



Acknowledging the Importance of Dental Assistant Certification

Dental Assistants Recognition Week 2025

Certified Dental Assistants are an integral part of our Oral Health Care System. They do everything from taking x-rays to filing insurance claims and from fluoride treatments to whitening your smile. Certified Dental Assistants are an essential part of your dental office visit, however, there is currently a significant shortage of Certified Dental Assistants in Ontario.

“According to recent surveys of our members, nearly two-thirds of dental offices report needing to hire at least one more dental assistant,” says Dr. Maneesh Jain, president of the Ontario Dental Association. “The current demand for Dental Assistants is very real and the Canadian Dental Care Plan has begun to make this demand even greater.”

In Ontario, Dental Assistants are certified by the Ontario Dental Assistants Association (ODAA). The Level II intra-oral certification is the standard across Ontario that ensures they have gained the knowledge, skills and training to assist in keeping the dental office running smoothly and performing the tasks required to keep patients safe and comfortable. This certification designates the successful completion of hands-on training in a college setting followed by an entry-to-practice exam. It ensures that the dentist and the patient can rely on the competency of the Dental Assistant and be confident that they can perform the tasks required of them.

Because of the shortage of Certified Dental Assistants and the fact that their training and qualifications are not fully appreciated, dental offices in need of staff will sometimes hire uncertified assistants to fill the staffing demand. Hiring people who do not have the essential education and certification which ensures proper training, skills and an up-to-date currency in continuing education is certainly not optimum for public safety.

The ODAA is committed to ensuring that the demand for Dental Assistants is met, while also ensuring that they are properly trained and hold the certification to prove it. “We understand the pressures on dental offices,” said Tara Fitzpatrick, a Certified Dental Assistant and ODAA Executive Director. “Working together with government and our dental partners we can ensure that there are enough Certified Dental Assistants to meet the increasing demand.”

About the ODAA: The Ontario Dental Assistants Association is a non-profit organization that supports Ontario Dental Assistants as respected healthcare professionals. As the certifying body and membership association for Ontario Dental Assistants, more than 6000 Certified Dental Assistants, Dental Receptionists, Treatment Coordinators, and other dental professionals belong to the ODAA. The ODAA maintains high standards for its members through an annual certification and membership renewal process.

To connect with the ODAA, contact Laura Thorne, Communications & Advocacy Manager, at lthorne@odaa.org. Media is also encouraged to contact local dental offices to highlight Certified Dental Assistants in their region.

T. 519.679.2566 F. 519.679.8494 116A-230 Victoria Street, London, Ontario N6A 2C2