



MEDIA RELEASE

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Alberta Dental Association + College revving up for an exciting year

It is at once a registry, an educator, an information resource for members and the public, a source for standards of practice and professional advice, a community supporter, and a regulator and arbitrator operating in the public interest. The Alberta Dental Association + College (ADA+C) is one of the few professional organizations that offers all these functions as an “one-stop” resource for both its member dentists and the public.

Established over 100 years ago, the organization has grown to 1900 members, including dentists from the nine dental specialties. Membership is mandatory for any dentist who wishes to practice in Alberta and standards of care are strictly monitored. However, the ADA+C provides much more than just leadership to the dental profession. It provides the public with information and services to ensure that Albertans receive safe, appropriate, ethical and quality dental care as an integral part of general health.

Dr. Jonathan Skuba is the newly elected President of the ADA+C and he strongly supports this message. “Oral health is important to overall health; if you have a tooth abscess or gum disease, it will compromise your health, especially if you already have another health condition like diabetes or heart disease. The condition of the teeth and jaws affects not only how you eat and speak, but can have far reaching effects on your overall wellness.”

“Dentists are the leaders of the oral health care team. The dentist’s office is the only place where you will receive comprehensive oral health care – from check ups, to restorative work, to integrated hygiene care, and beyond. Dentists are the only health professionals who can provide all these services and have the expertise to integrate your oral health care with your overall wellness.”

With this in mind, the ADA+C is launching a campaign to make people more aware of what they and their dentist can do to promote oral health. For example, pregnant women are encouraged to have a thorough professional cleaning and scaling in their second trimester, a measure known to reduce the risk of low birth weight babies.

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Concern for children's health has prompted a preventive oral care campaign aimed at parents of babies and young children. As well, the ADA+C has supported the Alberta community by donating to the Alberta Children's Hospital and the Stollery Children's Hospital.

The organization is also concerned about the oral health of the elderly and has used a generous government grant to fund the start-up of two state-of-the-art mobile clinics that will provide treatment at geriatric centers around Alberta beginning this Fall.

The ADA+C is focused on increasing Albertans' knowledge of the vast scope of care dentists can provide. "There are so many treatments out there," said Skuba. "People can get confused after seeing ads or finding information from a variety of sources on-line. It is our role as professionals to provide consistent, accurate information and to make each patient aware of the treatment and non-treatment options he or she has."

Dr. Skuba's term in office will also herald the start-up of mandatory practice consultations, in which every dental office will be visited and inspected every five years. "These visits will be focused on education, and practice improvement," said Skuba, "and will help verify that all dentists are aware of the most current standards of practice and infection control, as well as the many medicolegal aspects facing our profession."

Dr. Skuba's personal goals as President are to continue to address the issue of access to oral health care for all Albertans, and to foster a more informed and effective relationship between the patient and their dentist. "When a patient has a great relationship with their dentist, they are well-informed and can make the best choices for their oral health. We need to take every step possible to give this opportunity to every patient we see."

The Alberta Dental Association + College registers dentists and ensures that the oral health of Albertans is advanced through safe, available, affordable, quality and ethical dental services. All Alberta dentists and oral surgeons are required to be members. For further information go to www.abda.ab.ca or call toll-free 1-800-843-3848.

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