



# CDO Sexual Abuse Prevention Plan

## Statement of Philosophy

The College of Denturists views the matter of sexual impropriety and sexual abuse with the utmost seriousness and will not tolerate any actions of this kind on the part of Denturists of Ontario.

## Evaluation of Present Practices

Although the College has traditionally demonstrated a prompt and thorough approach to the investigation of allegations of sexual abuse and/or impropriety, the approach to these investigations has largely been of an ad hoc nature rather than the result of following an established protocol. In general, the investigations of the past have incorporated many appropriate characteristics:

- i. the participation of a female member of the College staff;
- ii. prompt follow-up, often involving an interview of the complainant, carried out in a supportive and sympathetic fashion;
- iii. a prompt office visit with the Denturist alleged to have committed the offense in which he/she is confronted with the allegations.

Nevertheless the College now believes that the goal of eliminating sexual abuse/impropriety may be more efficiently reached by creating a sexual abuse protocol. This protocol would have the advantage of ensuring that all reported incidents will be dealt with by the College in a consistently appropriate fashion. The major components of the protocol will consist of the following:

## Sexual Abuse/Impropriety

### 1. Sexual Abuse Officer

The services of a Sexual Abuse Officer will be provided by appointment through the **Patient Relations Committee**.

#### Role of the Sexual Abuse Officer

The Sexual Abuse Officer will have primary responsibility for the investigation of complaints or reported incidents of sexual abuse/impropriety. The Sexual Abuse Officer's duties will include primary responsibility for:

- i. communication with the victims of sexual abuse/impropriety;
- ii. follow-up office visits with the alleged perpetrator/denturist;
- iii. assisting complainants in the compilation of required information or submissions necessary for the complainants or discipline process;
- iv. the collection of data to facilitate reporting on trends, identification of solutions to problems, etc.;
- v. informing survivors of sexual abuse of effective treatment centres and counseling resources;
- vi. such other duties as are outlined in the sexual abuse/impropriety protocol.
- vii. facilitating training of staff and interested parties in matters concerning sexual abuse.
- viii. liaising with other Colleges and with government regarding sexual abuse matters.



## 2. Complaints Investigation Process

### a. Initial Contact with the Complainant

In the vast majority of cases, the College's initial contact with the complainant of sexual abuse/impropriety occurs over the telephone. Whenever possible, all College employees will direct such telephone calls to the Sexual Abuse Officer. When the Sexual Abuse Officer is not available, the call will be directed to an available member of the registrar staff. However, this staff member will bring the matter to the attention of the Sexual Abuse Officer when he/she becomes available.

Whenever possible, any staff member dealing with such a call will extend an invitation to the complainant of sexual abuse/impropriety to meet with the Sexual Abuse Officer.

### b. Meeting with the Sexual Abuse Officer

Should the complainant wish to meet the Sexual Abuse Officer, such meeting shall be arranged by the Sexual Abuse Officer and shall take place in accordance with the following criteria:

- The meeting will take place in a setting in which the complainant's privacy may reasonably be expected to be respected (such meeting place need not necessarily be located at College headquarters).
- The complainant will be advised prior to the meeting that he/she may bring other persons of her/his choosing to the meeting if he/she wishes, such as friends, relatives or other support figures, counselors (including legal counsel if desired) and interpreters.

The Sexual Abuse Officer will offer to assist the complainant to draft any submissions required by the College's complaint or discipline processes.

### c. Follow-up Visit to Denturist Alleged to Have Committed the Sexual Abuse/Impropriety

Following the meeting with the complainant (or following the initial contact with the complainant should the complainant decline a meeting), the Sexual Abuse Officer will arrange to visit the office of the Denturist alleged to have committed the sexual abuse/impropriety. During this office visit, the Sexual Abuse Officer will present the Denturist with the allegations made by the complainant and will attempt to obtain any information which he/she feels is relevant to the matter. On completion of the office visit, the Sexual Abuse Officer will draft a report respecting the office visit which shall be provided to the appropriate College committee investigating the matter.

The office visit will be conducted as promptly as reasonably possible following the meeting with the complainant or the initial contact with the complainant if the complainant declines the offer to meet with the Sexual Abuse Officer.

## 3. Collection of Sexual Abuse/Impropriety Data

The Sexual Abuse Officer shall maintain in a systematic fashion a record of all complaints or reports of sexual abuse and/or impropriety which come to the attention of the College, including:

1. The names and addresses of all complainants or reporters of sexual abuse and/or impropriety.
2. The names and registration numbers of all Denturists alleged to have committed the sexual abuse impropriety.
3. A description of all reported incidents, including the date and location.
4. The disposition of the complaint or report of sexual abuse/impropriety, including the steps taken in the investigation, the outcome of the investigation and any disciplinary activity which ensued, including penalties assigned to the Denturist.



## 4. Guidelines for Professional Behaviour

The [Guidelines for the Prevention of Sexual Abuse/Impropriety in the Denturist Office](#) has been distributed to all members of the profession.

This document has been drafted in accordance with legislation which calls for the development of a sexual abuse plan by the College. The primary objective of this plan is to eliminate incidents of sexual abuse and/or sexual impropriety in the Denturist office.

### Professionalism in the Sexual Context

The College takes the position that professional conduct requires a Denturist to conduct a Denturist practice observing the following principle:

#### ***Patients have the Right to Expect Denturist Care Which Places No Sexual Demands upon Them.***

Blatant types of sexual demands (often referred to as sexual abuse or sexual violation) usually include some form of overt sexual physical contact with the patient. There is no place in a Denturist practice for such physical contact.

However, more subtle types of sexual demands are often unrecognized and occasionally may occur inadvertently. These more subtle sexual demands include the following:

1. Behavior, gestures, or expressions that are seductive or sexually demeaning to a patient
2. Inappropriate draping practices which reflects a lack of respect for the patient's privacy
3. The placement of dental instruments upon the patient's chest.
4. Making sexual comments about a patient's body or underclothing.
5. Making sexually demeaning comments to a patient.
6. Criticism of the patient's sexual orientation.
7. Initiation of conversations regarding sexual problems, preferences or fantasies.
8. Inappropriately affectionate behavior involving hugging and kissing.

## 5. Professional Education Program

The College recognizes the importance of ongoing professional education respecting the issue of sexual abuse and/or impropriety. Accordingly, the following initiatives will be incorporated into the College's professional education program:

- The distribution of the above Guidelines for Professional Behavior to all Denturists practising in the province.
- The underwriting of seminars and lectures concerning the subject of sexual abuse and/or impropriety in the Denturist office. These seminars and lectures will be made available to local denturist societies.
- The encouragement of the Faculties of Denturism to incorporate appropriate training respecting sexual abuse and/or impropriety in their undergraduate and graduate programs.



## 6. Staff Education

The College is committed to the development of an education program for appropriate members who have contact with individuals who complain of sexual abuse or who are involved in investigating and adjudicating cases of this nature.

This education program will include the following:

1. The nature of sexual abuse, the magnitude of the problem, the consequences to victims and issues of race, gender and class related to abuse.
2. The range of ways the victim of sexual abuse may initiate a complaint and how to facilitate and handle complaints in an appropriate, empathetic and supportive manner.
3. How to fully and appropriately explain the complaints and discipline process of the College to potential or actual complainants.
4. The options available to a complainant to lodge a complaint of sexual abuse through the criminal and civil justice systems.
5. How to address victims of sexual abuse and those making inquiries with sensitivity and respect (for example, not implying that the problem is the victim's fault).
6. The characteristics of sexual impropriety and sexual abuse and/or sexual violation.
7. How to inform survivors of sexual abuse of effective treatment centers and counseling resources.

## 7. Public Education

The College is committed to a public education process designed to improve communication with the public and increase awareness of the College's regulatory role. The issues of sexual abuse and impropriety, including public awareness constitutes a substantive part of the College's overall public communication program.