals. It is mandatory for regulated oral health professionals to comply with the standards. The standards will be used to make regulatory decisions, including assessments of complaint investigations, and failure to comply with the standards may be considered professional misconduct.

They apply to all team members involved in the provision of oral health care, whether there is direct or indirect patient contact, including:

- Certified dental assistants
- Dental therapists
- Dental hygienists
- Dentists
- Dental technicians
- Denturists

Other health professionals, unregulated members of the team and staff who support the oral health team should also be aware of and follow the Professional and Practice Standards for oral health care. Regardless of scope of practice, it is important for the oral health team to know and understand the standards, and to take shared accountability for patient safety.

PROFESSIONAL DISCRETION

We set expectations through high-level, broadly stated principles, rather than detailed and prescriptive rules. A principle-based approach gives latitude to the oral health professionals we oversee to make decisions that provide safe care to patients. Our standards are not designed to be exhaustive and should be used in combination with professional discretion and individual patient needs.

PATIENT AGENCY

The standards are written to help patients and the public of BC understand the requirements for their oral health team, and to recognize they have agency by knowing what to expect from their oral health team and how to advocate for their oral health care. This is captured in the Patient Outcomes below.

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Introduction

One of the main ways that BCCOHP protects the public is by setting clear expectations for the delivery of safe, patient-centred oral health care.

BCCOHP's Professional Standards are the minimum requirements for professional and ethical performance, conduct and behaviour for oral health professionals in BC. The Professional Standards are the foundation of BCCOHP's Standards Framework. They are core professional and ethical requirements that apply to all aspects of oral health care and all oral health professionals.

ORAL HEALTH TEAM

The Professional Standards take a team-based approach and are written for the whole oral health team, including regulated members and unregulated members and oral health professionals outside of your oral health facility who also play a role in patient health and safety. Examples of unregulated members include chairside assistants, laboratory support staff, office managers and receptionists.

The standards encourage and foster collaboration and accountability for all members of the oral health team. While only regulated health professionals are required to comply with the standards, it is important for patient safety that unregulated members of the team are aware of and align with the standards.

PATIENT-CENTRED

The Professional Standards are also written for patients and the public in BC. The language used in the standards is intended to be clear and accessible for all audiences.

In addition, the standards include plain language “patient outcomes” to inform patients about what they can expect from their oral health professionals with a view to empower patients to advocate for their oral health care.

APPROACH

The Professional Standards take a [Right-Touch](#) and principle-based approach that considers risk, professional autonomy and individual patient circumstances, while still being enforceable by BCCOHP.

The standards laid out in this document are organized according to overarching principles that consider the bioethical principles of autonomy (individual choice), beneficence (do good), non-maleficence (do no harm) and justice (fairness) that underpin ethical decision-making in health care.

Development of the Professional Standards was informed by consultation with members of the public and oral health professionals. To ensure the standards stay current, they will continue to be evaluated and updated through an ongoing systematic review process.

ADDITIONAL INFORMATION

The Professional Standards were developed in alignment with:

- [BCCOHP's Regulatory Approach](#)
- [Right-Touch Regulation](#)
- [Current and future health legislation in BC, including the *Health Professions Act* and the forthcoming *Health Professions and Occupations Act*](#)

Principles for Oral Health Care

When providing oral health care, the oral health team have an ethical and professional responsibility to:



The principles for oral health care are guides for how to provide professional and ethical care.

The following pages break down each of the six principles above and outline the corresponding Professional Standards required for the oral health team.



Professional Standards and Patient Outcomes

The following pages outline the Professional Standards and the corresponding outcomes that patients can expect from their oral health professionals.

The standards are written in the second person (“you”) point of view and apply to all oral health professionals. Patient outcomes are also written in second person from the perspective of the patient.

For more information on how to demonstrate compliance with the standards, go to the [“How to Meet the Standards”](#) section or click on the standard.



Principle 1: Put the patient’s interests first

PROFESSIONAL STANDARDS	PATIENT OUTCOMES
<p>As part of the oral health team, you must meet the following Professional Standards to put the patient’s interests first:</p> <p>1.1 You must ensure the health needs and well-being of your patient are your primary concerns.</p> <p>1.2 You must identify and address conflicts of interest that may compromise your professional judgement or your patient’s care.</p> <p>1.3 You must identify and address conflicts of interest when treating family members and those with whom you have a dual relationship to ensure you provide safe, objective care.</p> <p>1.4 You must treat your patient with respect.</p> <p>1.5 You must provide care that considers your patient’s overall health and well-being.</p> <p>1.6 You must keep your patient’s personal and health information confidential.</p> <p>1.7 You must respect your patient’s right to raise concerns.</p> <p>1.8 You must support your patient’s continuity of care.</p>	<p>As a patient or member of the public, you can expect the following when receiving oral health care:</p> <p>That your oral health professionals are prioritizing your health needs and well-being.</p> <p>That any conflicts of interest that may impact your care will be declared and managed appropriately.</p> <p>That any interests resulting from a personal relationship between yourself and your oral health professional will be declared and managed appropriately.</p> <p>To be respected.</p> <p>That your care is specific to your health needs.</p> <p>That your personal and health information remains confidential and is not shared without your consent.</p> <p>To be able to raise concerns or submit a complaint when unhappy with care.</p> <p>That your care will continue to be supported when your oral health professional is unable to provide care.</p>

[Refer to page 16 for information on how to meet these standards.](#)



Principle 2: Provide safe and competent care

PROFESSIONAL STANDARDS

As part of the oral health team, you must meet the following Professional Standards to provide safe and competent care:

- 2.1** You must know and comply with all legal requirements that affect the provision of oral health care.
- 2.2** You must only provide care that is within your scope of practice, knowledge, skills and abilities.
- 2.3** You must provide care that is appropriate and clinically acceptable for your patient's needs and prevents avoidable harm.
- 2.4** You must make and securely maintain complete and accurate patient records.
- 2.5** You must only practise in safe and hygienic environments.
- 2.6** You must be accountable for patient safety and the care provided.
- 2.7** You must maintain current knowledge, skills and abilities.
- 2.8** You must be accountable for your own health or wellness.

PATIENT OUTCOMES

As a patient or member of the public, you can expect the following when receiving oral health care:

- To receive safe oral health care that is aligned with current statutory requirements.
- To receive care from qualified professionals.
- To only receive the care that is required and in your best interest.
- That your health care information is accurately recorded and securely maintained.
- To be treated in a safe and clean practice environment.
- That your oral health professional is personally accountable for your care.
- That your oral health professional is up to date with current knowledge and skills.
- To receive care from an oral health professional who is physically, psychologically and emotionally capable of practising safely.

[Refer to page 19 for information on how to meet these standards.](#)



Principle 3: Be culturally aware, equitable and inclusive

PROFESSIONAL STANDARDS	PATIENT OUTCOMES
<p>As part of the oral health team, you must meet the following Professional Standards to be culturally aware, equitable and inclusive:</p> <p>3.1 You must treat your patient fairly and without discrimination.</p> <p>3.2 You must practice in a culturally responsive way that respects your patient's identity, values and beliefs.</p> <p>3.3 You must identify, address and take steps to prevent discrimination and racism.</p> <p>3.4 You must provide culturally safe care for Indigenous Peoples.</p>	<p>As a patient or member of the public, you can expect the following when receiving oral health care:</p> <p>To be treated fairly and receive care without discrimination.</p> <p>That your values and beliefs are respected and considered in your care plan.</p> <p>That your oral health team will address racism and discrimination.</p> <p>That your oral health team respects the distinct rights of, and provides culturally safe care for, Indigenous Peoples.</p>

[Refer to page 22 for information on how to meet these standards.](#)



Principle 4: Communicate effectively and obtain informed consent

PROFESSIONAL STANDARDS	PATIENT OUTCOMES
<p>As part of the oral health team, you must meet the following Professional Standards to communicate effectively and obtain informed consent:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">4.1 You must communicate clearly and effectively with your patient.4.2 You must obtain informed consent prior to providing care.4.3 You must respect your patient's autonomy and support them in making informed decisions about their care.4.4 You must promptly communicate with your patient when care does not go as planned.	<p>As a patient or member of the public, you can expect the following when receiving oral health care:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">That there will be open discussion between you and your oral health team to clearly understand your needs.That your consent will be obtained before dental care or treatment is provided.To make informed decisions about your own care.To be informed if your care did not go as planned and of any potential negative outcomes.

[Refer to page 24 for information on how to meet these standards.](#)



Principle 5: Collaborate in the patient's interest

PROFESSIONAL STANDARDS

As part of the oral health team, you must meet the following Professional Standards to collaborate in your patient's interest:

- 5.1** You must work collaboratively with all members of the oral health team.
- 5.2** You must communicate effectively and foster open dialogue between members of the oral health team.
- 5.3** You must understand the roles and responsibilities of all oral health team members and appropriately refer, accept, authorize or delegate aspects of practice.
- 5.4** You must collaborate effectively with other health professionals outside of oral health care to support your patient's care.

PATIENT OUTCOMES

As a patient or member of the public, you can expect the following when receiving oral health care:

- That your oral health team is working together to support your care.
- That your oral health team is efficiently and effectively communicating to support your care.
- That you will only be treated by qualified professionals.
- That your oral health team will collaborate with other health professionals to support your care.

[Refer to page 26 for information on how to meet these standards.](#)



Principle 6: Build and maintain public trust

PROFESSIONAL STANDARDS

As oral health professionals, you must meet the following Professional Standards to build and maintain public trust:

- 6.1** You must be honest and trustworthy.
- 6.2** You must ensure your oral health team's marketing and advertisements are accurate and do not mislead the public.
- 6.3** You must maintain professional and personal boundaries with your patient.
- 6.4** You must not engage in a sexual relationship with a current patient.
- 6.5** You must not commit any form of sexual misconduct or sexual abuse.
- 6.6** You must address concerns if patients are at risk of harm.
- 6.7** You must know and comply with your obligations as a regulated health professional.

PATIENT OUTCOMES

As a patient or member of the public, you can expect the following when receiving oral health care:


- That your oral health professional is honest and trustworthy.
- To not be misled by false advertising.
- To feel comfortable receiving care and for your oral health professionals to maintain appropriate boundaries.
- That a sexual relationship will not be initiated with your oral health professional while you are their patient.
- To not be subjected to any form of sexual misconduct or sexual abuse.
- That your oral health professionals will advocate for your safety and raise concerns if you are at risk.
- That your oral health team meet their professional obligations.

[Refer to page 28 for information on how to meet these standards.](#)



How to Meet the Standards

The following pages provide information to support the oral health team in meeting the Professional Standards.



NOTE: Terminology is hyperlinked to the [Glossary of Terms](#) within the text.



Principle 1: Put the patient's interests first

1.1 You must ensure the health needs and well-being of your patient are your primary concerns.

To meet the standard, you must demonstrate that:

- 1.1.1** You put the best interests of your patient ahead of any other considerations.
- 1.1.2** When you do not agree with your patient's treatment preference, you inform them of your concerns and continue to support their care where reasonable.
- 1.1.3** You manage internal or external factors that adversely impact patient care, for example, social or business pressures.

1.2 You must identify and address conflicts of interest that may compromise your professional judgement or your patient's care.

To meet the standard, you must demonstrate that:

- 1.2.1** You recognize any interests that could conflict with your duty to provide care in your patient's best interest and inform your patient and/or others involved.
- 1.2.2** You address any [conflicts of interest](#) that may compromise your patient's care or your professional judgement, by:
 - a. disclosing the nature of the interest to your patient and/or others involved in a timely manner and resolving any identified conflicts of interest before obtaining [informed consent](#) to continue with treatment, or
 - b. ending or limiting the relationship with your patient to avoid a perceived or real conflict of interest.
- 1.2.3** You document any identified conflicts of interest and their management in your patient's record.
- 1.2.4** You refuse gifts, additional payment or hospitality if accepting them could negatively impact or appear to negatively impact patient care or professional judgement.

Principle 1: Put the patient's interests first

1.3 You must identify and address conflicts of interest when treating family members and those with whom you have a dual relationship to ensure you provide safe, objective care.

To meet the standard, you must demonstrate that:

- 1.3.1** Before providing treatment to a patient with whom you have a [dual relationship](#), you consider how your relationship could impact your ability to provide unbiased or [impartial](#) care.
- 1.3.2** You disclose your interests and manage any perceived or real [conflicts of interest](#) when treating patients with whom you have a dual relationship.
- 1.3.3** Your relationship does not influence your patient's [autonomy](#) to make decisions or their ability to disclose personal information, provide [informed consent](#), ask for a second opinion/referral or raise concerns.
- 1.3.4** You consult with other qualified health professionals, where possible, to ensure objectivity when treating patients with whom you have a dual relationship.
- 1.3.5** While you can treat patients with whom you have a dual relationship, you provide options for referral to other practitioners when warranted.

1.4 You must treat your patient with respect.

To meet the standard, you must demonstrate that:

- 1.4.1** You provide an approach to care that is open, honest, compassionate and supportive in all your interactions with your patient and others involved with their care.
- 1.4.2** You have an active regard for your patient's well-being and recognize, address and manage anxiety, fear or [trauma](#), where possible by taking a [trauma-informed approach](#) to care.
- 1.4.3** You recognize the [power imbalance](#) between yourself and your patient due to your professional status and engage with them respectfully.

1.5 You must provide care that considers your patient's overall health and well-being.

To meet the standard, you must demonstrate that:

- 1.5.1** You recognize and respect the individual health status, preferences, values and personal circumstances of your patient that may impact their ability to receive care.
- 1.5.2** You recognize the triggers and effects of your patient's previous experiences, including a history of [trauma](#), that may impact the provision of care.
- 1.5.3** You are flexible and make reasonable accommodations for your patient when required. For example, you make accommodations for those with a visible and/or invisible disability, such as hearing impairment or a mental health condition, [vulnerable populations](#) and those who have experienced trauma.

Principle 1: Put the patient's interests first

1.6 You must keep your patient's personal and health information confidential.

To meet the standard, you must demonstrate that:

- 1.6.1** You collect, access and use patient information in compliance with applicable legislation and practice standards.
- 1.6.2** You discuss patient information privately and ensure personal and health information is not accessed, overheard or shared with those not involved in your patient's care either verbally or through any other medium.
- 1.6.3** You only disclose necessary and relevant patient information when required by law or with your patient's consent.
- 1.6.4** You ensure that all members of the oral health team and staff are aware of the importance of patient confidentiality and keeping information private.

1.7 You must respect your patient's right to raise concerns.

To meet the standard, you must demonstrate that:

- 1.7.1** You listen to your patient and address their concerns when they are unhappy with treatment.
- 1.7.2** You respect your patient's right to file a complaint with BCCOHP and do not dissuade or prohibit them from making a complaint or communicating with BCCOHP.
- 1.7.3** You do not take adverse action against your patient if they make a complaint or assist in BCCOHP investigations.
- 1.7.4** You have safe and easily accessible processes in place to encourage and support your patient to provide you with feedback in relation to care.

1.8 You must support your patient's continuity of care.

To meet the standard, you must demonstrate that:

- 1.8.1** You have alternative arrangements in place to manage your patient's care when you are unavailable to treat them.
- 1.8.2** You inform your patient and support them in maintaining [continuity of care](#) when you do not have the capacity or ability to proceed with care.
- 1.8.3** You make accurate and legible records and communicate effectively with colleagues to support and manage your patient's continuity of care.

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Principle 2: Provide safe and competent care

2.1 You must know and comply with all legal requirements that affect the provision of oral health care.

To meet the standard, you must demonstrate that:

- 2.1.1** You know and comply with the requirements for practice in the [Act](#), regulations and BCCOHP bylaws.
- 2.1.2** You know and comply with BCCOHP's current Professional and Practice Standards.
- 2.1.3** You know and comply with all relevant federal, provincial and municipal legislation or other requirements, such as public health orders from the Provincial Health Officer (PHO).

2.2 You must only provide care that is within your scope of practice, knowledge, skills and abilities.

To meet the standard, you must demonstrate that:

- 2.2.1** You only provide aspects of practice within your [scope of practice](#) in accordance with the requirements and limitations in the [Act](#), regulations and BCCOHP bylaws.
- 2.2.2** You have the current education, training and relevant qualifications needed to safely provide patient care.
- 2.2.3** You seek help and/or refer your patient when you recognize limitations in your ability to provide safe and competent care.

2.3 You must provide care that is appropriate and clinically acceptable for your patient's needs and prevents avoidable harm.

To meet the standard, you must demonstrate that:

- 2.3.1** You take time to independently assess and evaluate the current needs of your patient to determine and provide clinically acceptable and evidence-based treatment.
- 2.3.2** You prevent avoidable physical and emotional harm or duress in the care of your patient.
- 2.3.3** You take your patient's comfort into account and offer appropriate pain control measures.
- 2.3.4** You identify potential [risks](#) to your patient to appropriately manage overall health and [safety](#) to prevent harm.

Principle 2: Provide safe and competent care

2.4 You must make and securely maintain complete and accurate patient records.

To meet the standard, you must demonstrate that:

- 2.4.1** You know and comply with BCCOHP's Recordkeeping Practice Standards
(Note: Legacy college standards are in force until Practice Standards are developed).

2.5 You must only practise in safe and hygienic environments.

To meet the standard, you must demonstrate that:

- 2.5.1** You ensure that the environment in which you provide oral health care meets relevant legal and regulatory requirements.
- 2.5.2** You follow infection prevention and control requirements established by BCCOHP and all applicable government or legislative requirements.
- 2.5.3** You ensure that the environment in which you provide oral health care has appropriate and properly maintained equipment in accordance with the manufacturer's instructions or relevant legislation.
- 2.5.4** You safely and securely store, use, take inventory and dispose of any drugs and hazardous materials.
- 2.5.5** You ensure that the environment in which you provide oral health care has a sufficient and properly maintained medical emergency kit that is available and accessible.
- 2.5.6** You ensure that the environment in which you provide oral health care has appropriate emergency protocols in place. You participate with your team in regular emergency training and understand your role and responsibilities in the event of a medical emergency.

Principle 2: Provide safe and competent care

2.6 You must be accountable for patient **safety** and the care provided.

To meet the standard, you must demonstrate that:

- 2.6.1** You are accountable for the care you and your team provide.
- 2.6.2** You share accountability for your patient's **continuity of care** when collaborating with another health professional.

2.7 You must maintain current knowledge, skills and abilities.

To meet the standard, you must demonstrate that:

- 2.7.1** You remain current and keep your knowledge, skills and abilities up to date throughout your professional career.
- 2.7.2** You use your professional judgement and reflect on patient outcomes to identify potential gaps or deficiencies in your knowledge, skills and ability and take steps to address them.
- 2.7.3** You fulfill your BCCOHP Quality Assurance requirements.

2.8 You must be accountable for your own health or wellness.

To meet the standard, you must demonstrate that:

- 2.8.1** You are physically, psychologically and emotionally capable of providing safe care.
- 2.8.2** You identify and address any **risks** to patient **safety** due to your health or wellness.
- 2.8.3** You discontinue practice while you have a physical or mental impairment that affects your ability to provide safe and competent care.

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Principle 3: Be culturally aware, equitable and inclusive

3.1 You must treat your patient **fairly** and without **discrimination**.

To meet the standard, you must demonstrate that:

- 3.1.1** You treat your patient **impartially** and without discrimination.
- 3.1.2** You respect the rights of all peoples and comply with the applicable human rights laws and legislation.
- 3.1.3** You recognize personal **privilege** and how it may influence **power imbalances** and your ability to respectfully care for your patient.

3.2 You must practice in a **culturally responsive** way that respects your patient's identity, values and beliefs.

To meet the standard, you must demonstrate that:

- 3.2.1** You promote respectful, open and effective dialogue to learn about and understand your patient's identity, values and beliefs, including cultural values and beliefs.
- 3.2.2** You foster physically, culturally, socially, emotionally and spiritually safe practices to support your patient's well-being and comfort while receiving care.
- 3.2.3** You consider and incorporate where possible your patient's values and beliefs in their care and recognize that culture and community may be an integral part of your patient's care.
- 3.2.4** You consider how cultural experiences, history and **trauma**, including **intergenerational trauma**, could impact your patient's ability to consent to or receive care and adapt your approach to accommodate specific needs.

Principle 3: Be culturally aware, equitable and inclusive

3.3 You must identify, address and take steps to prevent discrimination and racism.

To meet the standard, you must demonstrate that:

- 3.3.1 You and your team adopt [anti-discrimination](#) and [anti-racism](#) approaches and tools to identify, address and prevent [discrimination](#) and [racism](#).
- 3.3.2 You ensure your attitudes or beliefs do not negatively impact your ability to provide safe and compassionate care.
- 3.3.3 You take appropriate action when discriminatory and/or racist behaviour occurs in your workplace. This may involve helping colleagues to identify harmful attitudes, language or behaviour.
- 3.3.4 You are receptive to feedback and take steps to address any harmful discriminatory behaviour.
- 3.3.5 You report to BCCOHP or other appropriate regulator if you have reasonable grounds to believe another health professional, in relation to their practice, has committed an act of discrimination prohibited under the *Human Rights Code*.
- 3.3.6 You support patients, colleagues and others who experience acts of discrimination or racism.

3.4 You must provide [culturally safe care](#) for Indigenous Peoples.

To meet the standard, you must demonstrate that:

- 3.4.1 You take steps to educate yourself on the lived experiences of Indigenous Peoples recognizing the historical and current impacts of colonialism.
- 3.4.2 You recognize that Indigenous communities are distinct and incorporate the distinct needs of your Indigenous patients, where possible.
- 3.4.3 You respect the distinct rights of Indigenous Peoples. You recognize that laws of Indigenous Peoples and applicable legislation may apply to your patient, including the *United Nations Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples* and BC's *Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples Act*.
- 3.4.4 You understand how Indigenous-specific [racism](#) impacts Indigenous Peoples' health outcomes and ability to view, access and interact with the health care system.
- 3.4.5 You continually seek to improve your ability to provide culturally safe care for Indigenous patients.

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Principle 4:

Communicate effectively and obtain informed consent

4.1 You must communicate clearly and effectively with your patient.

To meet the standard, you must demonstrate that:

- 4.1.1 You introduce yourself and how you will be involved in your patient's care.
- 4.1.2 You communicate in a way your patient understands and include your patient's representatives, guardians or support people, as per your patient's preferences.
- 4.1.3 You recognize and make accommodations to overcome communication barriers, including language, disabilities or cultural differences.
- 4.1.4 You work with your patient to establish a [safe space](#) where they feel comfortable to communicate without fear of judgement.
- 4.1.5 You foster two-way, open discussions and listen to your patients to understand their overall health and personal circumstances. You encourage your patient to ask questions, including what they will experience during treatment and proactively seek feedback to clarify and understand their needs.
- 4.1.6 You are aware of your body language, your patient's body language and non-verbal communication to help determine how your patient is responding to communication and treatment. You make accommodations as necessary.
- 4.1.7 You allow enough time to communicate effectively and ensure your patient understands the information you presented.
- 4.1.8 You respond promptly to patient communications and requests for information or records.

4.2 You must obtain [informed consent](#) prior to providing care.

To meet the standard, you must demonstrate that:

- 4.2.1 You obtained your patient's consent to receive care.
- 4.2.2 You present all reasonable treatment options including the associated [risks](#), benefits, costs, outcomes and any other considerations related to your individual patient's situation. You explain the consequences of unsuitable, delayed or declined treatment.
- 4.2.3 You reaffirm your patient's consent if there are any changes and allow them to withdraw or modify their consent at any point.

Principle 4: Communicate effectively and obtain informed consent

- 4.2.4** You obtain consent from your patient for alternative treatment techniques or materials, participation in any research study or any use of their images or information.
- 4.2.5** You inform your patient of the reason for referrals and provide options for referrals.
- 4.2.6** You allow time to confirm that your patient understands the information given and is able to ask questions if unclear.
- 4.2.7** You recognize when your patient lacks the capacity (e.g. cognitive impairment, language barrier) and make accommodations for the provision of informed consent. This may include involving a representative, guardian or support person to support them in providing consent for treatment on their behalf.
- 4.2.8** You comply with relevant legislation.
- 4.2.9** You appropriately document informed consent discussions in your patient's record.

4.3 You must respect your patient's [autonomy](#) and support them in making informed decisions about their care.

To meet the standard, you must demonstrate that:

- 4.3.1** You actively support your patient's right to make their own decisions about their health.
- 4.3.2** You respect your patient's right to choose their provider, to seek a second opinion and/or treatment elsewhere.
- 4.3.3** You work in partnership with your patient and their representatives, guardians and/or support people to plan and manage their care.
- 4.3.4** You empower your patient to take an active role in their care.
- 4.3.5** When you do not agree with your patient's decision, you inform them and actively seek resolution.

4.4 You must promptly communicate with your patient when care does not go as planned.

To meet the standard, you must demonstrate that:

- 4.4.1** You inform your patient when treatment does not go as predicted.
- 4.4.2** You immediately disclose when an issue arises and discuss its consequences and possible solutions with your patient.
- 4.4.3** You immediately inform your patient when a hazardous event occurs, or potential harm discussed during the [informed consent](#) process is realized.

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Principle 5: Collaborate in the patient's interest

5.1 You must work collaboratively with all members of the oral health team.

To meet the standard, you must demonstrate that:

- 5.1.1** You treat all team members with respect, this includes regulated and unregulated members of the [team](#).
- 5.1.2** You actively participate in the prevention of bullying, harassment and [discrimination](#), including sexual harassment or unwanted sexual behaviour within your team.
- 5.1.3** You are open to and respect the contributions of team members who may have knowledge or experience that could support the delivery of patient care.
- 5.1.4** You recognize how professional status may create [power imbalances](#) within your team and do not allow them to affect your ability to provide collaborative care.

5.2 You must communicate effectively and foster open dialogue between members of the oral health team.

To meet the standard, you must demonstrate that:

- 5.2.1** You clearly communicate with team members in a timely manner and ensure appropriate team members are informed about your patient's care and approved treatment plans.
- 5.2.2** You inform appropriate team members when treatment does not go as predicted.
- 5.2.3** You support a culture of open communication where team members can raise potential issues or concerns without fear of repercussions.

Principle 5: Collaborate in the patient's interest

5.3 You must understand the roles and responsibilities of all oral health team members and appropriately refer, accept, **authorize** or **delegate** aspects of practice.

To meet the standard, you must demonstrate that:

- 5.3.1** You know and understand the competencies, duties and responsibilities, legislated **scope of practice** and limited aspects of practice of team members.
- 5.3.2** You only agree to perform activities that you are allowed to provide as identified in the legislation and bylaws.
- 5.3.3** You know limitations in the legislation and only delegate, authorize, refer or prescribe care to members of the team who have the required knowledge, skills and abilities.

5.4 You must collaborate effectively with other health professionals outside of oral health care to support your patient's care.

To meet the standard, you must demonstrate that:

- 5.4.1** You support open communication with your patient's other health providers.
- 5.4.2** You recognize when there are additional health risks or concerns and collaborate with and refer to your patient's other health providers to support your patient's overall health care.
- 5.4.3** You treat other health professionals who are involved in the care of your shared patient with respect.

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Principle 6: Build and maintain public trust

6.1 You must be honest and trustworthy.

To meet the standard, you must demonstrate that:

- 6.1.1 Your professional and personal conduct does not undermine trust in you or the profession.
- 6.1.2 You are truthful and transparent in all interactions with patients, colleagues, BCCOHP and the public.
- 6.1.3 You do not provide false or misleading information to patients or the public about health care, services provided, drugs, devices and other products.
- 6.1.4 You accurately and truthfully represent your qualifications for your license to practise oral health care.
- 6.1.5 You do not take advantage of your patient or any individual, or their physical, mental or emotional state.

6.2 You must ensure your oral health team's marketing and advertisements are accurate and do not mislead the public.

To meet the standard, you must demonstrate that:

- 6.2.1 Your advertising and marketing meet the requirements set out in BCCOHP Bylaw 15.03.

6.3 You must maintain professional and personal boundaries with your patient.

To meet the standard, you must demonstrate that:

- 6.3.1 You maintain trust by not exploiting the [power imbalance](#) between yourself and your patient.
- 6.3.2 You set and maintain appropriate [professional boundaries](#) with your patient.
- 6.3.3 You recognize and respect the [personal boundaries](#) of your patient – including physical and emotional boundaries – and you ensure those are not violated in a way that could harm or exploit your patient or make them uncomfortable receiving care.
- 6.3.4 You restrict your relationship with your patient to the healthcare setting where possible. If a [dual relationship](#) is established, you disclose and manage any conflicts that could impact your patient's care ([refer to 1.3](#)).

Principle 6: Build and maintain public trust

6.4 You must not engage in a sexual relationship with a current patient.

To meet the standard, you must demonstrate that:

6.4.1 You have appropriately ended your clinical relationship before entering a sexual relationship with a former patient. You ensure [continuity of care](#) where reasonable.

This does not apply to your spouse or intimate partner ([refer to 1.3](#)).

6.5 You must not commit any form of sexual misconduct or sexual abuse.

To meet the standard, you must demonstrate that:

6.5.1 You have not committed an act of sexual misconduct with your patient, including:

- a. Engaging in or attempting to engage in sexual intercourse or another physical act of a sexual nature.
- b. Touching or attempting to touch, directly or indirectly, in a sexual nature.
- c. Engaging in an act of a sexual nature in your patient's presence.
- d. Harassing in a sexual nature.
- e. Engaging in communication of a sexual nature, including requesting communication or sharing media containing sexual content.
- f. Engaging in any other activity of a sexual nature with or in relation to your patient, whether or not the activity occurs within the health service environment or in the course of providing health services.

For a dual relationship ([refer to 1.3](#)), this only applies when your spouse or intimate partner is your patient in a clinical setting.

6.5.2 You have not committed an act of sexual abuse with your patient, colleague or any other person, including:

- a. Engaging in or attempting to engage in non-consensual sexual intercourse or other physical act of a sexual nature.
- b. Touching or attempting to touch, directly or indirectly, in a sexual nature without the other person's consent.
- c. Engaging in an act of a sexual nature in another person's presence without that person's consent.
- d. Manipulating or exploiting a person for sexual purposes, including offering or providing services in exchange for acts of a sexual nature, whether or not the services are health services.
- e. Building a relationship of trust or emotional connection with a person and using or attempting to use that relationship to abuse, manipulate or exploit a person.

Principle 6: Build and maintain public trust

6.6 You must address concerns if patients are at [risk of harm](#).

To meet the standard, you must demonstrate that:

- 6.6.1** You report to BCCOHP if your continued practice of oral health care might result in harm to your patients or the oral health team ([refer to 2.8](#)).
- 6.6.2** When you become aware of any competence or conduct within your oral health team that could harm a patient or colleague, you consider the risk and support your colleague by appropriately raising and addressing concerns.
- 6.6.3** You have met your duty to report to BCCOHP if you have reasonable grounds to believe that a colleague presents a danger to patients or the public. This includes unaddressed health and wellness concerns that could impact patient care, such as addiction.
- 6.6.4** You have met your duty to report any misconduct to BCCOHP.
- 6.6.5** You have met your duty to report to appropriate authorities if you believe that your patient is being physically harmed, neglected or abused or is otherwise in need of protection in accordance with applicable legislation.
- 6.6.6** In the event your patient requires resuscitation, emergency transfer or referral to a hospital, or death during or following treatment, you submit a critical incident report to BCCOHP within 10 days of the procedure.

6.7 You must know and comply with your obligations as a regulated health professional.

To meet the standard, you must demonstrate that:

- 6.7.1** You know and comply with professional duties under the [Act](#), regulations and BCCOHP bylaws.
- 6.7.2** You are current with BCCOHP communications, standards, registration, quality assurance program, facility assessments and any other requirements.
- 6.7.3** You comply with any ongoing complaint investigations or direct communication from BCCOHP and respond in a timely and appropriate manner.

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Glossary of Terms

Act Standard: 2.1 , 2.2 , 6.7	refers to the current health legislation in British Columbia: Health Professions Act
Anti-discrimination Standard: 3.3	intended to prevent or opposed to discrimination.
Anti-racism Standard: 3.3	the practice of actively identifying, challenging, preventing, eliminating and changing the values, structures, policies, programs, practices and behaviours that perpetuate racism.
Authorize Standard: 5.3	to direct a person to perform a task under supervision. See BCCOHP Bylaw 11.01 for more information.
Autonomy Standard: 1.3 , 4.3	the ability of a person to make their own decisions.
Conflict of interest Standard: 1.2 , 1.3	occurs when an interest (financial or otherwise) competes with professional responsibilities and there is an actual, potential or perceived risk that an oral health professional may prioritize that interest above the care of their patient.
Continuity of care Standard: 1.8 , 2.6 , 6.4	responsibility of health professionals to facilitate ongoing access to care. This includes effective collaboration, coordination and follow up between health professionals to support continued management of patient care.
Culturally responsive Standard: 3.2	the ability to recognize, understand and respect the diverse cultural backgrounds and practices of the people you interact with. This involves adapting practices, policies and communication styles to meet the unique needs of different cultural groups, fostering an inclusive and supportive environment. It emphasizes the importance of being aware of cultural differences, valuing those differences and actively working to accommodate them to enhance engagement, trust and positive outcomes.

Glossary of Terms

Culturally safe care <i>Standard: 3.4</i>	<p>the provision of care that is physically, socially, emotionally and spiritually safe, and recognizes, and respects, the cultural identities of others, without challenge or denial of an individual's identity, who they are or what they need. Culturally unsafe care diminishes, demeans, or disempowers the cultural identity and well-being of an individual.</p>
Delegate <i>Standard: 5.3</i>	<p>to direct a person to perform a task without supervision. See BCCOHP Bylaw 11.01 for more information.</p>
Discrimination <i>Standard: 3.1, 3.3, 5.1</i>	<p>treating a person or particular group of people in a worse way from the way in which you treat other people because of their Indigenous identity, race, colour, ancestry, place of origin, religion, marital status, family status, physical or mental disability, sex, sexual orientation, gender identity or expression, age, etc.</p>
Dual relationship <i>Standard: 1.3, 6.3</i>	<p>when a health professional has one or more other relationships or roles with a patient, such as a familial (e.g. parent, spouse, child), social (friend, teacher), business (colleague) or sexual relationship in addition to the health professional-patient relationship.</p>
Equitable <i>Principle 3</i>	<p>fair and impartial.</p>
Fairly <i>Standard: 3.1</i>	<p>without favouritism or discrimination.</p>
Impartial <i>Standard: 1.3, 3.1</i>	<p>to be objective and not allow your biases to influence you.</p>

Glossary of Terms

Informed consent <i>Standard: 1.2, 1.3, 4.2, 4.4</i>	<p>specific permission granted to engage in an activity or an informed decision not to engage in the activity after having been informed of all the facts, benefits, risks and alternatives and ensuring understanding of the information.</p>
Intergenerational trauma <i>Standard: 3.2</i>	<p>historic or contemporary trauma that has been compounded over time and been passed from one generation to the next, the effects of which could negatively impact individuals, families, communities and entire populations.</p>
Personal boundaries <i>Standard: 6.3</i>	<p>the limits that a person may set to maintain their level of comfort with other people.</p>
Power imbalance <i>Standard: 1.4, 3.1, 5.1, 6.3</i>	<p>a situation where one person or group has more actual or perceived authority, control or influence over another whether recognized or not.</p>
Privilege <i>Standard: 3.1</i>	<p>an advantage, favour or benefit that a person or group possesses over others. One may not recognize one's own personal privilege. A privilege can be gained through your age, gender identity, social status, education, occupation, citizenship, race or other means.</p>
Professional boundaries <i>Standard: 6.3</i>	<p>the limits or guidelines that a professional sets to establish appropriate behaviour, communication and relationships.</p>
Racism <i>Standard: 3.3, 3.4</i>	<p>the belief that people are inferior or superior based on their race or ethnicity. It is a cause of discrimination.</p>

Glossary of Terms

Risk of harm Standard: 2.3 , 2.8 , 4.2 , 5.4 , 6.6	possibility that a person will be harmed or experience an adverse effect.
Safe space Standard: 4.1	a supportive and non-threatening environment.
Safety Introduction, Standard: 2.3 , 2.6 , 2.8	the condition of being protected from preventable harm.
Scope of practice Standard: 2.2 , 5.3	is the range of activities that a health care professional is permitted to perform within their profession, which are specified in health profession regulations in British Columbia under the Act or the BCCOHP bylaws.
Trauma Standard: 1.4 , 1.5 , 3.2	a deeply distressing or disturbing experience that can have a profound physical and emotional impact on a person.
Trauma-informed approach Standard: 1.4	an approach that recognizes and addresses the impact of trauma on an individual's symptoms, health, and behaviour and their ability to receive care.
Vulnerable populations Standard: 1.5	groups of people who are at a greater risk of harm or are disadvantaged in some way. Vulnerable populations may include individuals who are unable to provide consent or are at risk of coercion.

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